IE+

PROMOTING POSITIVE
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

IE+ Training Manual

Acknowledgements

This document was written with the support of the Erasmus+ funding programme under grant agreement 2017-3338/001-001

The other deliverables of the IE+ project can be found on the project webpage www.easpd.eu/en/content/promoting-inclusive-education

Contents

1. Introduction

This training manual is for the use of all trainers who will deliver the IE+ inclusive education training course. Together with the six training chapters that accompany it, this manual will equip trainers with the practical knowledge and expertise to be able to deliver a training course to decision-makers in the field of education. This training course will enable these decision-makers to implement evidence-based policy making, which will support the realisation of inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities in their region.

In this manual you will find out more about the intended target audiences of this training course, possible motivations that could encourage them to participate and how to include them in the delivery of your course.

This manual is a product of the 'Promoting positive attitudes and evidence-based policy for inclusive education' (IE+) project, which aims to provide decision-makers with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence-based policy making to support the transition towards inclusive education for children. This project has been driven by 7 partners across 5 European countries from civil society, academia, the support service sector and NGOs in the field of

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education. This manual and its training chapters have been co-produced in their design, development and delivery, and the contribution of key stakeholders, as well as that of our first 10 trainers, have been vital to their creation.

2. Inclusive Education: The way forward

Education is a fundamental human right that is enshrined in many international human rights instruments. The most notable of these instruments is the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, United Nations, 2006). Article 24 of the UNCRPD alludes to the right to inclusive education (IE) for students with disabilities, highlighting that States Parties must ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning to promote (United Nations, 2006, p. 16):

- The full development of human potential;
- The development of personality, talents and creativity to their fullest potential;
- The effective participation in a free society.

Under the UNCRPD, it is highlighted that IE should not only focus on curricular content (e.g. numeracy or literacy skills), but it should be holistic and promote the fullest development of students with disabilities of any kind, and their participation as valued members within communities and society (Amor, Verdugo, Calvo, Navas, & Aguayo, 2018). Through this approach, an inclusive education system promotes the Quality of Life of learners with disabilities and supports their overall personal well-being.

Despite the enshrinement of this right in a number of human rights treaties and the benefits that inclusive education has for all those who are a part of our society, access to mainstream education is still far from being the reality for many learners with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities.

> **Disclaimer**
> Given the broad scope of inclusive education, for the purposes of this project, this course focuses on supporting the realisation of inclusive education for learners with intellectual disabilities aged between 3-18 years old, regardless of their gender.
>
> Traditionally, achieving the inclusion of learners with intellectual disabilities in mainstream schools is perceived as more challenging. As a result, the IE+ project partners chose to focus on inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities to address these challenges and support decision-makers to implement policies that can overcome them.

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The participants of this training course should be aware of this parameter to the course. It should be stressed however that the information and tools that they will gain through this training will be useful for the inclusion of all learners and are for the benefit of all.

3. The IE+ training course

Via this training course, the IE+ project aims to support the realisation of inclusive education systems for learners with intellectual disabilities across Europe, by providing decision-makers with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence-based policy making.

For the purposes of this course, inclusion in the education sector is defined as every person having the same possibilities to enjoy a high-quality education without being segregated. In an inclusive education system, the framework changes to adapt to the individual needs of the learner and applies attitudes, approaches and strategies that include all learners in all activities, regardless of their support needs, with respect to their individual learning level. An inclusive education refers to education at all levels (e.g. parallel, informal and post-graduate learning).

The contents of this course

The IE+ training course is composed of 6 'chapters', each of which covers a different topic in the realisation of an inclusive education system. The chapters are as follows:

Chapter I. The Human Rights framework and Policy framework

Chapter II. Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education.

Chapter III. Monitoring and the Quality of Life Index

Chapter IV. Funding of Inclusive Education

Chapter V. School Environment

Chapter VI. How to adapt the classroom

How to devlier the course

Each chapter represents one 3-hour session of a 3-day training course. This course can be delivered in a timeframe that suits trainers and participants. For example, either in six, 3-hour individual chapter sessions; as three, 1-day trainings or one 3-day course. It is not mandatory for all course participants to attend the training on every chapter. Regardless of the arrangement and timeframe the chapters are organised in, the training course must:
- Be delivered in chronological order of chapters;
- Have a set group of participants throughout its entire duration;
- Offer an opportunity for all participants to come together and interact with each other.

It is also recommended that the course is delivered across a timeframe no greater than 2 months.

This course is intended to be delivered as a face-to-face training, rather than an online one. The partners of the IE+ project strongly recommend an in-person implementation. However, the course was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and was tested in an online format. It can therefore be delivered online if needed.

Who will benefit from this course?

Decision-makers in the field of education are the target of this training course, and will directly benefit from it. The six chapters will equip them with the knowledge and tools that they need for evidence-based policy making. This group of decision-makers is composed of key-stakeholders in the education sector and includes:

- Policy makers at the local, regional and national level;
- Ministry representatives;
- Educational providers, including those from middle management, headmasters or administrative staff;
- Representatives from teacher unions, parents' organisations or student associations (including those representing learners with disabilities);
- School inspectors;
- University Professors;

These decision-makers can come from the local, regional or national level but should, in some way, be involved in the policy making process. It is recommended that trainers aim to have a mix of course participants that is as diverse as possible. Diversity is a key strength of the course, and offering moments for participants to share their personal experiences will provide a

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powerful accompaniment to the training content. It can also help to facilitate the co-production of policies for inclusive education in the future.

While decision-makers are the direct beneficiaries of this training, it cannot be forgotten that a number of other groups will benefit from the creation of evidence-based policy that supports the realisation of inclusive education systems. The first of these groups are children with intellectual disabilities. As already mentioned in this manual, inclusive education can help children with intellectual disabilities to enjoy their human rights; achieve the development of their personality, talents and creativity to their fullest potential; fully participate in society and enjoy a higher quality of life. However, all students have individual learning needs and, as a result, it should not be forgotten that all learners will benefit from an inclusive school system that accommodates diversity.

The advantages of inclusive education are not just limited to learners; teachers can benefit from more flexible education systems and better support systems; parents and families can benefit from their family member's inclusion in the community, and policy makers and authorities can benefit from the economic savings that can be the result of moving from a segregated to an inclusive education system. (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017, P.14) These are just a few of the benefits of inclusive education, and the possible motivations of participants will be further addressed in the next chapter of this manual.

4. Why this course?

The IE+ training course offers participants the opportunity to learn more about a broad range of topics to support their policy making activities. Not all participants will be immediately convinced of the need to participate in this course; this chapter therefore gives a variety of possible motivations which could encourage stakeholders to join the course.

As we already mentioned, the diversity of participants in this course will be one of its key strengths, as the training will provide these stakeholders with the opportunity to come together with other education stakeholders to learn and exchange. The course offers policy makers the chance to speak with different members of their electorate. For other participants, this training is an opportunity to gather with policy makers and share experiences, concerns and what is important to them in ensuring a successful transition towards inclusive education.

Below you will find some more reasons to participate, what can be gained from the course and the impact that it can have on participants' work:

Chapter I. The Human Rights framework and Policy framework

This chapter will provide participants with knowledge on the international framework and standard, and how they can be implemented in participants' national/regional/local environments. It will also:

- Enable learners and parents to learn more about their right to an inclusive education.
- Educate participants on how the current legislation can support the achievement of their goals.
- Give policy makers the opportunity to understand the legal frameworks that they are obligated to implement.

Chapter II. Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education.

Chapter II recognises that attitudes are the main barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education. It will support a shift of mindset and inform the trainees on how to understand inclusive education. It will also:

- Provide the opportunity for participants to hear about the attitudes of others and the experiences that have shaped them.
- Help participants understand and overcome the fears and stigma linked to inclusive education.

Chapter III. Monitoring and the Quality of Life Index

Chapter III will highlight the importance of evidence-based monitoring and give trainees a practical tool to support their policy development. It will also:

- Provide participants with an important tool to monitor the implementation of inclusive education, as well as collect evidence on its impact on the quality of life of learners.
- Help policy makers monitor how effectively they use their funds to support inclusive education, and make adjustments when needed.
- Enable teachers, parents, schools and learners to collect evidence on the benefits of inclusive education, and use it in their advocacy work.

Chapter IV. Funding of Inclusive Education

This chapter will provide participants with the information and tools to access different forms of funding to support their reforms towards inclusive education. This could include:

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- Empower schools to utilise funding programmes outside of their traditional funding sources to scale-up innovative practices, support the continued professional development of their staff or invest in their infrastructure.
- Provide local authorities with additional funding opportunities to help them make the initial investment towards a more inclusive education system.
- Provide policy makers with alternative funding models that can promote the inclusion of learners.

Chapter V. School Environment

Chapter V will provide participants with a better understanding of the impact of the environment on the well-being, participation and achievements of learners. It will also:

- Open paths through which participants can improve the environment of their schools.
- Provide an opportunity for teachers, parents and learners to discuss their needs and how they can support the realisation of more inclusive school environments with policy makers and authorities.

Chapter VI. How to adapt the classroom

For authorities, inspectors and school management this chapter will highlight the importance and impact of a good classroom design. It will also:

- Provide participants with effective strategies to promote inclusive classrooms.
- Provide an opportunity for teachers and learners to discuss their needs and how they can support the realisation of more inclusive classrooms with school managers and authorities.

These are just a few of the reasons that can encourage decision-makers to participate in this course. You may find that they differ from region to region, with some chapters providing greater motivation to some participants than others.

5. Co-production

A key feature of this training course is the inclusion of all stakeholders in its design, development and delivery. The development and finalisation of the content of each training chapter has already been co-produced. The IE+ project partners believe that education is, by essence, a great example of co-production because of the need for cooperation between learners, family members, teachers and the system to be successful. To promote cooperation between all actors,

and its importance to the success of inclusive education, this course will also be co-delivered alongside key stakeholders.

As a trainer, working alongside a key stakeholder enables you to take advantage of their expertise and knowledge, as well as promote a greater integration between stakeholders. Your co-trainer could be one of your course participants, who supports you in the delivery of one of your sessions, helping them to take ownership of their own learning experience and that of the group. Although the same level of co-delivery is not expected for each chapter, at least two of these chapters should be co-delivered by a person with an intellectual disability. Below is a list of possible stakeholders who can help you co-deliver your course:

- **Chapter I:** A person with an intellectual disability.
- **Chapter II:** Teachers, a person with an intellectual disability.
- **Chapter III:** While it is not necessary to co-deliver the tool, it may be interesting to work with a parent who values the school environment and quality of life over grades.
- **Chapter IV:** A representative from the National Agency for Erasmus+ or from the European investment bank in your region.
- **Chapter V:** Teachers, school management, learners, school inspectors.
- **Chapter VI:** Teachers, Parents of children without or with an intellectual disability, a person with an intellectual disability.

For further support in co-delivering your training, please see the IE+ Co-production Checklist in Annex.

6. Conclusion

This manual provides the starting blocks for you, as a trainer of the IE+ training course, to go forward and deliver a dynamic course to decision-makers in the field of education. This course will provide these decision-makers with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence-based policy making. While the transition towards fully inclusive education systems is an ongoing process, which will take time to achieve, equipped with what they have learnt in this training and working together with the connections they have formed during this training, participants will be able to continue working towards the realisation of this goal: the provision of high quality, inclusive education for all learners.

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7. References

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Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, (2017). *Fighting school segregation in Europe through inclusive education: a position paper*. Retrieved from https://rm.coe.int/fighting-school-segregationin-europe-throughinclusive-education-a-posi/168073fb65

United Nations (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Available at: http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf

8. Annex 1

Coproduction Checklist

Production process that allows genuine participation at all stages.

Co-design of chapter (before training)

1. The two trainers chosen to deliver the chapters represent different categories of stakeholders (e.g.: 1 educational system/1 policy background).

2. The participants targeted need to represent the diversity of the decision-makers identified by partners.

3. The objectives of the chapters and expectations are discussed and agreed beforehand with the participants, so they start providing inputs/suggestions before the chapter.

4. The dates for the training chapters are communicated beforehand with a reasonable delay to ensure participation of a wide range of stakeholders.

5. The materials that will be used during the chapter are prepared with different stakeholders and are understood by all.

6. The aforementioned materials are sent sufficiently early to participants to ensure that they are prepared.

7. Participants are informed of the co-productive aspect of the chapter and their role in the chapter and can prepare testimonies, information before the chapter.

8. The communication must be adapted to the targeted participants.

9. The schedule of the chapter training must be adapted to the time constraints of the participants.

10. Trainers and participants are informed of the accessibility requirement and to communicate in an understandable way if people with intellectual disabilities are represented in the training chapter.

Co-delivery of chapter (during the training)

11. Trainers deliver the chapter bearing in mind the expectations of people and prejudices that might affect the training. (cf: needs assessment)

12. Energizer games and ice-breaker are taking place at the beginning of the training to increase the group cooperation and re-organised if the audience substantially changed (newcomers)

13. Accessibility rules as well as the mode of participation selected are explained to all at the beginning of the training.

14. Accessibility cards and visuals are used during the training to facilitate everyone's participation and understanding.

15. Based on the work done with the participants before the module delivering, the trainers foster a pro-active approach.

16. Every participant is given the opportunity to speak and share his/her experience and thoughts on the topic discussed.

17. All discussions should happen in presence of all the participants or at least representatives of all category of stakeholders.

18. A statement/memorandum of understanding is agreed upon and signed by all participants and the barriers identified and how to overcome them. All disagreement should be also enshrined and explained in the final document.

Co-assessment of chapter (after the training)

19. All participants are given a chance through an accessible questionnaire to comment their experience of participation before and after in the training chapter

20. Participants can support the development of the deliveries (cf: Quality Assurance Framework on coproduction).

9. About the IE+ Project

Promoting positive attitudes and evidence-based policy for inclusive education' (IE+) is a Erasmus + funded project which aims to provide decision-makers (policy-makers and education providers) with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence based policy making. Through these activities the project will facilitate not only adequate policy frameworks but also their real implementation, with a special focus on the transition from segregated to inclusive education settings.

The project partnership is comprised of the following organisations:

The **European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities** (EASPD) is a wide European network which represents around 17.000 services across Europe and across disabilities.

The **European Association of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families Inclusion Europe** (Inclusion Europe) represents the voice of people with intellectual disabilities and their families throughout Europe.

At **Ghent University** the Department of Special Needs Education has a focus on Inclusive Education in teaching research and service to the community.

The first **University of Salamanca's Institute on Community Integration** (INICO) is composed of interdisciplinary professionals that lead activities linked to training, research and counseling in the field of disability and special educational needs with the aim of easing and enhancing the quality of life and self-determination of people living at social disadvantages in different contexts and throughout their life cycle.

ESTIA - Support & Social Care Center for People with Intellectual Disability specialises in providing support and care to people with intellectual disabilities from 15 years of age with the aim of improving quality of life and supporting inclusion into the community.

The **National Association of Resource Teachers in Bulgaria** (NART) is a national NGO umbrella for professionals working for full and quality integration, inclusion and education of children with different abilities and needs in mainstream education.

C.E.C.D. Mira Sintra - Centro de Educação para o Cidadão com Deficiência, C.R.L. (Education Centre for Persons with Disability) is a Cooperative for Social Solidarity, a non- profit organisation and was recognized by the Government as an organization of Public Utility.

With the support of:

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Agreement Number: 2017-3338/001-001

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PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

IE+ Training Course: Chapter I

Acknowledgements

Contents

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1. International rights framework

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a basic European and international framework of the right to inclusive education in the terms of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of United Nations (United Nations, 2006 [1]) and the General Comment 4, from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations 2016a [2]). Inclusive education is defined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as a set of values, principles and practices that seeks meaningful, effective and quality education for all students, and that does justice to the diversity of learning conditions and requirements not only of children with disabilities, but for all students. This definition is endorsed by the whole United Nation's system.

2. A brief introduction on the hierarchy of norms and the State obligations regarding the right to Education

Education is a fundamental human right enshrined in many international human rights instruments, which may be divided into categories: on one hand, those that have legally-binding force, since they are adopted and ratified by the Member States. In general, it refers to conventions and treaties. In other words, once a State ratifies a treaty, they must abide by it. On the other hand, there are those documents that, although no having legally-binding force, embody a great political and moral authority, as a guideline to the Member States. It usually refers to declarations, recommendations, reports and general comments.

