

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION



European Agency for Development in
Special Needs Education



The Agency network

- National networks in 28 European countries:
Austria, Belgium (Flemish and French speaking communities), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)
- 16th year of operations
- Main secretariat in Odense, Denmark and European Liaison office in Brussels, Belgium



International Policy Context

At all times, the Agency works to guiding principles as outlined in:

- UNESCO statements and declarations on EFA and Inclusion
- UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities (2006)
- Council Resolutions concerning inclusion of children and young people with disabilities into mainstream systems of education



The TE4I Project

- Agency member countries agreed that Teacher Education was a top priority for investigation
- 25 Agency member countries participated in the project
- 55 experts took part in activities:
 - SNE specialist teacher educators and policy makers
 - Mainstream teacher educators and policy makers
- Representatives of OECD and UNESCO and the European Commission DG-EAC Schools Unit



Teacher Education for Inclusion

- Aimed to address the essential project question: *how all teachers are prepared via their initial education to be 'inclusive'*
- Examined the essential skills, knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values needed by everyone entering the teaching profession
- Provided information on best policy and practice to support the development of TE4I
 - Recommendations for teacher education
 - Recommendations for wider policy
- Developed a Profile of Inclusive Teachers



Project outputs

- Policy review
- International literature review
- Web based country literature abstracts
- Individual country reports
- Country information database
- Project recommendations linked to sources of evidence document
- Synthesis report ‘Teacher Education for Inclusion across Europe - Challenges and Opportunities’
- Profile of inclusive teachers
- Policy key messages paper



Project Recommendations (1)

- Effective approaches to *improve the recruitment of teacher candidates* and increase retention rates should be explored along with ways to *increase the number of teachers from diverse backgrounds*, including those with disabilities
- *Research* should be undertaken on the *effectiveness of different routes into teaching* and the course organisation, content and pedagogy to best develop the competence of teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners



Project Recommendations (2)

- The *profession of teacher educators needs to be further developed* with improvements in recruitment, induction and continuing professional development
- Schools and teacher education institutions must work together to *ensure good models in practice schools and appropriate placements* for teaching practice



Project Recommendations (3)

- Wider, *systemic reform is needed to ensure the development of inclusive schools*, to support the development of teacher education for inclusion
- Reform must include *clarification of the language that is used* when referring to inclusion and diversity
- Policies should be introduced to *develop a ‘continuum of support’* to allow teachers to meet the full diversity of learner needs
- *Accountability measures* that impact upon teachers’ work *should reflect the importance of wider achievements* that are more closely aligned to inclusive principles.



A Profile of Inclusive Teachers

- *Four core values* relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for the work of all teachers in inclusive education
- These core values are associated with *areas of teacher competence*
- For each area of competence identified, a certain *attitude* or belief demands certain *knowledge* or level of understanding and then *skills* in order to implement this knowledge in a practical situation



Core Values

- Valuing Learner Diversity
- Supporting All Learners
- Working with Others
- Personal Professional Development



Young Views on Inclusive Education

European Parliament Hearing 2011

<http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/european-hearing-2011>



The starting point for inclusive education is teacher awareness and education (Sophie and Gemma)



Teachers sometimes only focus on the things I cannot do, not on my skills (Thordur)



There were teachers who didn't want to co-operate in making inclusive education work for me and others; teachers should accept everyone in their classes (Wessel)



The ICT teacher in my school is disabled, too – this helps him understand special needs better – he is more familiar with the problems of his students (Áron)



The focus is often on practical things (like buildings) – but inclusive education is mostly in people’s minds. Everybody must have the habit of thinking about different disabilities, not discriminating or dividing (Mei Lang)



We need to remove barriers in the widest sense; we must change people's mentalities (Jens)



More information

<http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/teacher-education-for-inclusion/teacher-education-for-inclusion>

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