Disability Services in Spanish Universities

Verdugo, M. A., Campo, M., Díez, E., Sancho, I., Moral, E., Sánchez, S.

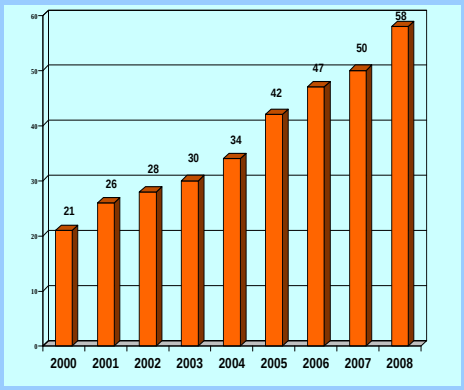
Institute on Community Integration (INICO)

University of Salamanca (Spain)

http://www.usal.es/adu

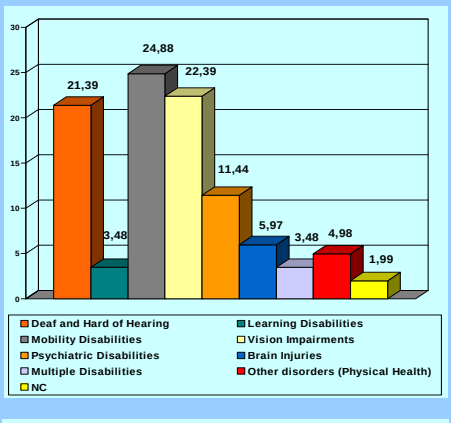
adu@usal.es

1. Growth in Disability Services



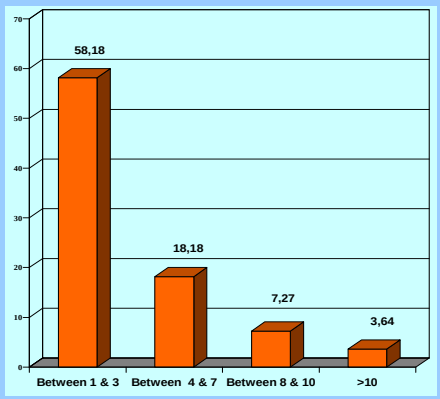
Disability Services in Public Universities were implemented at the end of the 90's and have increased significantly since the year 2000

2. Disabilities



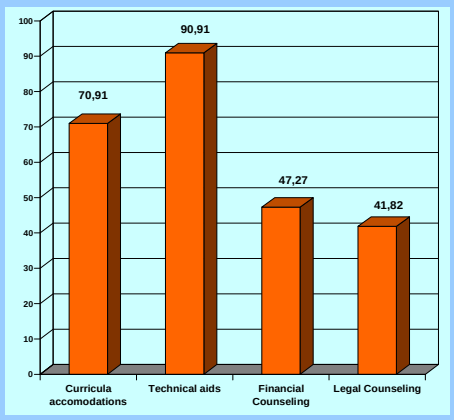
Most users have mobility disabilities, followed by those who have hearing or visual impairments

3. Staff



Most Disability Services have between 1 and 3 staff members. Main profesionals: Psychologists, Pedagogues and Social Workers

4. Reasonable Accommodations



71% Disability Services provide curricula accommodations, 90% technical aids, 47% financial counseling and 42% of them offer legal counseling

Disability Services

Autor: José Luis Blanco Bocas. This picture was presented in Digital Photografhy Awards 2004. INICO

From 76 Spanish Universities, 53 have Disability Services and 5 of them - even though they do not have Disability Services - provide some type of support. This represents 86% of Public Universities and 14% of Private Universities

5. Incentives for helpers

Volunteers programs are a widely used resource in Disability Services. 69% of the Services have volunteers, and almost 10% of them are starting new programs

Although a great number of Services consider volunteering as an altruist activity (36%), there are others that compensate non-hired supporting helpers in different ways: specific scholarships (20%), exchange for university credits (20%), refund of expenses (10%) or rewards (10%)

6. Choice of studies

Students with disabilities enroll both in sciences and humanities studies

Although they follow a similar pattern of election of careers when choosing University studies, students with disabilities differ slightly to the rest of students

7. Conclusions

Disability Services in Spain have experienced a fast evolution and have generally improved in many aspects the last decade

To maintain this evolution, services need higher budgets, new objectives and plans and increasing committment of University bodies and other organizations

Staff members come from various backgrounds and lack stability

Accesibility is still an unsolved issue

Personal Assistants for students with disabilities are not a kind of support given by Universities - with some exceptions

Disability Services are usually aimed only to students with disabilities. Nevertheless, some Services give also support to other people of the University with disabilities (staff, teachers and professors)

Emerging types of disabilities and new challenges presented by the convergence towards the European Space for Higher Education, are some of the reasons why Services and Programs supporting students with disabilities should work with common standards

8. ADU. Counseling on University and Disability

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