As a fundamental right that belongs to economic, social and cultural rights' category, Member States are obliged to respect, to protect and to fulfil education in progressive realization of this right. It means they must take appropriate measures towards the full realization of the right to education to the maximum of their available resources. Likewise, it means that a State's compliance with its obligation to take appropriate measures is assessed in light of the resources – financial and others – available to it. It is important to highlight that the concept of progressive realization is sometimes misinterpreted as if States did not have to protect economic, social and cultural rights until they have enough resources. On the contrary, States Parties are required to prove that they are adopting all the necessary measures to realise the right as quickly and effectively as possible, within the limits of the resources at their disposal (United Nations, 2008 [3]).

Reasonable accommodations, in contrast, do not depend on progressive realization to be accomplished, as the Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities clarified on General Comment on the right to inclusive education: "the denial of reasonable accommodation

constitutes discrimination and the duty to provide reasonable accommodation is immediately applicable and not subject to progressive realization" (United Nations, 2016a [2]).

3. United Nations

3.1 The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The article 28 of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (United Nations, 1989 [7]) was dedicated to the right of education. Despite sharing the values of an inclusive education, the convention does not refer to education as inclusive; neither does the **General Comment 1 on the aims of education** (United Nations, 2001 [8]). Children with disabilities are referred to as a discriminated group in many education systems, whereas the **General Comment 9 on children with disabilities** mentions inclusive education, providing a definition to the expression as "a set of values, principles and practices that seeks meaningful, effective, and quality education for all students, that does justice to the diversity of learning conditions and requirements not only of children with disabilities, but for all students" (United Nations, 2006 [9]). Moreover, the **General discussion on the rights of the children with disabilities** held in 1997 clarified the difference between inclusion and integration in school: "The inclusion of disabled children was a right, not a privilege. There was an important distinction between integration and inclusion. Policies of integration tended to seek to change the child in order to fit into the school. Inclusion, on the other hand, sought to change the school environment in order to meet the needs of the disabled child" (United Nations, 1997 [10]).

3.2 Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education

The **Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education** (1994) call upon all governments and urge them to "adopt as a matter of law or policy **the principle of inclusive education**, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise". It also mentions inclusive schools, stating that their fundamental principle is: "that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities" (United Nations, 1994a [11]).

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3.3 General Comments of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regarding the issue

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) also pronounced itself about the right to education of persons with disabilities on the **General comment 5: Persons with Disabilities**, assuring that "persons with disabilities can best be educated within the general education system" (United Nations, 1994b [12]). The same committee also adopted the **General Comment No. 13: the right to education**, in which upholds that: "educational institutions and programmes have to be accessible to everyone, without discrimination, within the jurisdiction of the State party" (United Nations, 1999 [13]).

3.4 The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Approved in 2006, the **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (United Nations, 2006a [1]) is the most important law on the issue, being the first human rights treaty on the rights of persons with disabilities in History. In addition, it recognizes the social model of disability as the appropriate paradigm to analyse disability, understanding it as a human rights issue. The CRPD explicitly mentions inclusive education as the adequate way to achieve the right to education, being the first legally binding instrument to contain a reference to the concept of inclusive education.

Throughout the **General Comment 4, on the right to inclusive education**, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities sheds light on its meaning, clarifying that it involves strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners, regardless of being a person with disability (United Nations, 2016a [2]). It also states that there are many profound challenges preventing inclusive education to be accomplished, such as discrimination on the grounds of disability, lack of political will and of implementation of the social model of disability. Therefore, millions of persons with disabilities continue to be denied the right to education, being excluded from ordinary educational systems.

The document has great importance to foster the right to inclusive education, offering guidelines for the States parties on its implementation. Firstly, the Committee stablishes they must consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, in all aspects of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education policies. Persons with disabilities and their families must be recognised as partners and not merely recipients of education.

Above all, inclusive education must be understood as a fundamental human right of all learners and not, in the case of children, the right of a parent or caregiver. Parental responsibilities in this regard are subordinate to the rights of the child. It is also a principle that values the well-being

of all students, respects their inherent dignity and autonomy, and acknowledges individual requirements and ability to effectively be included in and contribute to society. Lastly, it is the result of a process of continuing and pro-active commitment to eliminate barriers impeding the right to education, together with changes to culture, policy and practice of regular schools to accommodate and effectively include all students.

To accomplish it, core features must be adopted: whole systems approach; whole educational environment; whole person approach; supported teachers; respect for and value of diversity; learning-friendly environment; effective transitions throughout the different educational stages and to work; recognition of partnerships and monitoring.

The **General Comment No. 6 on equality and non-discrimination**, from the abovementioned committee, is also relevant to the discussion. It stresses that "the failure of some States parties to provide students with disabilities - including students with visible and invisible disabilities and those who experience multiple forms of discrimination or intersectional discrimination - with equal access to mainstream school with inclusive and quality education is discriminatory" (United Nations, 2018 [15]).

3.5 United Nations sustainable development goals

Education is also one of the **UN's sustainable development goals** (United Nations, 2015a [16]). Specifically, sustainable development goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The sustainable development goals aim to mobilize efforts in order to fight inequalities with the commitment of several countries from 2015 to 2030, and education is crucial to foster this change. It is intended to accomplish, among others, the target 4.5, to "by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including **persons with disabilities**, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations". To help achieve this objective, the Incheon **Declaration for Education 2030** was adopted in 2015, setting out a new vision for education for the next fifteen years (United Nations, 2015b [17]). In line with the sustainable development goals, UNESCO released a **Guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education**, to support countries in embedding inclusion and equity in educational policy (United Nations, 2017 [18]).

Aware of the importance of measuring the progress of the sustainable development goals through data-based evidence, the United Nations established indicators that make measuring the path of development possible. For target 4.5, there are parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated. Nonetheless, the data associated with the target 4.5 is still insufficient, as it may be observed in the chart below:
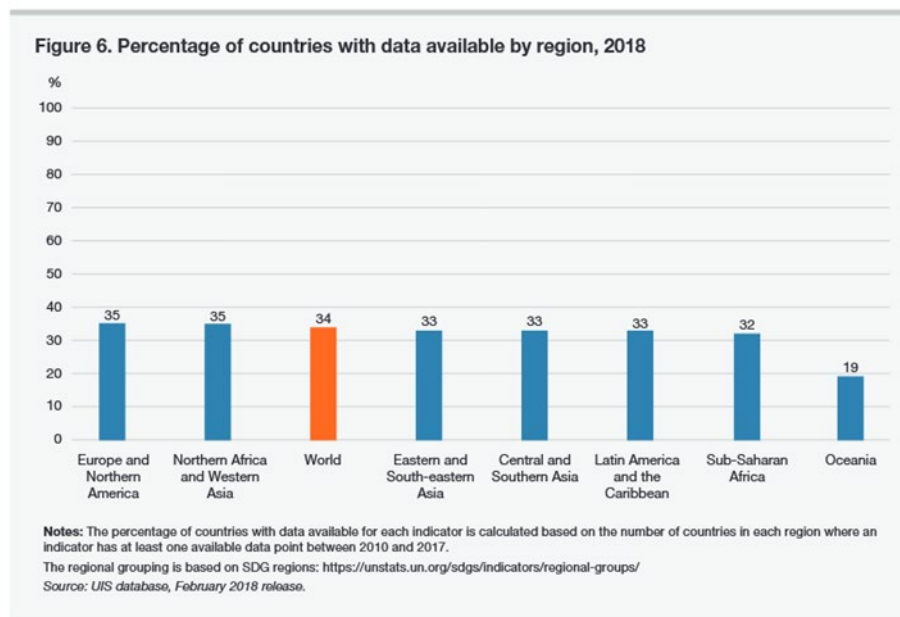
Figure 6. Percentage of countries with data available by region, 2018

Notes: The percentage of countries with data available for each indicator is calculated based on the number of countries in each region where an indicator has at least one available data point between 2010 and 2017.
The regional grouping is based on SDG regions: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/
Source: UIS database, February 2018 release.

Figure 1: Percentage of countries with data avalible for the UN's indicators ; (Source : http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/sdg4-data-book-2018-en.pdf)

Even though Europe is one of the regions with the highest percentage of data available for the indicators of the target 4.5, not even half of its countries release this information. It also draws attention that there is no available data regarding persons with disabilities or the other groups of the target, aside from gender[1].

3.6 Other relevant documents

In 2013, the Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was dedicated to the right of persons with disabilities to education, in which "inclusive education has been acknowledged as the most appropriate modality for States to guarantee universality and non-discrimination in the right to education". It also mentions the "no-rejection clause", according to which no student can be rejected from general education on the basis of disability. The referred clause has immediate effect and is reinforced by reasonable accommodation.

Finally, the General Assembly submitted a report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Empowering children with disabilities for the enjoyment of their human rights, including through inclusive education (United Nations, 2019 [19]). Other documents regarding the right to education in United Nation's framework are worth mentioning: World declaration on education for all and framework for action to meet basic learning needs (United Nations, 1990 [20]), Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

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[1] According to the information available at: https://sdg-tracker.org/quality-education#targets, in 14/03/2019.

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Agreement Number: 2017-3338/001-001

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(United Nations, 1993 [21]), Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (United Nations, 1995 [22]), the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education of persons with disabilities (United Nations, 2007 [23]) and the Report on Equality and non-discrimination under article 5 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2016b [24]).

Moreover, the Quality of Life model, analysed throughout the Chapter III, is a crucial indicator to verify the results of inclusive education for each student, as well as a guide to stablish the cryteria to evaluate the students' progress (Verdugo, 2009).

Altogether, these documents allow us to understand how the right to inclusive education has developed in the United Nations' system and its importance to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, not only as a right itself, but also a means for attaining other rights.

4. European Union (EU)

4.1 The European Union legal order: instruments of Union law

The EU is a community based on law: it is a creation of law and pursues its objectives by means of law. Hence, every action taken by the EU is founded on treaties that have been approved by all its Member States. The Treaties set out the EU's objectives, rules for EU institutions, how decisions are made and the relationship between the EU and its Member States.

One of its main treaties related to human rights is the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** (European Union, 2000 [25]), which refers to, among other issues, persons with disabilities, non-discrimination, human dignity and education. The provisions of the Charter are addressed to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity. This principle seeks to safeguard the ability of the Member States to take decisions and action and authorises intervention by the Union when the objectives of an action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, but can be better achieved at Union level (European Union [26]).

This principle applies to the right to education, because EU countries are responsible for their own education and training systems, but the European Union helps them set joint goals and share good practices on the issue, playing a supporting role. According to Art. 165 of the **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union** (TFEU), the Community "shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States, through actions such as promoting the mobility of citizens, designing joint study programmes, establishing networks, exchanging information or teaching languages of the European Union." (European Union, 2007 [27]).

In 2017, the Council of the European Union adopted the **Conclusions on Inclusion in Diversity to achieve a High Quality Education For All**, in which it underlines that "ensuring inclusive high quality education should be seen in a life-long perspective covering all aspects of education. It should be available and accessible to all learners of all ages, including those facing challenges, such as those with special needs or **who have a disability**, those originating from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, migrant backgrounds or geographically depressed areas or war-torn zones, regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation" (European Union, 2017b [28]).

The same year, the Commission also presented its new strategy to support high quality, inclusive and future-oriented school and higher education. The initiatives outlined the EU's support to help Member States and education providers take the steps needed to improve opportunities for all young people in Europe, helping to build fair and resilient societies. The Commission identifies areas where action is urgently needed and how EU support can help its countries address the current challenges, especially in three priority areas: raising the quality and inclusiveness of schools; supporting excellent teachers and school leaders and improving the governance of school education systems. Furthermore, among the main goals of the renewed EU agenda for higher education, it is building inclusive higher education systems.

Despite the efforts to boost inclusive education, the EU still has challenges to overcome, as EASPD pointed out: "the EU could do more to fulfil the right to inclusive education and should lead by example as recommended by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the EU, starting with the European Schools. A first step is to more actively promote trainings and programmes which would help staff to succeed in achieving inclusive education and to encourage Member States to focus on transition from segregated education systems to mainstream schools" (EASPD, 2015 [29]).

The aforementioned documents are not the only ones regarding inclusive education in European Union framework. Other relevant documents are: a thematic publication on the **Special Needs Education in Europe** (European Union, 2003 [30]); **Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes** (European Union, 2012 [31]); **Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education** (European Union, 2015 [32]); a communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions on **Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture** (European Union, 2017d [33]); a position paper from the Council of Europe on **Fighting school segregation in Europe through inclusive education** (European Union, 2017 [34]); **Council recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning** (European Union, 2018a [35]) and **Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching** (European Union, 2018b [36]).

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4.2 European Union and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was the first human rights treaty ratified by a regional organization, the European Union. Likewise, all of its State members have also ratified it. EU, however, has not ratified the Optional Protocol of the Convention. Consequently, it does not recognize the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals subject to its jurisdiction who claim to be victims of a violation by that State Party.

The EU relies on the **European Disability Strategy 2010-2020** as the most important instrument to support the EU's implementation of the CRPD.

All States parties to the CRPD are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights are being implemented. The Committee examines each report and shall make such suggestions and general recommendations on the report as it may consider appropriate and shall forward these to the State Party concerned. The Committee made the first recommendations to EU in 2015.

Regarding education, the Committee stated that: "The Committee is concerned that in different European Union member States, many boys and girls, and adults with disabilities cannot access inclusive, quality education in line with the Convention. The Committee recommends that the European Union evaluate the current situation and take measures to facilitate access to and enjoyment of inclusive, quality education for all students with disabilities in line with the Convention and include disability-specific indicators in the Europe 2020 strategy when pursuing the education target."

When analysing the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, the Committee expressed its concern, since the mid-term assessment of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which was due in 2015, had not yet been carried out and there were no clear benchmarks and guidelines on how the recommendations in the present concluding observations will be incorporated into the implementation of the strategy during the second half (2016-2020) of its term.

5. Conclusions

- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the greatest reference in terms of inclusive education in the international framework and the following documents adopted by its Committee guarantee the guidelines on the issue are always updated and in line with the needs of persons with disabilities.

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- Inclusive education goes far beyond reuniting children with and without disabilities at the same classroom, ensuring a diverse environment where the needs of the children with disabilities are met. It also must guarantee quality education to all children.
- The ratification of the Optional Protocol by a State party enables its citizens to submit communications regarding the violation of the right to inclusive education. To this date, however, no communication on the issue has been analysed by the Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities or the Committee on the rights of the child;
- The fact that the European Union has not ratified the Optional Protocol undermines the competences of the Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities in its territory and concerns the United Nations.

6. Summary

The chapter describes the international legal framework regarding the right to inclusive education, both in the United Nations and the European Union. It is possible to observe how the protection of this right has evolved throughout the years and how the idea of inclusive education as the best way to fulfil this right has emerged. As the international legal documents guarantee, inclusive education goes far beyond reuniting children with and without disabilities at the same classroom, ensuring a diverse environment where the needs of the children with disabilities are met.

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter I

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The other deliverables of the IE+ project can be found on the project webpage www.easpd.eu/en/content/promoting-inclusive-education

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Contents

1. Laws

This chapter explains which laws talk about inclusive education

in Europe and in the world.

To explain them, we will refer to the Convention

on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

of the United Nations.

The Convention is a law.

It has a list of rights like the right to work,

to play or to receive an education.

The United Nations is an organisation that unites

most countries in the world.

This Convention is from 2006.

1.1 Types of Laws

Many laws say that education

is a very important right.

These laws can be classified into 2 types:

- Binding law.

If a country signs these laws, it must obey them.

- Non-binding law.

There are documents that countries are not obliged to obey to.

But they are very important, and the countries must try to obey them.

Education is a social right.

This means that:

- Education is basic to having a dignified life.
- Each country must fulfil the right to education step by step.
- Each country must do everything possible to fulfil the right to education.

And that means investing as much money as possible.

Other basic rights are work, housing and health.

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1.2 Reasonable accommodation

These are changes and adaptations

so that people with disabilities

can have a good education.

The countries must do them.

If they do not do them, they are discriminating.

To discriminate is to treat someone badly or differently.

2. United Nations

The United Nations is an international organisation

that unites many countries.

It makes many laws to protect

the rights of individuals.

Some of the most important laws it makes

are called conventions.

It also has teams of people working

to make sure that the countries are obeying the conventions.

Those teams are called committees.

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For example: The Committee on the Rights

of Persons with Disabilities

is responsible for checking if the countries are obeying

the Convention on the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities.

2.1 First Laws

Education appears in many United Nations documents.

The right to education appears for the first time

in a document that is over 70 years old.

