
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DOING AWAY WITH BARRIERS

RIGA

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Introduction: Who we are

- The Agency is a permanent network of ministerial representatives acting as the member countries' platform for collaboration regarding the promotion of quality and equity in education as a means to achieving social cohesion



The Agency Network

- National networks in 29 European countries: 26 countries from the European Union plus Norway, Iceland and Switzerland



Funding

- The member countries' Ministries of Education
- The European Commission as one of the six organisations supported by the Jean Monnet, Erasmus+ Programme



Focus

- The Agency's main focus is upon inclusive education within its widest interpretation – that is dealing with learner difference and diversity in all educational settings as a quality issue.

The Agency's work is essentially concerned with how the achievement of all learners at all levels of inclusive lifelong learning can be improved in a meaningful way that enhances their opportunities for an effective participation in society.



PRESENTATION

THE ROLE OF SUPPORT MEASURES IN FAVOUR OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



Questions for discussions

Guidance for the required measures

Countries comparability

Main preconditions for successful IE

Situation across Europe

Negative attitudes

Role of universities



Some reflections

From young learners:

‘Diversity is positive’



‘Inclusive education is mutually beneficial to us and to the others’



‘We see a lot of benefits in inclusive education: we acquire more social skills; we live more experiences; we learn about how to manage in the real world; we learn to be stronger and more independent’



All teachers should have positive attitudes towards all learners



Inclusive education is the best option if adequate conditions exist



Adequate conditions

Sufficient resources

Well trained and motivated educational and support staff (teachers, assistants, sign language interpreters, etc)

Accessibility of the physical environment and the buildings; accessible technical aids and support

Adequate educational support (small class sizes, IEP, adapted exams, etc)

Good counselling throughout the school education



Some reflections

From theory to practice:

‘A clear vision of Inclusive Education
as a quality approach for ALL
learners’



Inclusion as systemic change

- Understood to concern a far wider range of learners vulnerable to exclusion than those identified as having disabilities or SENs
- Involves a curriculum for all that considers academic and social learning; curriculum goals and implementation should reflect this dual focus
- Inclusion is a process and not a state; educators will always need to move their work forward to enable the learning and participation of all learners



Challenges for Inclusive Education

- Academic achievements (output) versus meeting individual needs
- Preparing all teachers for inclusive education
- Over 2% of pupils are being educated in separate settings (schools and classes) across Europe



Horizontal issues that impact on all phases of educational provision

- Educational assessment systems
- Teacher education and development
- Financing systems
- Coherence of provision for meeting a diversity of learners' need
- Monitoring equity, effectiveness and efficiency issues



Progress and Opportunities: Infrastructure

- A re-focussing of the role of special schools as a resource for the mainstream sector
- Improving frameworks and structures of provision – changes aim towards improvements and capacity building within mainstream provision
- Promoting specific tools and approaches within provision – i.e. the implementation of Individual Education Plans and personalised learning approaches
- End user participation in local decision-making
- ‘Inter’-disciplinary support structures



Progress and Opportunities: Shared Value Systems

- Leadership at all levels with a clear vision of inclusive education as a quality approach for all learners
- All stakeholders hold the view that diversity in education is beneficial
- Reflective practice in teaching
- ‘Formalising the informal’



Inclusive education as a means to...

- ... realise the right to an equitable high quality education without discrimination
- ... advance towards more democratic and fair societies
- ... learn to live together and build shared identities
- ... improve the efficiency and cost-benefit relationship of education systems



More Information

www.european-agency.org

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