There were many documents over the years

that were talking about education.

But they did not talk about:

- Inclusive education
- Persons with disabilities

2.2 Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

is 17 years older than the Convention

on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is from 1989.

It is a legally binding law.

Remember: that means it is obligatory.

This law talks about education,

but it does not use the words "inclusive education."

Integration or inclusion?

In 1997, a debate was held

on the rights of children with disabilities.

This discussion made the difference

between inclusion and integration in the school clear:

Integration

Change the child

to fit in the school.

Inclusion

It changes the school and its surroundings

to educate children with and without disabilities.

It also takes into account their needs.

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General Comment 9

A document that talks about inclusive education.

It was made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2006.

This document says that inclusive education:

- It is a good or quality education.
- It is for all students.
- It takes diversity into account: each person has their own needs.
- With it, children with disabilities learn with children without disabilities.

2.3 Salamanca Statement

It is a historical document from 1994.

This document:

• Calls on governments to make education inclusive.

• Demands that all children with disabilities

   go to the same schools

   of children without disabilities.

This is then repeated by many other documents and laws.

This statement also gives many ideas.

For example, it proposes that schools should count on their communities.

That is, with what is around them:

families, neighbors, libraries, town halls...

2.4 General Comments of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The Committee of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

of the United Nations

has also published important documents

that talk about the right to education.

These documents are called General Comments.

General Comment 5 says that

persons with disabilities

can be better educated

if they learn in schools

with persons without disabilities.

General Comment 13 speaks

of the spaces where we learn.

For example: schools or universities.

It says they must be accessible

for everybody

and that each government is responsible for achieving it.

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2.5 The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

It is the most important law

about disability

we are going to talk about.

It is from 2006.

Until this law,

most people were focusing

on the limitations of persons with disabilities.

After the approval of this law,

the rights of the persons with disabilities

became the focus.

This law says that inclusive education

is a right and it is the best way

to achieve the right to education.

It also says that inclusive education

must be good and quality education.

If not, it is not inclusive education.

According to this law,

the education that segregates

children with disabilities

and children without disabilities

is not good education.

This law is also binding.

Remember: this means that the countries that signed it

have an obligation to obey it.

This was the first binding law

that talks about inclusive education.

General Comment 6

This document is from the Committee on the Rights

of Persons with Disabilities.

And it also talks about education.

It says that:

- The education system must do more

  to reach every single student

  regardless of their disability.

- There are many barriers to get

  inclusive education:

  discrimination on the grounds of disability,

  the lack of interest from politicians

  and the way of thinking about disability.

- There are millions of people

  who are discriminated against because of their disability.

  Their right to education is not fulfilled.

  They are excluded from education,

  separated from persons without disabilities.

The most important thing it says is that

if countries do not promote inclusive education

what they are doing is to discriminate.

This document is very useful

to fight for inclusive education.

He gives very important recommendations:

- Participation is essential.

  Governments must ask the opinion

  of persons with disabilities

  to achieve inclusive education.

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- The entire education system must be changed

  so that children can participate.

- The right to inclusive education

  is of the children,

  not their parents.

- Inclusive education believes in dignity,

  abilities and autonomy

  of every student.

- There must be enough teachers.

- Learning must become

  easier to understand.

  For example: having books that are easy to read

  or to use more videos.

2.6 Sustainable Development Goals

These are goals that governments must achieve

to end poverty.

They are also called SDG.

There are 17 targets to achieve by 2030.

It is a proposal of the United Nations.

Inclusive education is in goal 4.

It is also fundamental to achieve

the rest of the targets.

It says the inequality in education

suffered by women or persons with disabilities

must end.

These Goals give a series of data

to be achieved

to move towards inclusive education.

To achieve all this,

there are also 2 interesting documents:

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- The Incheon Declaration of 2015.

- A guide to ensuring education and equity

  in education. It is from 2017.

2.7 Other important documents

A report from the United Nations in 2013

says that inclusive education

is the best one not to discriminate.

It also prohibits a student

to be rejected because of a disability.

Other report from 2019 says that:

- The education system must be accessible.

- Education must change a lot to be inclusive.

- Persons with great support

  needs must be included

  For example: persons who have difficulties to speak.

- The support given in schools

  in which there are only children with disabilities

  must be given in all schools.

- Governments must stop giving money

    to special education

    and give it to the regular schools instead.

    Little by little, all children must study

    in the same schools.

There are other important documents:

- World Declaration on Education for All.

    It is from 1990.

- The rules for equal opportunities.

    It is from 1993.

- The United Nations Action Plan

    to educate on human rights.

    This action plan began in 1995 and ended in 2004.

- The Report on Equality and Non-Discrimination.

    It was written by the Committee on the Rights

    of Persons with Disabilities.

    It is from 2016.

All these documents are important

to understand inclusive education.

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If the right to education is fulfilled,

it makes it easier for other rights

to be fulfilled

like the right to employment or to culture.

3. European Union

3.1 The laws of the European Union

The European Union is composed

by some European countries like Spain

and their governments.

It has mandatory laws

that all countries must obey.

We also name the European Union by the letters EU.

It most important document

is the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

This charter says that all persons have the same rights.

It is from 2000.

The European Union helps countries

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to fulfill these rights.

All the countries of the European Union

are responsible for the education

and the training of their citizens.

And the European Union helps them to achieve this.

It also has laws to provide quality education.

All countries must work together to achieve it.

That is what Article 165 of the Treaty

on the Functioning of the European Union says.

The Council of the European Union also said in 2017

that inclusive education

must also be for people with little money,

people who are of a different **sexual orientation**,

people of other faiths

or fleeing from a war.

> **Sexual orientation**
>
> Attraction to a person from a different sex or the same sex.
>
> For example: a woman

The European Union also says

that education in the university

must also be inclusive.

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The European Union thinks that there are 3 things

that needs to be changed urgently:

1. Improving the quality of education

and making it inclusive.

2. Supporting teachers

so they can improve their teaching.

3. Change how schools are run.

The European Union is going to work on these 3 things.

There are organizations that say the European Union

must do more to make education inclusive.

For example: support countries

so that special education schools

are turned into inclusive schools.

There are many more important documents

of the European Union that talk about education.

Some of them are:

- A publication on special needs in Europe.

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It is from 2003.

- The Paris Declaration, which speaks of freedom and tolerance.

  It is from 2015.

- A Council Recommendation that says

  that continuous learning is very important.

  It is from 2018.

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3.2 The European Union and the Convention

The European Union signed the Convention

on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Every country in the European Union has also signed this convention,

so they have a double obligation to obey it.

But the European Union did not sign the Optional Protocol,

a document that allows people to file complaints.

It means the European Union does not allow

that we make complaints to the Committee

if the European Union does not follow the law itself.

If the European Union signed this document,

anyone could report cases

in which the right to inclusive education is not fulfilled

in the European Union.

So far, the United Nations has not analyzed

any complaints about the right to education.

It is important to report

when the right to inclusive education

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is not fulfilled.

The European Union has a plan to obey the Convention.

That plan is called the European Disability Strategy.

The plan started in 2010 and ends in 2020.

The plan says that inclusive education must be achieved

and with supports designed for each student.

All European Union countries

and the European Union

must make reports that explain

if they fulfill the rights of persons with disabilities.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

reviews the reports and gives recommendations for improvement.

The Committee published its first recommendation

to European Union in 2015.

It said that in the European Union

the right to inclusive education is not fulfilled

and there is a lot to be improved.

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4. Conclusions

The Convention is the most important law

to demand inclusive education.

Thanks to the Convention,

other education laws take into account

the needs of people with disabilities.

Inclusive education is not only

to put students with and without disabilities

in the same schools.

It must also:

- Be a quality education
- Give the necessary support

   for everyone to learn.

5. Summary

This chapter explains the laws

that talk about inclusive education

in the United Nations and the European Union.

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Inclusive education is the best way

to get the right to education.

Inclusive education is not only

put in the same schools

to students with

and without disabilities.

It also must:

- Be a quality education.
- Give the necessary support

  for everyone to learn.

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Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

PROMOTING POSITIVE
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Contents

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

1. Introduction

Poor attitudes are a key barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education. To support a shift in the mindset and approach of key decision-makers in the field of education, this chapter will support individuals to understand and overcome fears and stigma linked to inclusive education.

The achievement of inclusive education cannot be seen as an isolated phenomenon, rather it can only be understood and realised as part of a complex process in which the attitudes of people in society must change.

This chapter will offer four different elements of a broader paradigm shift, that aims to bring persons with an intellectual disability into a position of real citizens in our society.

2. The "socio-ecological approach"

A first dynamic factor that we want to refer to in this complex process is called "the socio-ecological approach" of intellectual disability.

This approach starts from the idea that a person and an environment do not exist independently from one another. This basic idea inspired the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to introduce a multidimensional model of human functioning as shown in following scheme: (Schalock et al., 2010 [42])
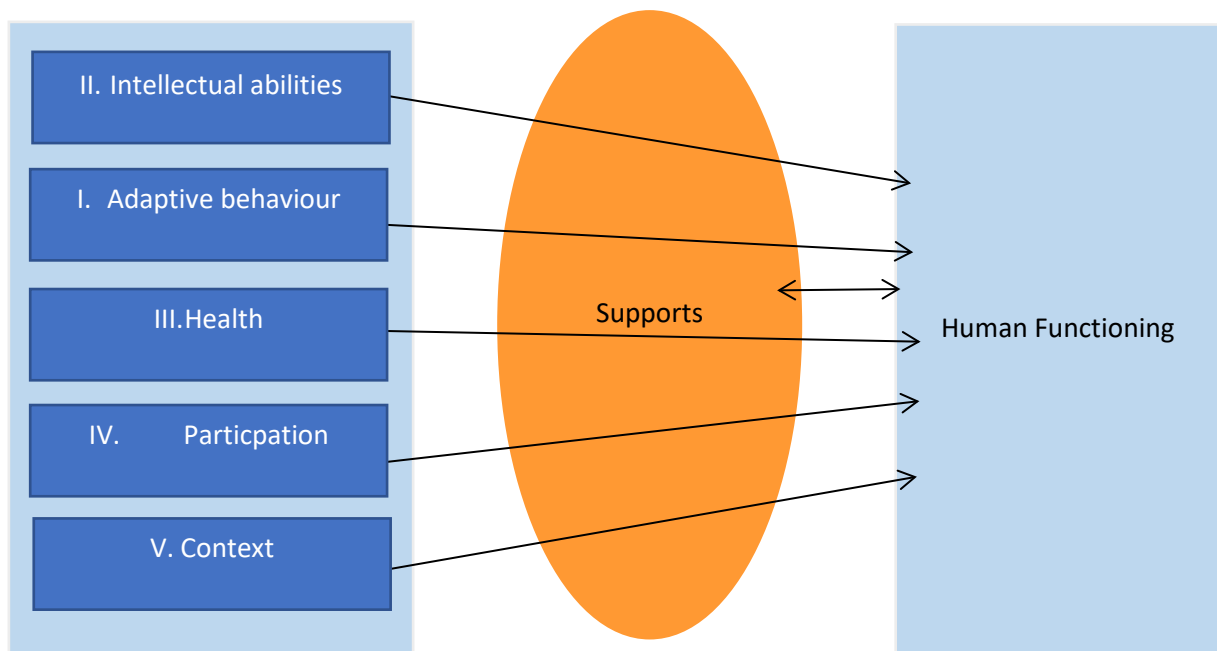
The above framework of human functioning recognises that the phenomenon of Intellectual Disability involves a dynamic, reciprocal engagement among intellectual ability, adaptive behaviour, health, participation, context and individualised supports. Persons with an intellectual disability experience problems in every domain and this has repercussions on their functioning in their context and in society.

What is different in a socio-ecological approach of intellectual disability?

This model offers enormous opportunities to make a paradigm shift: going from a perspective on intellectual disability as a personal characteristic (a defect within a person) to intellectual disability as the **(mis)fit between the person's capacities and the contexts in which the person functions.** (Schalock et al., 2010, p. 13 [42]) It turns away from being a problem that resided within a person to activate motion and, instead, focusing on the fit between a person's capacities, their strengths, and the demands of the context in which he or she might live, learn, work or play. This understanding, in turn, introduces a **supports model** that challenges us to use our imagination to figure out not only how to increase personal capacity, but also to modify the environment and context and to put in place supports that will enable people to function successfully in typical environments. An intellectual disability is situated in the gap that exists when a person is participating in daily activities at work, at school, in the family, in the

neighbourhood… It is necessary to provide support to maximalise the participation of persons with an intellectual disability.

It is not that Jack is not able to use public transport because he cannot read. An app on his telephone can help him see if he is on the right bus. His parents have taught him to be as independent as possible and that coming out and being in the world is important. In order to go to work he has moved near the city center, so there are a lot of opportunities for public transport, close to his door.

It is not that Jenny is not able to work with small children because she does not always see dangers properly. Jenny is working as a co-worker in childcare facility and she started to help with the smallest children. She took care of the fruit and made sure all tables and eating chairs were cleaned after eating. Gradually she became more and more involved with the children and also learned to give them a bottle and change their diaper. Jenny is never alone, there is always one colleague she works together with and who is available for questions and help, if Jenny needs it.

Let us explain the model of human functioning of the AAIDD.

I. In this model **intellectual abilities** are seen as a concept that helps to understand and to clarify why individuals differ in their ability to understand complex ideas, to adapt effectively to their environments, to learn from experience, to engage in various forms of reasoning, and to overcome obstacles by thinking and communicating (Schalock et al., 2010 p. 15 [42])

II. **Adaptive behaviour** is understood as a collection of social, practical and conceptual skills that have been learned and performed in people's everyday lives. A person's strengths and limitations in adaptive skills should be documented within the context of ordinary community environments typical of the person's age peers and tied to the person's individualised needs for support. (Schalock et al., 2010 p. 16 [42])

III. For people with intellectual disabilities the effects of **health** and mental health on functioning range from greatly facilitating to greatly inhibiting. (Schalock et al., 2010 p. 16 [42])

IV. **Participation** refers to roles and interactions in the areas of home living, work, education, leisure, spiritual and cultural activities. Participation includes social roles that are valid considered normative for a specific age group. Participation is best reflected in the direct observation of engagement and the degree of involvement in everyday activities. (Schalock et al., 2010 p. 16 [42])

V. **Context** represents the ecological perspective of this model. It refers to the immediate social setting of a person, but also the neighbourhood, the community or organisations providing education and supports; and finally, also the overarching patterns of culture and society are included (Schalock et al., 2010 p. 17 [42]).

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Supports are resources and strategies that aim to promote the development, the education, the interests and personal well-being of a person. There is clear evidence that human functioning is facilitated by the congruence between individuals and their environments. Facilitating such congruence involves determining the profile and intensity of needed support for a particular person vis à vis certain contexts. (Schalock et al., 2010, p. 18 [42])

Jeremy grew up in a family context where he was constantly stimulated to think about politics. He learned skills that he could use in his daily life. This way he can read and understand an accessible newspaper. In this newspaper the points of view of the different political parties were explained. At the recent elections he cast his vote with great enthusiasm. In the polling booth he could count on the appropriate support of his mother to cast his vote correctly.

Helen is studying to become a kitchen assistant in secondary education. Together with the supporter and the teacher a step-by-step plan was drawn up and the use of the different machines in the kitchen was explained. She can follow this step-by-step plan to get all the things she needs together and in the end leave her kitchen neat and tidy. Where all students cook a full menu once a week, Helen chooses one dish. She needs more time and works together with another student in the classroom. Helen is always allowed to watch a video of how the dish is prepared first. She sees this vividly, not only verbally through the teacher's instructions. The classmate notes all the steps and then they work together.

The understanding of the multidimensional nature of human functioning of persons with intellectual disability offers a lot of **advantages**. These include:

- The model recognises the biological and social complexities associated with intellectual disability.
- The model offers opportunities to capture the most essential characteristics of an individual person.
- The model establishes an ecological (person x environment) framework for the provision of supports (Schalock et al., 2010 p. **19 [42]).**

In this way the socio-ecological model positions supports as a **bridge** between an individual and his/her talents and the demands of an environment (Jim Thompson, 2016 [43])

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

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ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
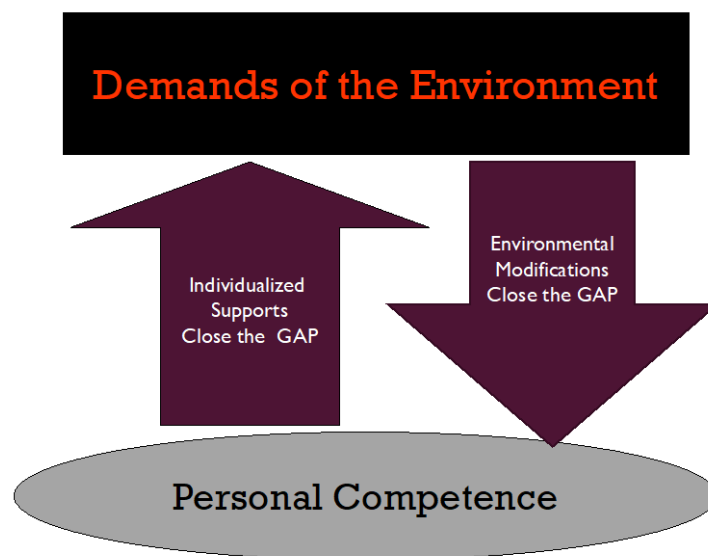
Patrick needs to take the bus to his meeting. He is used to going from his hometown to the city by train and then he takes a bus to the meeting centre. He gets on, but the bus is stopped by road works. Everybody needs to get of the bus and walk a few minutes to go catch another bus. Patrick is panicing: why did the bus stop? Where is he? He is not able to figure out what to do and to just follow the general instructions the driver gives all the people on the bus. The driver goes towards Patrick who stays in his seat and asks him to get off. The driver asks another person on the bus to accompany Patrick to the right bus. The woman takes Patrick with her to the next bus. On the bus Patrick calls his colleagues who are also attending the meeting. Can they pick him up at the bus stop? That way, he will know where to get off.

William is in class. He has 3 folders with 3 different colours: yellow is for maths, green is for languages and blue is for writing. When the other pupils need to take their materials: they have a notebook for each subject. This is not possible for William to manage. By making it accessible for him, we make sure that he is able to understand what the teacher wants and that he can provide his own learning material when needed. William sits in a group of 4 children, so he can see what they are doing and how they start working. This helps him translate the messages of the teacher about what she expects the pupils to do. Sometimes the teacher needs to address him individually in order to get what she asks. Two times a week William gets support from a special educator. She provides adaptations of the learning material so William can participate with his peers. She also installed a buddy system for the playground so that William knows what to do and who to play with. She helps the teacher to see how William comes to learn and what is necessary to do in order to support his learning.

Highlights:

- The socio-ecological approach starts from the idea that a person and an environment do not exist independently from one another. People with ID experience a **mismatch** between their personal competency and environmental demands.
- Understanding intellectual disability through a social-ecological lens is more useful than through a deficit lens because it puts the burden on settings/activities to be more **accessible** and human service systems to provide **sufficient supports**, than on the person to change/transform.
- The context in which an individual is situated is a vital component of this approach. We need to think about **reasonable acccommodations,** so that the person is able to participate in that context.

3. Quality of Life

The Quality of Life (QOL) framework starts from some very important premises (Verdugo et. al. 2005 [44]). First, QOL is **important for all people** and should be thought of in the same way for all people, including individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Second, measuring QOL is required to **understand the degree** to which people experience a life of quality and personal well-being. It is not a matter of yes or no, but of nuances: less and more. We can work towards more quality of life on several specific domains.

Third, measuring QOL reflects the **blending of two meanings** of quality of life: the one which is commonly understood by human beings all over the world and the one which has become valued by individuals as they live their lives within their unique environments. The personal and subjective understanding of quality of life is also valued in this framework.

4. Universal Design for Learning

Most students with intellectual disabilities get personal support and reasonable accommodations. At the same time – if we want to stay within the logic of the framework of a socio-ecological model – we should try to find ways to design new approaches for all learners and adaptations to environments and systems as a counterbalance for the purely individualised way of thinking and working.

IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

IE+
PROMOTING POSITIVE
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

… Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is promoted as a philosophy, framework, and set of principles for designing and delivering flexible approaches to teaching and learning that addresses student diversity within the classroom context… (Capp, 2017, p. 791 [45])

Universal design is originally a term from architecture. It means that buildings are designed in such a way that they are accessible to everyone. By taking into account the needs of all possible users from the outset, fewer adjustments are needed afterwards. For example, a building is fitted with a staircase with a sloping surface and with doors that open automatically. Visitors with reduced mobility, but also parents with pushchairs, visitors carrying luggage... will thus have easier access to the building.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines universal design as "the design of products, environments, programmes and services which can be used by everyone in the widest sense without modification or special design" (CRPD, Art. 2).

The underlying principles of UDL provide us with guidelines for designing and implementing instruction in a flexible manner that meets the needs of diverse learners, whilst improving the learning process for all students. The philosophy of UDL is based on the idea that there are multiple ways of representing knowledge (principle one), multiple ways students can demonstrate their understanding (principle two), and multiple ways of engaging students (principle three). (Capp, 2017, p. 792 [45])

Daisy, together with the other children in the classroom, learns about the blood circulation and which organs are vital in our body. Daisy has a large print with a human body, the heart and the lungs. She has stuck a red and blue strip on the body with the caps of bottles. These are the veins and arteries. This drawing hangs at the front of the classroom. The children of the class use the drawing to name all the organs and explain how the heart works.

Madeline needs a clear structure so that there are not too many unpredictable things in her path. In the morning the teacher starts with a schedule of what the day will look like and what the class will do. This daily schedule gives Madeline a handle, but also appears to work for the other children in the class to have a better grip on what will happen on a particular day.

By systematically offering different options, UDL creates easier learning outcomes for all students. **Accessibility is achieved through a total approach**: not only the accommodation, furnishing and equipment of the classrooms is optimised, but also the learning materials are developed differently, activities are planned and organized more meticulously, assignments are designed more thoughtfully... UDL takes a flexible approach to objectives, methods, materials and forms of evaluation, but continues to set the bar high for everyone. By taking the diversity of the classroom (including students with a mental disability) into account right from the creation, UDL works efficiently and cost-efficiently and avoids adjustments that are burdensome and stigmatising.

IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

IE+
PROMOTING POSITIVE
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In order to achieve this, teachers are trained to work with individually-adapted curricula and learning pathways. They have a clear view on the learning objectives so that they can attune them to the different possibilities of their students. **Teachers do not do this alone**. They can turn to colleagues, supporters, parents, management or the student himself/herself in order to give this the best possible shape together.

UDL is mostly represented through the following scheme:

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

I. Provide Multiple Means of **Representation**	II. Provide Multiple Means of **Action and Expression**	III. Provide Multiple Means of **Engagement**
1: Provide options for perception	**4: Provide options for physical action**	**7: Provide options for recruiting interest**
1.1 Offer ways of customizing the display of information	4.1 Vary the methods for response and navigation	7.1 Optimize individual choice and autonomy
1.2 Offer alternatives for auditory information	4.2 Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies	7.2 Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
1.3 Offer alternatives for visual information		7.3 Minimize threats and distractions
2: Provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols	**5: Provide options for expression and communication**	**8: Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence**
2.1 Clarify vocabulary and symbols	5.1 Use multiple media for communication	8.1 Heighten salience of goals and objectives
2.2 Clarify syntax and structure	5.2 Use multiple tools for construction and composition	8.2 Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge
2.3 Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols	5.3 Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance	8.3 Foster collaboration and community
2.4 Promote understanding across languages		8.4 Increase mastery-oriented feedback
2.5 Illustrate through multiple media		
3: Provide options for comprehension	**6: Provide options for executive functions**	**9: Provide options for self-regulation**
3.1 Activate or supply background knowledge	6.1 Guide appropriate goal-setting	9.1 Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation
3.2. Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships	6.2 Support planning and strategy development	9.2 Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies
3.3 Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation	6.3 Facilitate managing information and resources	9.3 Develop self-assessment and reflection
3.4 Maximize transfer and generalization	6.4 Enhance capacity for monitoring progress	
Resourceful, knowledgeable learners	**Strategic, goal-directed learners**	**Purposeful, motivated learners**

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APA Citation: CAST (2011). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.0*. Wakefield, MA: Author.

UDL is defined within the literature as a form of proactive differentiation, which contrasts with retrospective forms of adjustments. Within the traditional lesson planning paradigm, a classroom teacher refers first to the curriculum when making decisions; if a student does not make progress, then retrospective adjustments are made. Within the UDL paradigm, the student is of primary concern. As such, it is fundamentally about valuing diversity. It advocates that a classroom teacher first thinks of the needs of the students within the classroom, then goes to the curriculum. This process leads to success for all as the teacher proactively plans to the edges of the classroom, rather than waiting for students to fail. (Capp, 2017, 793 [45])

When Miss Ann prepares her schedule for math, she thinks about what the students in her class need to participate in the fracture exercise. She sees a number of children who are still going to work with concrete material: they are going to divide cakes, they are going to divide ballpoint

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

pens in a container with four equal sliders... Other pupils get to work on paper and practice with the verbal pronunciation: one of the ... equal parts. It's a question of imprinting how a fracture really works. Another group is already working with the concepts of 'counter' and 'denominator' and is able to recognise the different fractions and write them correctly. Miss Ann foresees several possibilities to work with the same material. By planning this in advance, she does not experience any students who cannot participate at the moment, and Lester can start working with the very concrete material as well.

It is important to understand that working with the basics of Universal Design for Learning AND the rights to get **"reasonable accommodations"** is in perfect harmony with art 24 of the UNCRPD.

Reasonable accommodationss are **concrete measures** that a pupil with specific educational needs to be able to learn in regular school. They eliminate the limiting influence of an inappropriate (school) environment on a pupil's participation. The school has the duty to include reasonable accommodations in its care policy. Reasonable accommodations in the educational context are measures in which the educational needs of the pupil are central, but in which the care of the educational professionals are the starting point. Reasonable accommodations are always made to measure. These can be compensatory, remedial, differentiating or dispensatory measures.

Emir needs extra instruction in between. It is ensured that he is close to the teacher. From time to time he can use a buddy in the class who can give him some extra explanations, or he can do the first two exercises together with him. Emir, together with a number of other students, also receives extra instruction about things that were not clear when the support person comes out of the support network.

Legally, one understands "reasonable accommodations":

- Are necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments.
- Are not disproportionate and do not impose an unnecessary burden.
- Ensure that the right to participate in school and in society is guaranteed.

How can one know whether an adaptation is a good adaptation?

- Effectiveness: is there really participation?
- Equivalence: is participation equivalent?
- Independence: can the pupil participate independently?
- Safety: is the safety of the pupil with specific educational needs guaranteed?

Tina has a severe form of epilepsy. Sometimes she can only participate in the morning because fatigue threatens to provoke seizures. In such a period, it is ensured that every now and then a WO lesson and/or musical education is planned in the morning. This way Tina also gets the opportunity to participate in these lessons.

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

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ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

When formulating reasonable accommodations, you always start **from the what the general curriculum has to offer to all students**. A teacher wants to achieve maximum learning efficiency for all students, while taking into account their possibilities and limitations. A teacher starts from the possibilities of his/her students and the communalities they always share. The focus can not only be on what a student does not (yet) succeed in: teachers and educational professionals try to look at what is possible. It is important to have clear expectations, even with reasonable accommodations. A teacher also wants to teach a student with an intellectual disability something and make sure he/she makes progress. A teacher does not only use the common curriculum as a checklist of what each student has to achieve. There is flexibility in the learning goals and activities according to the capacities of each student. **Reasonable accommodations can be made to ensure that the student can be involved in a meaningful way but does not have to achieve the same curriculum in the same way and at the same pace as the other students in the class.**

For both primary and secondary education this means that there is always a focus on differentiating and remedying and only in the second instance on compensating and dispensing. Within an Individually Adapted Curriculum (which most students with an intellectual disability need), alternatives are sought in the first place before deleting a goal or a number of goals for a student. **Participation within the classroom is paramount.** There is always a search for how the student can connect to the lessons and activities of his/her class. How can the student participate in his/her own way? What contributions can the student make within the classroom? This requires looking with an open mind at the possibilities of students. Every contribution, however limited, can be seen as a valuable and indispensable contribution.

If reasonable accommodations are used during teaching, the pupil also has the right to use these adjustments for **tests and/or evaluations**. If reasonable adjustments have been recognised for a particular student, then this should be followed by fellow teachers in successive years. Reasonable accommodations do not take into account whether the teacher is happy with them or not, whether they want to use it or not. However, the support needs of a teacher are looked at in order to respond to them. What does this teacher need to apply this adaptation to this pupil, in this classroom?

Teachers in regular education have a central role as the final managers of each pupil's learning process, but at the same time they also have many questions and uncertainties about their pupil with specific educational needs. The image of the classroom teacher on his/her island who wants or has to grub up the classroom with all pupils on his/her own remains very persistent. It is up to the professionals who work with the pupils to find creative ways to give all pupils the opportunity to participate, to experience appreciation and success, to see their contribution acknowledged and to let them grow. In order to achieve this, **collaborative teaming** is needed between the different parties involved: care coordinator/pupil counsellor, supporters, therapists, parents, pupils themselves... Together they think about how reasonable accommodations can be made to maximise participation in the classroom. At the same time,

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they also think about how the support can be used in the best possible way depending on the pupil and the teacher in the classroom. This is not an obvious task. We see that up to now the main focus has been on pupil-oriented support. The mindshift in thinking and acting requires much more cooperation between the teacher and the supporter(s) within the possibilities and limits of the regular classroom context. It is important that the supporter, together with the teacher, looks for what he or she needs and in this way addresses the action embarrassment from teachers to pupils with specific educational needs. This does not mean that they can solve everything immediately. It takes time to find out what really works for the pupil, for the teacher, in the classroom... It often comes down to putting the teacher in his/her power. Confirmation is needed: am I doing well? It is about appreciating what they are doing and at the same time confronting them from time to time with what can be adjusted.

Jason finds it hard to concentrate. He is allowed to sit at the front close to the board and to the teacher. The teacher often offers him visual support. He has headphones to shut out some stimuli. If it is difficult to work in the classroom, he can work in the hallway. The teacher offers him the exercises in pieces, which makes him progress faster and less likely to lose himself in the assignment. Jason gets the schedule printed out on his couch and follows it with a whistle pen, while the teacher applies it to the group at the front.

Highlights:
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) promotes a set of principles for **designing and delivering flexible approaches to teaching and learning**, that address student diversity within the classroom context.
- The UDL Guidelines underline the need for learning opportunities to provide **multiple means of representation, action and expression and engagement**.
- Working with the basics of UDL as well as the rights to get "**reasonable accommodations**" is key to realising art 24 of the UNCRPD.

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5. Evidence-based practices connected to inclusive education

Inclusive education is based on a human rights framework. In some countries and environments citizens stay suspicious about the question if (especially for children with intellectual disabilities) the regular school is the best option.

Instead of getting into a neverending discussion about "what is best" based on ideological principles, more and more scholars try to build a positive perspective by bringing in "the

IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

evidence-based" way of thinking about good practices to the field of inclusive education. (Nelson and Campbell, 2017 [46])

The evidence discussed above can be situated on two different levels: a practice level (looking for the best teaching methods to work with a diverse student group) and a system level (trying to get evidence about the outcomes of certain ways of organising school systems). We will discuss them both.

Evidence informed methods of teaching that can be used in practice were collected by David Mitchell who gathered (2014 [47]) 27 strategies available for a teacher or a school team. In his book the following strategies are discussed and illustrated with necessary research evidence.[1]

Each chapter provides strategies based on evidence from the most recent studies in the field, with the aim of facilitating high-quality learning and social outcomes for all learners in schools. Chapter topics include, Parent involvement and support, Review and practice, Assistive technology, Quality of indoor physical environment, Classroom climate and School-wide strategies.[2]

Research about the possible effects of inclusive education is scarce and inconclusive till now. We could gather some examples of research reviews that bring first attempts to bridge ideology with empirical evidence.

1. European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018. Evidence of the Link Between Inclusive Education and Social Inclusion: A Review of the Literature. (S. Symeonidou, ed.). Odense, Denmark [48]

Concerning education this reports concludes (p.14): …

Research indicates that:

- Inclusive education increases the **opportunities for peer interactions and for close friendships** between learners with and without disabilities.
- For social interactions and friendships to take place in inclusive settings, due consideration needs to be given to several elements that **promote learners' participation** (i.e. access, collaboration, recognition and acceptance).
- Learners with disabilities educated in inclusive settings may **perform academically and socially better** than learners educated in segregated settings.
- Attending and receiving **support within inclusive education** settings increases the likelihood of enrolling in higher education.

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[1] For a first introduction to this book go to:
https://www.routledgetextbooks.com/textbooks/_author/mitchell-9780415623230/
[2] To view all the chapters in full visit:
https://www.routledgetextbooks.com/textbooks/_author/mitchell-9780415623230/students.php

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

IE+
PROMOTING POSITIVE
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

2. Hehir, T., Grindal, T. Et. al. (2016). A summary of the evidence on Inclusive Education [49]

(p.26) …In this report we have reviewed evidence from more than 280 research studies conducted in 25 countries. We find consistent evidence that inclusive educational settings—those in which children with disabilities are educated alongside their non-disabled peers—can confer **substantial short- and long-term benefits for children's cognitive and social development**. This issue has been studied in many ways with many different populations of students. The magnitude of the benefits of inclusive education may vary from one study to another, but the overwhelming majority either report **significant benefits for students who are educated alongside their non-disabled peers**.

The research evidence also suggests that in most cases, being educated alongside a student with a disability does **not lead to negative consequences for non-disabled students**. In fact, research on effective inclusive schools indicates that inclusion can have important positive benefits for all students. What these effective inclusive schools have discovered, is that inclusion is not just about locating disabled and non-disabled students in the same classrooms. Effectively including a student with a disability requires teachers and school administrators to develop a better understanding of the individual strengths and needs of every student, not just those students with disabilities. Teachers in inclusive classrooms **cannot simply target the curriculum toward the average student.** This means providing students with multiple ways to engage with classroom material, multiple representations of curricular concepts, and multiple means for students to express what they have learned. This type of thoughtful, universally designed approach to learning benefits disabled and non-disabled students alike.

Yet, despite this evidence, students with disabilities **continue to face challenges** in accessing high quality education. Long-standing misconceptions regarding the capacities of children with intellectual, physical, sensory, and learning disabilities to benefit from formal education have, for generations, led educators to deny these students access to formal schooling. Even in countries where laws guarantee the educational rights of these students, educational options are sometimes limited, and services are provided through separate programmes that segregate disabled and non-disabled students.

3. Camila Brorup Dyssegaard & Michael Sogaard Larsen (2013). Evidence on Inclusion. Danish Clearinghouse for Educational Research. [50]

The outcome of the synthesis (p.45) thus suggests that it is possible to include special needs pupils in mainstream education and that inclusion can have a **positive effect on all the pupils' scholastic and social development**. Based on the presented study results we can generally summarise that successful inclusion **requires instruction/in-service training of teachers** in intervention initiatives that target pupils with special needs, access to resource persons who can supervise and offer direct support during teaching and knowledge of evidence-based teaching methods and intervention initiatives that target special needs pupils.

IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

4. A meta-review was organised and is reported in the following article: Aster Van Mieghem, Karine Verschueren, Katja Petry & Elke Struyf (2018) An analysis of research on inclusive education: a systematic search and meta review, International Journal of Inclusive Education, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2018.1482012 [51]

On page 10-11 we can find five different themes that have been studied already in review studies trying to connect inclusive education with evidence from research projects.

Five main themes were abstracted from the selected reviews, four are about substantive aspects of the implementation of IE: (1) attitudes towards IE; (2) teachers' professional development fostering IE; (3) practices enhancing IE and (4) participation of students with SEN. (5) The last theme refers to aspects of conducting research into IE.

The results relating to the first main theme show that in general the **attitudes of teachers towards IE are rather negative**, in contrast with the attitudes of parents and peers (Bates et al. 2015 [52]; de Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert 2010 [53], 2011 [54], 2012 [55]). Teachers, however, play a key role in the implementation of IE, so it is vital to positively influence their attitudes. Positive attitudes of teachers, parents and typically developing students are related to their knowledge of disabilities and their experience of IE (de Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert 2010 [53], 2011 [54], 2012 [55]; Qi and Ha 2012 [56]). Teachers, parents and typically developing students are **less positive towards children with behavioural problems and severe intellectual disability,** compared with children with physical disabilities and sensory impairments (de Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert 2010 [53], 2011 [54], 2012 [55]; Qi and Ha 2012 [56]).

Professional development of teachers, the second main theme, is found to be more effective if it focusses on specific student needs or disabilities, rather than on IE in general (Kurniawati et al. 2014 [57]). Training programmes considering specific teachers' concerns and their teaching context are the most helpful in encouraging change in teachers' practice (Kurniawati et al. 2014 [57]; Roberts and Simpson 2016 [58]; Qi and Ha 2012 [56]).

The third main theme is **additional support for teachers and support from peers for SEN students** which are two types of practice that enhance IE, and which can be provided by other teachers (co-teaching) or teaching assistants (Fluijt, Bakker, and Struyf 2016 [59]; Giangreco, Suter, and Doyle 2010 [60]; Qi and Ha 2012 [56]). This additional support aims to help teachers create more opportunities to directly instruct SEN students and focus more directly on their learning goals (Fluijt, Bakker, and Struyf 2016 [59]; Giangreco, Suter, and Doyle 2010 [60]). Peer support practices (cooperative learning, peer tutoring) increase the social skills of students with emotional and behavioural disorders and enhance the reading comprehension and phonological skills of students with reading and/or moderate learning disabilities (Kaya, Blake, and Chan 2015 [61]; Reichrath, de Witte, and Winkens 2010 [62]; Watkins et al. 2015 [63]).

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Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

The fourth main theme, **student participation**, focuses on the social and academic participation of SEN students within mainstream education. Social participation refers to the presence of mutual positive social contact or interaction, acceptance and friendships between students and their SEN peers (Bossaert et al. 2013 [64]; Koster et al. 2009 [65]). In general, students are open to friendships with SEN peers, but barriers (e.g. "caretaking" roles) should be considered (Bates et al. 2015 [52]; Qi and Ha 2012 [56]). Mixed classes with a minority of SEN students and a larger number of typically developing peers, fosters positive relationships (Parker et al. 2015 [66]; Pijl, Skaalvik, and Skaalvik 2010 [67]). In addition, within the selected reviews, there were remarkably few results reported on the academic participation of students compared to their social participation. Nevertheless, the higher achievements of SEN students regarding academic and vocational skills have been described (De Vroey, Struyf, and Petry 2016 [68]).

Highlights:
- Evidence based practices provide strategies based on evidence from the most recent experiences in the field of inclusive education.
- The evidence discussed can be situated on two different levels: a practice level and a system level.
- Current research is now bridging ideology with empirical evidence.
- Evidence-based practices provide strategies based on evidence from the most recent experiences in the field of inclusive education.

The final theme reflects on the **methodological aspects regarding research into IE**. It is argued that an operative definition of IE should be included in each study because of the ambiguity of the concept (Göransson and Nilholm 2014 [69]). In addition, aspects to enhance the practical impact of IE research (e.g. responsiveness) must be considered when conducting IE research (Grima-Farrell, Bain, and McDonagh 2011 [70]). It is necessary to clarify what we mean by inclusive education and how we want to keep the options open for students with an intellectual disability in regular settings. The domination of segregation is still very available in education systems and in the attitudes of educational professionals.

6. Conclusions

Inclusive education is a part of a complex process which involves the changing of attitudes towards disability and inclusion. In this chapter we have provided three different elements of a broader paradigm shift, that aims to bring persons with a (intellectual) disability into a position of real citizens in our society. These three elements include the adoption of the socio-ecological approach, which introduces a multidimensional model of human functioning; Universal Design for Learning, which promotes proactive differentiation and evidence-based practices.

IE+ Training Course: Chapter II
Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence
Based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education

7. Summary

- Poor attitudes are a key barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education.
- The socio-ecological model offers opportunities to capture the most essential characteristics of an individual person.
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) promotes a set of principles for designing and delivering flexible approaches to teaching and learning, that addresses student diversity within the classroom context.

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter III

Acknowledgements

Contents

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter III
Monitoring and the Quality of Life Index – Inclusive Education

IE+
PROMOTING POSITIVE
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-
BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

1. Introduction

In Chapter I we have seen the different documents (those that are legally-binding and those which are not) concerning inclusive education (IE). The main conclusion derived from Chapter I is that talking about IE means to talk about a right recognized for students with intellectual disability (ID) since the *United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) was passed (United Nations, 2006 [1]). The UNCRPD destinates its article 24 to the right to education, stating that States Party must ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning to ensure (United Nations, 2006 [1], p. 16):

(a) The full development of human potential

(b) The development by persons with disabilities to their fullest potential

(c) The effective participation by persons with disabilities in a free society.

The UNCRPD's article 24 (United Nations, 2006 [1]) highlights that IE must go beyond learning basic curricular competences (e.g. literacy or numeracy), putting the focus also in the globality of the student and providing students with disabilities with opportunities to reach their fullest development, and participate in their communities. Without this, it will not be possible to develop democratic societies. Reasonable accommodations and personalized supports are key tools to guarantee article 24 (Amor, Verdugo, Calvo, Navas, & Aguayo, 2018 [72]).

Chapter II, for its part, offers a framework from which to understand the personalized supports (and support needs) of students with ID to advance their inclusion. Such framework is the so-called 'supports paradigm' (Schalock et al., 2010 [42]). From the supports paradigm, ID is understood as a state of functioning characterized by a mismatch between the competencies of the student with ID and the environmental demands, defined by the contexts of participation and the activities to develop in such contexts. Applied to education, the supports paradigm considers students with ID as learners who experience ongoing mismatches between their competencies and the environmental demands posed by educational contexts and activities (i.e. learning or participation and social interactions in transition between activities and in the community). The key, from this paradigm, is to offer students with ID with the personalized supports they require to participate successfully in such activities and contexts on an equal foot with their peers without disabilities. In this sense, the goal of the provision of supports is to maximize the '*student x environment*' fit, and not to rehabilitate the student.

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Both chapters address the same critical point: IE must put the focus not only in the academic achievement, and, beyond access, participation, and learning, it must ensure the development of students with disabilities to their fullest potential. Chapter I refers to this point when highlighting the goals of article 24, while Chapter II describes a framework to understand and support students with ID. However, there is still a question that needs to be answered: How can we know if we are advancing or not in the path towards IE? In other words, which elements do we have to investigate to assess whether we are really moving towards the inclusion of students with ID? To answer such question, the goal of Chapter III is to offer a conceptual framework and resources that may help schools and high schools to assess the extent to which they are advancing towards the inclusion of their students with ID.

Highlights of section 1

- The UNCRPD states that States Party must ensure access, participation, learning, and development of students with disabilities to their fullest potential
- The supports paradigm helps in this task and provides an understanding of students with ID and the way to support them in the path towards IE
- There is still a question to answer: How to know if we are advancing towards IE?
- The goal of chapter III is to provide a framework and resources to help schools and high schools to gather evidence on their advances in the inclusion of students with ID.

2. Why to monitor inclusive education?

'Within educational systems, only what is measured will be done' (Echeita & Ainscow, 2011 [73], p. 35). This statement can help to understand the need to assess and monitor IE. The question is that IE is not only a right, it also implies adopting a commitment to action within the general education process. In other words, IE brings into action a set of values that are reflected in the way that each school conceives their students with ID and offers them opportunities to enhance their access, participation, learning, and development. Therefore, given that IE is a ongoing process aimed at specific goals, it is necessary to gather evidences continuously about the extent to which actions implemented are making the school advance successfully towards the aforementioned IE goals (Capó, Pla, & Capó, 2011 [74]). In addition, IE monitoring is important given two reasons that help us to understand better the statement with which we started this section:

1. **Motivation:** monitoring highlights the responsabilities of the different members of the educational community: Policy makers, special education teachers, general teachers, paraprofessionals, family members… motivating them to action

2. **Effective feedback**: monitoring allows early identification of problems and barriers in the implementation of IE. This is essential to adopt measures that transform these barriers into facilitators and drivers of change.

Before moving on to understand 'how to monitor IE' and offer a conceptual framework and exemplary indicators in this task, it is necessary to clarify what we mean when we say that IE must be assessed/monitored. The assessment of IE does not have to be understood as an 'all or nothing', or in terms of success-failure. IE is a process and, therefore, has no end. For this reason, there will never be a school that can claim itself as fully inclusive, since reality changes and, what we are doing in a certain situation to include students, may not be effective in another (even if we are talking about two students with the same condition). Hence, inclusion and monitoring require us to work continuously. For this reason, IE evaluation must follow a formative and functional strategy. The formative or functional assessment is that in which the evidence gathered is used to learn from what we are doing right or wrong to act accordingly to improve our actions (Jiménez, Arias, Rodríguez, & Rodríguez, 2018 [75]). The formative assessment is, therefore, necessary to learn from ourselves to advance in the inclusion of students with ID. Figure 1 represents the sense of monitoring for the ongoing improvement of IE.

The next section addresses the question 'how to monitor IE?' In that section, we present a framework shared at international level to support evidence-gathering with two main purposes:

a) to monitor, based on a collaborative reflection, the current situation of a given school regarding the inclusion of their diverse learners (e.g. to highlight barriers towards the inclusion of students with ID); and b) to develop improvement plans based on the evidence gathered in a).
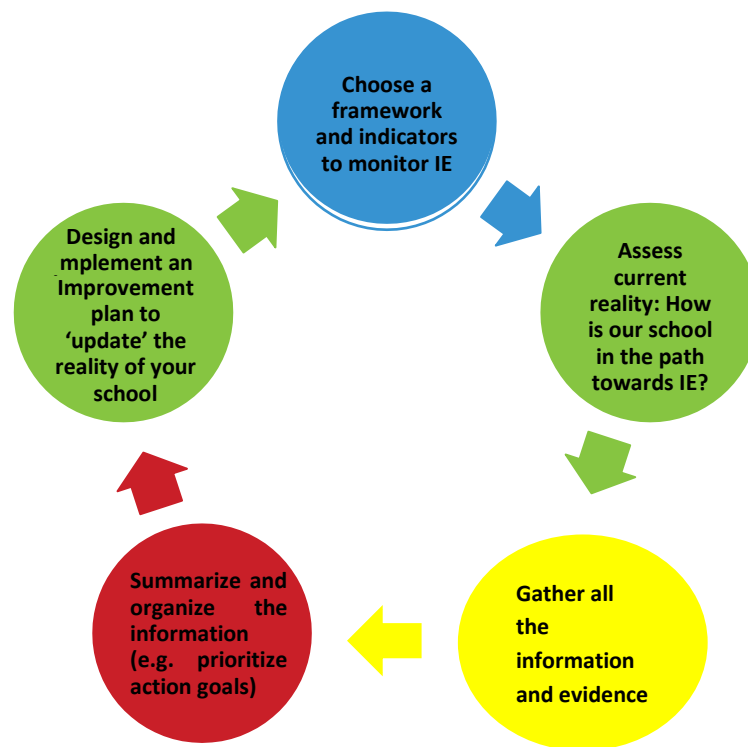
Figure 1. Monitoring inclusive education

Highlights of section 2

- To understand the monitoring of IE, it is necessary to understand IE as an ongoing process that brings into action a set of values in schools
- IE monitoring is necessary to motivate stakeholders and to implement improvement actions based on the information gathered (e.g. to overcome barriers)
- The goal of monitoring IE is to support decision-taking regarding its ongoing improvement

3. How to monitor inclusive education

Until now, we have seen the need to monitor IE and how to understand it. In this section we present a conceptual and applied framework that may help in this task.

2.1. *Starting point: In which aspects of educational reality should we pay attention to monitor inclusive education?*

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Monitoring must respond to a plannified strategy to be as efficient as possible. The starting point must be to define the variables that will be monitored: In which aspects do we have to put the focus in the assessment to know if we are making progress in IE?

Focusing the assessment of IE on the whole education system of a given country would not be very operational for improving IE. This is so because each school and its educational community are unique. Therefore, trying to monitor IE regarding the whole education system would not be sensitive to each reality. To be operational, IE monitoring must be focused at school level. According to Booth and Ainscow (2011 [76]), the essential elements that help us understand the extent to which a school walks towards IE are its educational cultures, policies, and practices. The ongoing reflection and evidence-gathering on these variables is what will put each school in front of the mirror of IE, allowing schools to organize the changes they have to face in their task of including students with ID. Before offering, as a resource, the proposal of Booth and Ainscow (2011 [76]) for monitoring cultures, policies, and practices, and for supporting decision-making, it is necessary to define each variable, as well as to understand their relationships.

Cultures refer to the values, beliefs, and principles shared in a school by its educational community (i.e. teachers, family, administration and services staff, and students). We could define cultures as the 'glasses' through which the life of the school is seen in general (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]; Echeita, Fernández-Blázquez, Simón, & Martos, 2019 [77]). We talk about cultures and not about culture because in each school several cultures con coexist, and they can be consistent or contradictory. Cultures are often reflected in institutional projects, such as educational projects or documents referring to the vision, mission, and values of the school (see Chapter V).

By school policies, we refer to the explicit and articulated planning of its norms, procedures or actions (usually in the form of plans or programs). Examples would be student admission policies, policies related to the participation of educational community or the curriculum policy. Policies have their foundation in school cultures, and they may or may not be consistent with such cultures. For example, it is not uncommon to find schools that are explicitly defined as inclusive and democratic, but they follow authoritatian decision-making processes in relation to certain students (e.g. those with ID) (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]; Echeita et al., 2019 [77]).

Last, practices refer to the actions that are carried out on a daily basis by techers (and other professionals), both in the classroom (e.g. ways of teaching and evaluation, use of teaching materials, etc.) and in other spaces or in complementary or extracurricular activities. Practices need policies that support them and, at the same time, practices are the way to embody the values and principles of school cultures (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]; Echeita et al., 2019 [77]). Figure 2 represents the relationship existing between these three relevant variables for monitoring IE:
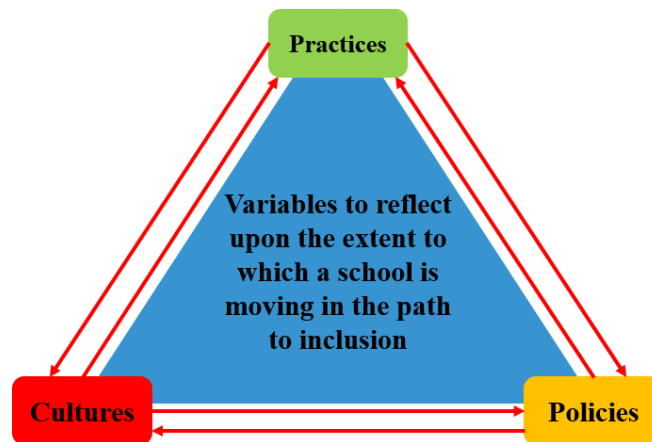
Figure 2. Relationship between key variables in monitoring inclusive education

From the perspective of these authors, developed in the '*Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools*' (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]), for a school to successfully move towards inclusion, it must aligh inclusive cultures, policies, and practices. The point is, 'how to move towards inclusive cultures, policies, and practices?' To answer this question, we must split it into two specific questions that we will address below: a) How to monitor school cultures, policies, and practices?; and b) What to do with the evidence obtained through monitoring to support decision-making and advance towards inclusive cultures, policies, and practices?

3.2 The Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2011): monitoring cultures, policies, and practices, and using the information for ongoing improvement

The *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]) offers a set of resources and guidelines for action for those schools that are interested in advancing the inclusion of all students. Once we have defined cultures, policies, and practices, now it is time to address the process of school improvement proposed by the *Index for Inclusion* for including diverse learners (as those with ID). It is in this ongoing improvement process in which we have to understand the indicators to monitor the variables aforementioned (i.e. cultures, policies, and practices). To access the *Index for Inclusion*[2] for a better understanding of its conceptual framework and materials, please visit the following URL: http://www.csie.org.uk/resources/inclusion-index-explained.shtml.

The improvement plan that incorporates the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]) begins at the moment when each school considers how to better include their diverse learners. This is the first step towards IE: The explicit recognition of the need to improve as a school to respond to diversity. This improvement plan, therefore, is based on the formative self-

assessment of each school to advance in the path to inclusion. The following figure shows the improvement process (described subsequently) that the *Index for Inclusion* facilitates:
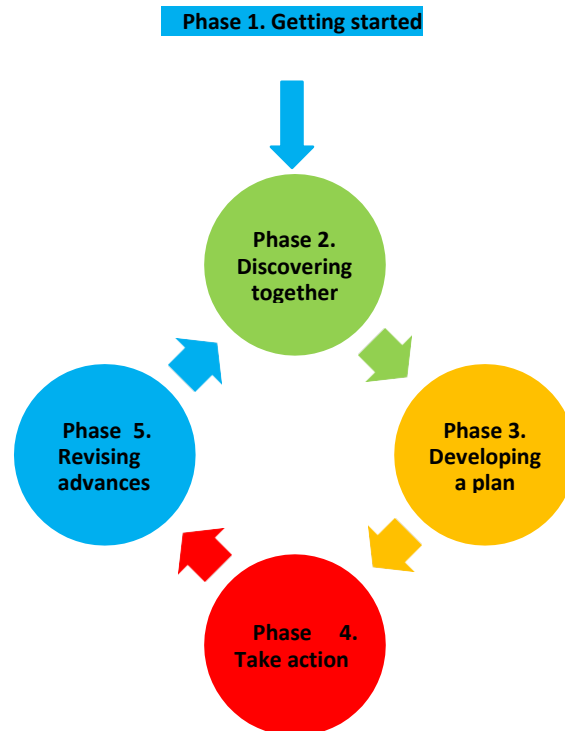

Figure 3. Using the *Index for Inclusion* for monitoring and improvement

In the **Phase 1,** the members of the educational community (not necessarily teachers) propose the need to improve in the level of inclusion of their school. In this phase it is necessary to create a 'planning team' that represents the main actors (stakeholders) of the educational community. In addition, it is necessary to include what Booth and Ainscow (2011 [76]) call a 'critical friend'. This person is usually someone from outside the school who has experience in using the *Index for inclusion*. The critical friend can facilitate access to the materials, help to understand the essential concepts of the tool (e.g. inclusive school values, concepts of inclusion/exclusion, barriers to learning and participation), support the planning team for a better understanding of the evidences they are gathering through their reflections, and help things change.

Although Phase 1 represents the beginning of the implementation of the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]), is in this Phase when we should start to gather evidence about the processes carried out by our school to include students with ID. To this end, the *Index for Inclusion* collects a set of indicators and questions to monitor and gather evidence on the extent to which cultures, policies, and practices present barriers to learning and participation of diverse students. For each variable (i.e. cultures, policies, and practices), the *Index for Inclusion* establishes two essential domains, which are specified through indicators that are developed in operational questions to guide the shared reflection of the planning team on the

own cultures, policies, and practices. Since the indicators and questions are very exhaustive, it is essential that the planning team starts with a first contact to understand the indicators and questions. This is necessary to gain an understanding of the materials and to avoid falling into discouragement: Not all indicators must be used and each planning team can decide where to start.

As soon as the planning team has become familiar with the basic concepts and materials, it is necessary to begin exploring the school's priorities to improve the inclusion of students with ID. Indicators and questions can guide and help in this task. Tables 1-3 collect the domains, indicators, and exemplary questions for monitoring cultures, policies, and practices that help in the task to identify barriers to learning and participation.

Table 1

Domains, indicators and exemplary questions for cultures

Domain	Indicator	Exemplary question (number of questions by indicator)
(A.1) Building community	(A.1.1) Everyone is welcomed	Is the first contact that people have with the school welcoming? (21)
	(A.1.2) Staff co-operate	Do staff get on well together? (26)
	(A.1.3) Children help each other	Are supportive friendships actively fostered? (22)
	(A.1.4) Staff and children respect each other	Do staff view children as human beings like themselves rather than as lesser beings? (24)
	(A.1.5) Staff and parents/carers collaborate	Do staff feel that parents/carers appreciate what they do? (26)
	(A.1.6) Staff and governors work well together	Do governors reflect the composition of the school communities? (25)
	(A.1.7) The school is a model of democratic citizenship	Do all children have an opportunity to be involved in a School Council or Children's Parliament? (12)
	(A.1.8) The school encourages an understanding of the interconnections between people around the world	Is the school linked to a school in an economically poor country? (19)
	(A.1.9) Adults and children are responsive to a variety of ways of being a gender	Do adults and children recognize that not everyone thinks of themselves as male or female? (19)
	(A.1.10) The school and local communities develop each other	Does a school newspaper highlight local people, events, and businesses? (22)
	(A.1.11) Staff link what happens in school to children lives at home	Are staff aware of the variety of children's home cultures and family circumstances? (17)
(A.2) Establishing inclusive values	(A.2.1) The school develops shared inclusive values	Are values understood as revealed through actions rather than words? (23)
	(A.2.2) The school encourages respect for all human rights	Is it understood that rights commonly go unrecognized? (25)
	(A.2.3) The school encourages respect for the integrity of planet earth	Do adults and children consider how dependent they are on the well-being of the planet? (23)
	(A.2.4) Inclusion is viewed as increasing participation for all	Are excluding pressures recognized as always present and always needing to be counteracted? (19)
	(A.2.5) Expectations are high for all children	Do staff encourage a view that everyone has gifts and talents? (19)
	(A.2.6) Children are valued equally	Are children, staff and parents/carers with disabilities as welcomed into the school as those without impairments? (20)
	(A.2.7) The school counters all forms of discrimination	Do adults and children identify areas of discrimination which need to be addressed? (17)
	(A.2.8) The school promotes non-violent interactions and resolutions to disputes	Do adults model non-coercitive interaction? (26)
	(A.2.9) The school encourages children and adults to feel good about themselves	Does the school help children and adults to scape the tyranny of ideas of normality? (23)
	(A.2.10) The school contributes to the health of children and adults	Are stress and anger seen to arise from the difficult circumstances of some children? (26)

Table 2

Domains, indicators and exemplary questions for policies

Domain	Indicator	Exemplary question (number of questions by indicator)
(B.1) Developing the school for all	(B.1.1) The school has a participatory development process	Do staff consider that change becomes development when it reflects desired values? (17)
	(B.1.2) The school has an inclusive approach to leadership	Is it understood that strong leaders can be collaborative rather than autocratic? (22)
	(B.1.3) Appointments and promotions are fair	Is there a strategy for removing barriers to the appointment of staff with disabilities? (21)
	(B.1.4) Staff expertise is known and used	Are staff genuinely interested in each other's knowledge and expertise? (19)
	(B.1.5) All new staff are helped to settle into the school	Are all new staff formally welcomed by governor and parent representatives? (20)
	(B.1.6) The school seeks to admit all children from its locality	Is there an increase in the diversity of children from the locality included in the school? (20)
	(B.1.7) All new children are helped to settle into the school	Is it recognized that some children may find it more difficult to feel at home than others? (22)
	(B.1.8) Teaching and learning groups are arranged fairly to support all children's learning	Do staff establish opportunities for children to learn from, and teach, each other in diverse groups? (18)
	(B.1.9) Children are well prepared for moving on to other settings	Is there co-ordination of support for children moving between schools? (23)
	(B.1.10) The school is made physically accessible to all people	Is disability access audited each year in order to make improvements to the building improvement plan? (17)
	(B.1.11) The buildings and grouns are ceveloped to support the participation of all	Is the staffroom a welcoming space for all staff? (20)
	(B.1.12.) The school reduces its carbon footprint and use of water	Is the carbon footprint of the school understood as its annual greenhouse gas emission? (24)
	(B.1.13.) The school contributes to the reduction of waste	Do children learn about waste reduction through links with other schools? (26)
(B.2) Organising support for diversity	(B.2.1.) All forms of support are co-ordinated	Is support understood to involve the mobilizing of resources from within and outside the school? (19)
	(B.2.2.) Professional development activities help staff respond to diversity	Do professional development activities help staff to work with diverse groups? (20)
	(B.2.3.) Additional languages or dialects spoken in the country are a resource for the whole school	Are the home languages of children integrated into classroom activities and homework? (16)
	(B.2.4.) The school supports continuity in the education of children in public care	Does school avoid stereotyping children in public care as uniformly challenging? (18)
	(B.2.5.) The school ensures that policies about 'special educational needs' support inclusion	Does the co-ordinator of support work to increase the capacity of the school to respond to diversity in ways that value children equally? (22)
	(B.2.6.) The behavior policy is linked to learning and curriculum development	Does the code of conduct for the school apply to both adults and children? (18)
	(B.2.7.) Pressures for disciplinary exclusion are decreased	Does the school avoid creating pools of disaffection in devalued teaching groups? (20)
	(B.2.8.) Barriers to attendance are reduced	Do staff investigate why children are regularly late and offer appropriate support? (21)
	(B.2.9.) Bullying is minimized	Are clear records kept about bullying incidents? (23)

Table 3
Domains, indicators and exemplary questions for practices

Domain	Indicator	Exemplary question (number of questions by indicator)
(C.1) Constructing curricula for all	(C.1.1) Children explore cycles of food production and consumption	Is the school linked to a local farm? (99)
	(C.1.2) Children investigate the importance of water	Is the school involved in the conservation of local rivers and waterways? (57)
	(C.1.3) Children study clothing and decoration of the body	Do children learn about the spred of clothing styles from one country to another? (44)
	(C.1.4) Children find out about housing and the built environment	Do children consider how and why cities have grown? (51)
	(C.1.5) Children consider how and why people move around their locality and the world	Do children consider what makes a place good to live and stay in? (50)
	(C.1.6) Children learn about health and relationships	Do children consider what they mean by being healthy? (75)
	(C.1.7) Children investigate the earth, the solar system and the universe	Do children photograph, paint or draw those details of their local environment they like and dislike and comment on their choices? (102)
	(C.1.8) Children study life on earth	Does school have a pond for studying pond creatures and water plants? (110)
	(C.1.9) Children investigate sources of energy	Do children understand the way plants convert energy from the sun into food and fuel? (66)
	(C.1.10) Children learn about communication and communication technology	Are children helped to become fluent speakers, readers and writers or fluent singers of their first language? (42)
	(C.1.11) Children engage with, and create, literature, arts, and music	Is the repertoire of songs linked to the ones children bring with them from previous schools? (64)
	(C.1.12) Children learn about work and link it to the development of their interests	Do children learn to distinguish between unemployment, inactivity and not being in paid employment? (46)
	(C.1.13) Children learn about ethics, power and government	Do children consider how borders are disputed? (68)
(C.2) Orchestrating learning	(C.2.1) Learning activities are planned with all children in mind	Do activities extend the learning of all children? (19)
	(C.2.2) Learning activities encourage the participation of all children	Do lessons involve children emotionally? (23)
	(C.2.3) Children are encouraged to be confident critical thinkers	Do children learn about the pressures on them to think and act in particular ways? (24)
	(C.2.4) Children are actively involved in their own learning	Are children encouraged to ask challenging uestions to which no-one has an immediate answer? (23)
	(C.2.5) Children learn from each other	Do children see helping each other as routine? (25)
	(C.2.6) Lessons develop an understanding of similarities and differences between people	Do materials used in lessons represent human diversity? (20)
	(C.2.7) Assessments encourage the achievements of all children	Do assessments of children lead to modifications in learning activities? (24)
	(C.2.8) Discipline is based on mutual respect	Do children help teachers to create an atmosphere that supports learning? (21)
	(C.2.9) Staff plan, teach and review together	Is mutual observation followed by shared reflection used to improve teaching and learning? (20)
	(C.2.10) Staff develop shared resources to support learning	Does the school website link the school with other schools locally/nationally and in other countries? (20)
	(C.2.11) Teaching assistants support the learning and participation for all children	Do teaching assistants demonstrate that they too are learners with a range of interests? (20)
	(C.2.12) Homweork is set so that it contributes to every child's learning	Does homework encourage children to collaborate? (22)
	(C.2.13) Activities outside the school lessons involve all children	Are call children given opportunities to take part in activities outside the school? (17)
	(C.2.14) Resources in the locality of the school are known and used	Do members of local communities contribute to teaching in school? (7)

Note. Apart from the indicators and questions, *the Index for Inclusion* offers questionnaires to assess the extent to which students feel welcomed in the school. To access the *Index for Inclusion*, its resources and guidelines, please visit the following link: http://prsinstitute.org/downloads/related/education/IndexforInclusion.pdf

Page | 13

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The use of the indicators and questions is essential to build and feed the improvement plan: They allow to know the real needs of the school on which it will be necessary to start working for including students with ID. In the specification of the improvement plan, it is essential to investigate the feelings of all the planning team members, as well as to make explicit their beliefs and views, so that everyone gets involved with the improvement plan. This is a process of **discovering together** (Phase 2), in which it is important to check everybody's understanding about the materials, the indicators, and the improvement plan to be developed. Once the **plan is explicitly elaborated** (Phase 3), specifying priorities in short-, medium-, and long-term goals is essential to **translate the plan into actions** (Phase 4) and to facilitate the maintenance of the agreed actions. As a continuous process, it is essential to **review the progress being made in the goals** (Phase 5), reinforcing the progress of the school, reflection the processes taken and readjusting the priorities by defining new goals (it will be necessary to move the focus from one indicator to another). In short, the indicators are useful to monitor and guide the reflections of the planning team, and help in the task of defining goals (based on the needs or barriers detected) to enhance the inclusion opportunities of all the students in the school through the improvement of school's cultures, policies, and practices.

In this section we have presented the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]) as a resource that incorporates materials and guides for action that allow, on the one hand, to monitor the school's cultures, policies, and practices regarding the inclusion of diverse learners (as those with ID) and, on the other hand, based on the evidence gathered, it allows to take action based on the needs detected. Instruments like this one are essential to support decision-making aimed at improving access, participation, and learning of students with ID. However, monitoring the other essential goal in the IE of students with ID (i.e. their development to their fullest potential), requires adopting complementary approaches as the one presented in the following section.

Highlights of section 3

- To monitor IE, it is necessary to clarify a framework that identifies the key variables to put the focus on to gain an understanding of where we are regarding the inclusion of the targeted students
- The Index for Inclusion provides such a framework. It allows for identifying key variables to reflect upon and specific indicators to guide planning teams in the improvement of the inclusion of diverse learners
- Nevertheless, approaches like the latter put the focus mainly on the processes that schools follow towards the access, participation, and learning of their students, thus being necessary to adopt complementary approaches that focus on the outcomes we need to enhance in students through these processes to enhance their full development

4. What about the students? Monitoring personal outcomes: Quality of Life framework and resources

Perspectives such as those included in the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]) put the emphasis on monitoring and supporting access, participation, and learning for all students. Although these perspectives also focus on the maximum development of students' competencies and the exercise of their self-determination (Echeita et al., 2019 [77]), it is necessary to advocate for the adoption of complementary approaches that help to bring the focus of education on fostering the development of students with ID to their fullest potential from a global perspective, as the UNCRPD suggests (United Nations, 2006 [1]).

One perspective that is gaining weight in this regard is the Quality of Life (QoL) Model developed by Schalock and Verdugo (2002 [78]). This model defines QoL as a state of personal well- being that: (a) incorporates objective and subjective elements; (b) is influenced by personal and environmental factors (and by the interactions between them); and c) considers eight domains in the student's life: Personal Development, Emotional Well-being, Interpersonal Relations, Physical Well-being, Material Well-being, Self-determination, Social Inclusion, and Rights. Talking about QoL in education means to put the focus on the student and global domains that make up his/her life (going beyond academic achievement), from which to understand his/her aspirations and needs to define programs and planning supports aimed at improving his/her personal outcomes in each one of the domains (Verdugo, 2009 [79]).

In addition to this view of education, the model offers a monitoring and measurement framework that has been consistently validated by research (Pazey, Schalock, Schaller, & Burkett, 2016 [80]). Each domain is developed in observable and measurable indicators that collect behaviors, conditions, and perceptions. These indicators are sensitive to the goals contained in the articles of the UNCRPD (Verdugo, Navas, Gómez, & Schalock, 2012 [81]). With regard to article 24, various authors suggest relationships between its goals and the QoL domains (Amor, Fernández, Verdugo, Aza, & Schalock, in press [82]; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer, & Park, 2003 [83]). The 'Rights' domain is related to the goal of 'access'; 'Social Inclusion' and 'Interpersonal Relations' domains are related to the goal of 'Participation'; 'Self-determination' and 'Personal Development' domains are related to 'learning'; and 'Emotional Well-being', 'Physical Well-being', 'Material Well-being', 'Self-Determination', and 'Personal Development' domains are connected with the 'development of students with disabilities to their fullest potential'. On the other hand, Emotional and Physical Well-being, and Personal Development are transversal domains that contribute to all the four goals. Table 4 shows the QoL domains along with their core indicators:

Table 4

Quality of Life Domains and their core indicators

QoL Domain	Description	Core indicators
Personal Development	Having the possibility of learning different things, accessing knowledge and having the possibility of self-realization	Education opportunities, skills, achievement, personal competence, useful activity, promotion
Self-Determination	Being able to self-decide and having the opportunities to choose that things that one considers relevant, choosing one's life, employment, leisure time, living, and the people to be with	Autonomy, elections, decisions, personal control, self-direction, personal achievement, and values
Interpersonal Relations	Having relations with different people, having Friends and getting on well with others	Intimacy, affection, family relationships, interactions, friendships, supports
Social Inclusion	Going to different places in the city or neighborhood where other people go and participating in different activities with other people	Acceptance, status, support, work environment, community integration and participation, roles, volunteering, residential environment
Rights	Being considered and treated equally with other people and being respected	Privacy, votes, access, property, civic responsabilities
Emotional Wellbeing	Feeling safe, without worries, relaxed	Security, spirituality, happiness, absence of stress, self-concept, satisfaction with life
Phyical Wellbeing	Being healthy, feeling fit, having good eating habits	Health, food, recreation, mobility, health care, health insurance, activities of daily living, leisure time and activities
Material Wellbeing	Having enough money to buy whatever one needs and/or wants, having a proper household or workplace	Possessions, property, income, security, housing conditions, food, employment, socioeconomic status

How can the QoL model help to monitor IE? The QoL model (Schalock & Verdugo, 2002 [78]) offers a framework to gather evidence and/or encourage reflection on students' personal outcomes in the eight QoL domains which, as explained, are sensitive to the goals of article 24 of the UNCRPD (United Nations, 2006 [1]). This framework allows enriching the reflection-based monitoring of IE, complementing the one presented regarding the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]). The QoL model, instead of putting the focus of reflection on the current processes mobilized by the school through its cultures, policies, and practices (see 3.2), focuses on the personal outcomes that these processes are achieving (or that, at least, should be considered) in students with ID. Following a formative assessment, the evidence gathered through this reflection should be used to support decision-making for an ongoing improvement of schools' cultures, policies, and practices. In this case, with the end in mind of updating school's cultures, policies, and practices bearing in mind the needs and aspirations of students with ID in critical domains of their lives which are linked to IE goals (Amor et al., in press [82]).

Monitoring using the QoL indicators can follow a quantitative or a qualitative perspective. Both approaches serve the pruposes outlined above, although it is necessary to know what they imply in order to know wich one to use. The most desirable would be to follow a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach, also called psychometric approach, requires designing, developing, and validating specific instruments aimed at the measurement of personal outcomes in a targeted population (students with ID in our case). Through this approach it is

possible to develop standardized QoL assessment instruments (see, e.g. Gómez et al., 2016 [84]) with evidences of validity (i.e. certainty that the instrument measures QoL and not another thing) and reliability (i.e. accurateness). Through these types of instruments, it is possible to evaluate the real impact that cultures, policies, and practices have on the life outcomes of students with ID, and use these evidences to improve cultures, policies, and practices in a given school, or to make comparisons of schools regarding these variables. However, to use this approach, it is necessary to comply with a series of requisites. The most important is that the validation of the indicators to measure personal outcomes only has sense for a given targeted population of a certain context. In other words, to work with this approach in this project, it would be necessary that each partner defines and validates its own QoL indicators, since items that reflect personal outcomes of students with ID in Spain, for example, may be different from those in Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, or Portugal. Although this approach is not useful for this project, if you are interested in how to design, build, and validate a standardized measure of personal outcomes for students with ID, do not hesitate to consult directly with the authors of this chapter.

An alternative is the qualitative approach. From this approach, it is possible to develop items as a way of specifying the indicators of the QoL domains. These items can be used to delimit key areas from which to support reflection on the school's cultures, policies, and practices, in the same way as is done in the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]). In this case, the items bring into the monitoring process the identification of the barriers that the school's current cultures, policies, and practices have in enhancing students' personal outcomes. This is the approach we will follow in this project. As a resource accompanying this Chapter and to help implement this perspective in practice, we offer three 'Quality of Life Index-Inclusive Education', one for each one of the three educational stages that cover the range of age of this project (from 3 to 18 years old): a) *Quality of Life Index-Inclusive Education: Preschool version* (3—6 years); *Quality of Life Index-Inclusive Education: Primary education version* (7—12 years); and c) *Quality of Life Index-Inclusive Education: Secondary education version* (13—18 years).

The goal of these indexes is to clearly define items to guide reflections on personal outcomes relevant for the development of students with ID to their fullest potential in the eight QoL domains. Through these reflections, each school can, on the one hand, identify the barriers that its current cultures, policies, and practices, have towards enhancing critical outcomes in their students with ID; and, on the other hand, use this information for an ongoing improvement of their cultures, policies, and practices. Each Index includes a set of guidelines on how to use the indicators for reflection purposes, and how to develop and implement improvement plans (i.e. they include not only guidelines for monitoring but also for using the evidence gathered).

Highlights of section 4

- QoL framework offers a conceptual view of education focused in the globality of the student. It also provides a measurement framework to understand the needs and aspirations of students with ID from which to support the development of schools' practices, cultures and policies focused on students' fullest development

- Monitoring IE through QoL can be done from a quantitative and a qualitative approach. Regarding this project, the qualitative approach is the best option. Both approaches support monitoring putting the focus on the fullest development of students
- Accompanying this chapter, we have developed three Quality of Life Index-Inclusive Education to help implement this qualitative approach for monitoring and improvement processes

5. Conclusions

In this chapter we have offered a conceptual basis to understand the need to monitor IE, as well as the way in which this monitoring as to be understood to support the implementation of IE. In addition, we have offered a monitoring framework such as the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]) that makes it possible to support the continuous improvement of access, participation, and learning for all students. Additionally, and complementary to the previous one, we have offered the conceptual and measurement framework of the QoL model (Schalock & Verdugo, 2002 [78]) to support monitoring processes with a reflection on the key areas in the student's life that schools should consider to enhance the development of their students with ID to their fullest potential. To help schools implement the QoL approach, we have developed three Indexes that bring into the practice the reflection processes discussed in this chapter with the focus on improving student's outcomes.

6. Summary

It is necessary to monitor IE to advance its implementation. This monitoring must be based on a formative and summative assessment: Evidence-gathering process has to pursue the goal of ongoing learning and improvement of the educational praxis itself if we want to include students with ID.

The *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]) offers a framework from which to plan monitoring processes that address the detection of barriers to learning and participation in school's cultures, policies, and practices. This monitoring process, specified through domains, indicators, and questions, is oriented to the shared reflection of the current processes put in

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place in a given school with the goal to propose an improvement plan that acts systematically at these three levels.

One way to enrich these processes of reflection and improvement, is through items that help to consider student's personal outcomes in key areas that are sensitive to the goals of IE stated on the UNCRPD's article 24 (United Nations, 2006 [1]). The QoL framework (Schalock & Verdugo, 2002 [78]) helps to this, enriching both the monitoring and improvement processes proposed by the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2011 [76]), by including all the areas relevant for the full development of the student. Accompanying this chapter, three annexes are offered to help implement this proposal in practice.

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter IV

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Acknowledgements

The other deliverables of the IE+ project can be found on the project webpage www.easpd.eu/en/content/promoting-inclusive-education

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Contents

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1. Introduction

It is difficult to speak about how to facilitate inclusive education without also addressing how it can be funded. To successfully transition towards inclusive education, inclusive measures and policies must be adequately supported by the appropriate allocation of funds and resources.

From the structuring of a school's overall budget, all the way down to the provision of a free school bus, funding measures can impact the successful inclusion of learners with disabilities.

2. A funding model for Inclusion

As a national, regional or local authority, how you decide to allocate money within your authority's education system immediately impacts on the successfulness of inclusive measures. It is key that the selected funding model incentivises, rather than disincentives, schools to become inclusive to all learners.

A first challenge to the successful transition towards inclusive education is the continued funding of special education. Known as the "Parallel Model", the funding of special education alongside the funding of mainstream schools creates a competition of resources and outcomes between mainstream schools, who are trying to become more inclusive, and special schools. The continued funding of separate education systems (both mainstream and segregated) has been found to be far costlier to authorities, in comparison to inclusive education systems (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017, P.14 [34]). Although the initial transition towards inclusive education systems can incur higher costs placing high concentrations of students with disabilities in the same schools, and classrooms oblige public authorities to provide substantial material and human resources to meet the needs of high numbers of students who may have learning difficulties (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017, P.14 [34]). Studies have found that, in the long run, these costs can be significantly reduced with the adoption of inclusive education systems (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017, P.14 [34]).

Across Europe special schools continue to be better resourced than inclusive schools (IE+, 2019 [89]). This better access to resources helps to ensure that special schools can meet the needs of their students, creating the impression that special schools can foster a better Quality of Life for the learners with disabilities. Care must be taken when analysing these results however, as they do not represent the whole situation and imbalance of funding between schools. Too often, parents are forced to choose between ensuring that their child's support needs are being adequately met, which can often lead to their placement in a better resourced special school or

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unit, and ensuring that their child has the same rights and opportunities as other learners, which is possible in a fully inclusive education system (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017, p.31[90]).

The goal is to create an education system where these choices become unnecessary (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017, p.31 [90]).

Effective funding mechanisms provide an incentive for inclusive education when they promote capacity-building mechanisms that empower stakeholders to develop innovative and flexible mainstream learning environments for all learners (European Agency, 2018, p12 [91]). These mechanisms should accommodate the local context and facilitate inclusive education via a community-based approach (European Agency, 2018, p.29 [91]).

Developing this funding model starts with a question:

Who will be the funding target? Schools? Or learners?

Most countries or regions funding systems can fit broadly into one of two funding models, each of which have different implications for the transition towards inclusive education. While some systems may not replicate these models exactly, an understanding of how these models work can help to implement changes for positive change.

2.1 Learner targeted funding

Per-Capita Funding Models target students, and the funding followers the learner. These models consider the special educational needs of learners, including those with disabilities, and will systematically vary the pre-capita funding available to certain categories of students (UNICEF, 2014, p.15 [93]).

These categories group learners by common characteristics: this could by their age, location, perceived social disadvantage or their disability.

Each category is allocated a different weight in the funding system, meaning that schools can receive additional funding for the learners who are deemed to fall into categories that require additional support and funding (UNICEF, 2014, p.16 [93]).

> For example (UNICEF, 2014, p.16 [93]):
>
> - A student with no special educational needs may be deemed to have a funding weight of 1.
> - A student from a low-income family may be deemed to have a funding weight of 1.2.

- A student with a disability may be deemed to have a funding weight of 1.5.

So, in a class of 30 students:

- 25 students may have no special educational needs: **25x1= 25.**

- 3 students may be from a low-income family: **3x 1.2= 3.6.**

- 2 students may have a disability: **2x 1.5 = 3.**

The combined funding weight for this class would be 31.6 (25+3.6+3). As a result, the funding for this class would be 31.6 x the base funding amount.

For students with disabilities, a single funding weight may be used. Most countries have multiple sub-classifications for identifying differing disabilities and needs however, as a result, it may be preferred to use differential weights for each sub-classification. This differentiation can help ensure that the appropriate resources are allocated to students with additional supports needs (UNICEF, 2014, p.16 [93]).

There are several advantages and disadvantages to the Per Capita system:

Advantages:
- The Per Capita model can allow for greater flexibility, enabling learners to enjoy their right to an education in a school of their choice, as the funding will follow them (UNICEF, 2014, p.16 [93]).
- This model is able to reflect the actual cost of educating students with special educational needs or disabilities and ensure that schools are given the appropriate amount of funding to support these students in their schools.
- Schools can be encouraged to accept learners with disabilities, as via this model the funding follows the student and the school will be eligible to increased funding to support their needs. This model can help promote equity in the education system by providing funding based on the needs of learners.

Disadvantages:
- A weakness of the model is that it has the potential to promote a disability label rather than educational needs (Susan J. Peters, 2003, p.20 [94]). This issue can be overcome with the correct application of a human rights approach, which moves away from a learner's disability and instead focuses on their needs.
- The need to formally diagnose and identify a learner's education needs and disability can drive up costs.

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- This model can also provide an incentive for schools to inflate the numbers of children with disabilities in order to increase funding. Auditing can be an important disincentive to stop this practice.
- Providing support to individual learners does not necessarily improve the capacity of the school system (Susan J. Peters, 2003, p.20 [94]).

2.2 School targeted funding

Resource-based models, otherwise known as "through-put models", target funding at the services (including schools) provided, rather than learners (UNICEF, 2014, p.16 [93]). These models often provide funding based on the payment of a certain amount of special education resources (such as teachers or classroom units) which have been pre-determined at a regional or national level. The aim of these models is to facilitate local initiatives that develop programmes and services, but comprehensive evaluation and monitoring mechanisms are needed to ensure that quality services are being developed and services are constantly seeking to improve (UNICEF, 2014, p.16 [93]).

Resource-based models offer decentralised funding which enables authorities to have more autonomy over how their funding can be best used. This funding model has a number of advantages and disadvantages (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2016, p.49 [95]):

Advantages:
- In this model funding may support and promote a school-development approach, building upon inclusive design for learning (European Agency, 2018, p.28 [92]).
- In resource-based models the funding focuses on teacher resources and support, rather than a learner's perceived disability, to provide quality education for students with special needs.
- Research by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education found that such a mode of funding promotes financial reasoning with hiring staff, changing curriculum and organising extra support (2018, p.28 [92]).

Disadvantages:
- Several researchers have asserted that resource-based models incentivise schools to fit students into existing programmes, rather than to adapt programmes to meet students' needs.
- Embedding inclusive education issues in general funding may not appropriately cover the costs of support staff needed to address the range of a pupil's learning needs.

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- There is also the danger that schools may be penalised for success and rewarded for failure. For example, those students who experience success no longer need services, and so funding is lost.

Overall, a school's funding model directly affects changes in thinking and practices in education (European Agency, 2018, p.25 [92]). It is important to ensure that the adopted funding model empowers schools to meet the needs of the learners and allocate the appropriate resources to inclusion. The funding model must also enable schools to embed inclusive education in their local contexts, enabling them to promote inclusion via a community-based approach (Education Agency, 2018, p.26 [92]).

Useful Tool:

Via its participation in the recent "Financing Policies for Inclusive Education Systems" (FPIES) project the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education has developed a "Financing Policy Self-Review Tool" design for use by policy-makers responsible for developing and implementing policies for inclusive education at national, regional and/or local levels.

The tool aims to support the reflection on financing policies for inclusive education with decision-makers working in different social sectors – education, health, welfare, etc. – at national, regional and/or local levels.

Available in 25 different languages, the Self-Review Tool is an open-source and can be adapted and developed to meet specific country or local situations as needed, provided a reference to the original source is given.

To download it and find out more visit the Agency's website here: https://www.european-agency.org/resources/publications/financing-policies-inclusive-education-systems-self-review-tool

Highlights:
- A challenge to the successful transition towards inclusive education is the continued funding of special education.
- An inclusive education system has been found to be less costly than funding a segregated and mainstream education system simultaneously.
- Per-Capita Funding Models target students, and the funding followers the learner.
- Resource-based models, otherwise known as "through-put models",' target funding at the services (including schools) provided, rather than learners.

3. School budget

This content should be localised for each national context

Highlights:
- Provide a list with main ideas.

4. External Opportunities for funding inclusive education

Unfortunately for many schools and authorities, in today's economic climate education budgets are limited and the needed funds to implement inclusive education are not available via traditional funding sources (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, p.7 [91]). While the responsibility of funding inclusive education systems lies primarily with authorities, there are a number of alternative funding and financial opportunities available to schools and regional authorities, which can be used to bridge the gap between a school's financial needs and their budget.

Although education is a competence of EU Member States, the European Union has declared its commitment to supporting high quality education through its own budget. As a result, a number of EU funding programmes are available to education providers to support their transition towards inclusive education. Not every EU funding programme is designed to support inclusive education however, and the funding programme best suited to the needs of schools and local authorities will depend on your needs and what you what to achieve.

4.1 Funding innovation and inclusion in your School

The European Union offers a variety of opportunities to foster innovation in education and training. There are a number of EU funding programmes that can support an innovative best practice that you would like to scale up, or help you learn more from the experiences of others:

Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Open to organisations, including universities, education and training providers, think-tanks,

research organisations, and private businesses the programme aims to promote social equity and inclusion via its 3 Key Actions:

Key Action 1: **Mobility.**

Key Action 2: **Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Good Practices.**

Key Action 3: **Support for Policy Reform.**

The programme supports opportunities for cooperation, for innovation and the exchange of good practices in education, and also aids partnerships which facilitate the development of evidence-based policy-making by supporting networks and tools for policy implementation.

Localised Information

You can find out more information on the programme's latest funding opportunities on the Programme's webpage (*https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding_en).*

Localised Example

European Social Fund

The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the EU's largest funding programmes which focuses on supporting actions that improve employment and education opportunities across the European Union. The fund finances initiatives that improve education and training, reduce school drop-out rates and ensure that young people learn the skills they need to make them more competitive on the labour market.

Organisations (such as public administrations, workers' and employers' organisations, NGOs, charities and companies) with innovative projects that fulfil the fund's criteria are eligible for ESF funding. ESF funding is allocated at a Member State and regional level.

Localised information on how to access https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/managing-authorities/.

Localised Example

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4.2 Supporting the training and lifelong learning opportunities of your school staff

Very often basic teacher training requirements do not cover training in inclusive education competences. For many school staff additional training is needed to ensure that they can appropriately implement inclusive education. Via its Key Action 1 programme Erasmus+ enables organisations and schools to have the ability to offer structured study, work experience, job shadowing, volunteering, training and teaching opportunities to staff and learners.

Beneficiaries of the funding are able to spend a period of time in another participating country to participate in structured training courses and events as well as partake in job shadowing opportunities to learn from others in their place of work.

These 'Learning Mobilities' are offered to higher education students and staff, VET learners and staff, school staff as well as adult education staff.

Localised information on how to apply https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact/national-agencies_en.

4.3 Opportunities in your región

Localised

• Local funding opportunities and mechanisms

<div style="border:2px solid gold; padding:10px;">

Highlights:
- Alternative funding and financial opportunities are available to schools and regional authorities, which can be used to bridge the gap between a school's financial needs and their budget.
- EU funding programmes, such as Erasmus+, the European Social Fund and Interreg can provide funding to support innovative practices which facilitate the inclusion of leaners.
- Financing opportunities, via the European Investment Bank, could be available to you to help you meet your social infrastructure needs.

</div>

5. Looking to your student and local community

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However, simply allocating funds to the provision of educational resources is not an end in itself (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2016, p.39 [95]). High-quality inclusive education systems must be equitable and non-discriminatory to ensure that all learners with support needs, regardless of their family's socio-economic status, are able to access an inclusive education (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2016, p.39 [95]).

The use of a per capita model, which incorporates socio-economic status as a factor in the funding weight of students, can begin to ensure that there is an appropriate distribution of resources, so that every child can access, participate and learn in inclusive settings.

5.1 Socio-economic factors

A learner's socio-economic background, either high or low, can impact on their access to inclusive education.

For example, the absence of accessible school transport represents a further barrier to participation in mainstream education for many students. Special schools, due to the additional resources they have, are often more able to provide free school transportation giving vital support to families. If mainstream schools are unable to provide similar services, this can again decentivise parents from enrolling their children in mainstream schools due to the additional logistical and economic pressures it can create and impacting on a learners Quality of Life.

As a result, it is important that authorities and schools take a closer look at students, their families and the wider community to ensure that all aspects of the educational system promote inclusion, regardless of economic status.

5.2 Privatisation of therapy

Localised.

5.3 Access to information

Localised.

Highlights:
- High-quality inclusive education systems must be equitable and non-discriminatory to all learners with support needs, regardless of their family's socio-economic status.

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5 Conclusions

In this chapter we have addressed how the funding mechanisms and structures associated with schools can impact on the successfulness of inclusive education. Starting with an assessment of the possible school funding models available to local authorities, this chapter has focused on funding measures on a number of levels, including a school and community level as well as on a European level.

6 Summary

- It is crucial that authorities develop clear funding mechanisms which enable schools to meet the needs of their learners and become more inclusive. Per-Capita Funding Models, in which funding follow the learners as they progress through their education are effective in promoting inclusive education and equity in the education system.
- A school's budget must be carefully considered to ensure that the school's resources are used for the benefit of all students.
- Additional funding and financial opportunities are available to schools and regional authorities and can be used to bridge the gap between a school's financial needs and their budget.

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter V

PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Acknowledgements

Contents

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1. Introduction

A school's environment can be broadly defined as its facilities, classrooms, school-based support, policies, practices and activities. Together these elements create a wider environment or atmosphere which will impact the way students, teachers, parents and other external stakeholders interact with the school itself. For a fully inclusive school, it is crucial that all aspects of the school environment support inclusion.

2. Start with a Vision

A school vision is a clear statement of what a school is trying to achieve, providing a roadmap for the school's direction and a framework for offering students the best education possible (TESS-India, 2017, p.2 [96]). A common vision can unify stakeholders of a school, enabling them to work for the benefit of its students (TESS-India, 2017, p.2 [96]).

> Developing a school vision is an important part of effective school leadership (TESS-India, 2017, p.2 [96]). Standing as a frame of reference, a school's vision:
> - Provides a focus for all aspects of organisational life.
> - Informs planning and the development of policies.
> - Clarifies and prioritises the work of individuals.
> - Helps to articulate shared beliefs and develop a common language, thereby securing alignment and effective communication.
> - Characterises the organisation to external partners.

A school vision will reflect the unique context of each school, but will also reflect wider factors and influences, such as the context of the local community, region and country (TESS-India, 2017, p.2 [96]). It is crucial that a school's vision unites stakeholders around the school's journey towards inclusion. Including stakeholders in the development of a school's vision is the best way to ensure that they support the development of the school and achievement of its vision (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.9 [97]).

A school's vision can create an initial framework for an inclusive school environment. From this vision's statements schools can define a mission statement, which will indicate how the school aims to achieve its vision in its day-to-day operation. This mission statement can contain important information about what the school does, its students, teachers and its services as it strives to achieve its vision.

To make a school's vision a reality, efforts must also be made to ensure that a school's physical, social and cultural environments promote the full partipation of all learners, helping to foster a positive and inclusive school environment for the benefit of its students, staff and stakeholders.

Highlights:
- A school vision is a clear statement of what a school is trying to achieve.
- A school's vision should reflect the unique context of each school.
- Including stakeholders in the development of a school's vision is the best way to ensure that they support the development of the school and achievement of its vision.

3. Creating a culture of inclusion

While there is no fixed definition of culture, school culture can be loosely defined as a school's shared values, attitudes, and behavioral norms (Ann Higgins-D'Alessandro, 1997, p.554 [98]). A school's culture affects the day-to-day operation of the school, how policies are developed and implemented, how problems are solved, and how stakeholders are involved in the school's activities (UNICEF, 2014, p.24) [99]

An inclusive school culture is comprised of a vast number of elements, some of which are clearly visible, and others which are hidden out of sight, similarly to the composition of an iceberg. The visible elements of a school's culture are supported by the larger array of the unseen elements, which are just as crucial to the promotion of inclusive schools.

The occurrence of bullying, which is defined as repeated unwanted, aggressive behaviour, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance, poses one of the biggest barriers that endangers the creation of an inclusive school culture. Children with intellectual disabilities, as well as children with physical, developmental, emotional, and sensory disabilities, are at an increased risk of being bullied. As a result, is crucial that schools work to prevent bullying between students. This action can begin by incorporating the desire to create a supportive atmosphere into a school's vision and mission statements, but should also include the adoption of an effective strategy to resolve any occurrences of bullying within school, which can help to foster an inclusive school environment.

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> **Highlights:**
> - A school's culture can be loosely defined as a school's shared values, attitudes, and behavioural norms.
> - The visible elements of a school's culture are supported by the larger array of the unseen elements, which are just as crucial to the promotion of inclusive schools.

4. Stakeholder involvement oppurtunities for an inclusive school environment

4.1 Identifying stakeholders

An inclusive school only develops through the joint efforts of all those working in the school or have a stake in in the school and its pupils. These stakeholders must work together to co-produce more inclusive school environments.

A school's stakeholders can be internal as well as external. Their physical proximity to the school may vary, as can their potential influence and involvement in the activities of the school (Implementing Inclusion in Schools Project, 2019, p.8 [103]). In different countries these stakeholders are named differently and are organised differently. But in most countries the stakeholders of a school broadly consist of (Implementing Inclusion in Schools Project, p.8 [103]):

- School staff. This will include the headteacher as well as teachers, special needs teachers, learning attendants, therapists, administrators, maintenance and housekeeping people.
- Parents, the advisory board of parents and the school´s aid association.
- Organisations and/or public authorities that provide the funds for the school staff, the buildings and the teaching and learning material.
    - This may be split between different stakeholders and professions.
- Public authorities who decide on the curricula, guidelines for testing and acceptance criteria for degrees, certificates and diploma.
- Politicians who focus on educational issues.
- Counselling services for inclusion and integration provided by public authorities or non-profit organisations.
- Service providers for children with special needs in the region.
- Other schools in the school district.

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4.2 How to support stakeholder involvement

To support the involvement and collaboration of all stakeholder in school development processes, schools and school leaders must:

- *Ensure that the production process allows genuine participation at all stages.*

Co-production is not just a consultation process but includes the active participation of stakeholders. From the very first stage (co-creation) until the very last one (co-assessment), the process needs to be accessible, adaptable and flexible to include and to foster the participation of all stakeholders identified above (IE+, 2019 [104]). Stakeholders need to feel welcomed, respected, trusted, heard and needed (UNICEF, 2014 p.8 [99]). It is also important to provide opportunities for all participants to clarify their expectations, understand the complexities of the process (accomplishments as well as disappointments and drawbacks) and discuss how to improve the quality of the collaborative process (UNICEF, 2014 p.8 [99]).

- *Transparency in the development of policies and key objectives*

All discussions throughout the whole coproduction process should happen in presence of all stakeholders or be brought to the knowledge of the people who could not be present.
Collaboration must be both constructive and efficient, this is more likely to happen when all parties feel comfortable in the process, the different roles are agreed and understood, and information is provided regularly in an open and democratic way (UNICEF, 2014 p.8 [99]).

- *A more equal relationship between stakeholders*

The co-production process is essentially characterised by the equal relationship between all stakeholders involved in the coproduction. In practice, it means that each partner must have a voice in the process that is heard equally and has the same power in decision-making.

Opportunities for stakeholder partipation in schools include:

- **When developing a school vision:** Inviting parents, school staff, governors, local policy makers and students from a diverse range of backgrounds, to reflect on what they want for the school and its aims. Stakeholders can participate via workshops, surveys and meetings to together create a school's vision.
- **When making changes to the school's daily timetable:** Working with school staff, including teachers, parents and students from a diverse range of backgrounds, to develop a school timetable that can suit everyone.
- **When defining learning objectives and learning activities:** Fostering cooperation between teachers and parents to together define a school or class' learning objectives and learning activities.

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- **Developing a health and well-being policy:** Involving students, parents, teachers, experts and local food suppliers to together develop the aims of the policy and the activities that will ensure the implementation of the policy.

Example of Co-production: Burlington Junior School, (UK) – Change Teams

The Change Team at Burlington Junior School exists to discuss a wide range of issues to help move the school forward, taking account of the views of different stakeholders. The team consists of an experienced teacher, a newly qualified teacher (NQT), a teaching assistant, a member of the administrative staff, a governor and a small number of parents, including one who is a member of the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) (Fiona Carnie, 2013, p.504 [105]).

The agenda is wide-ranging and covers practical issues as well as providing an opportunity for reflection and discussion about new and imaginative ways forward. Discussion topics have included (Fiona Carnie, 2013, p.504 [105]):
- How are we doing with home learning?
- What can we do to improve communication?
- Does our curriculum reflect our children's cultural backgrounds?

4.3 Opportunities for involvement in your local community

Localised
Neighbourhoods and involvement in the community (the school as a community).

Highlights:
- School stakeholders must work together to co-produce more inclusive school environments.
- Co-production is not just a consultation process, but it includes the active participation of stakeholders.
- Collaboration must be both constructive and efficient.
- The co-production process is essentially characterised by the equal relationship between all stakeholders involved.

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5. Inclusive learning opportunities

Schools provide important learning environments in which students, as well as staff, can flourish. It is important to ensure that school learning programmes and curricula are

flexible to the learning needs of all students, enabling them to learn as well as demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge and skills. The education and continued training of teachers is also an important feature of the inclusion process. For schools to be fully inclusive, teachers must be provided with the knowledge, skills and tools that they need to be able to support the learning needs of all learners in the classroom through both initial and ongoing training.

5.1 Developing a learning programme for all

An important component of an inclusive school environment is the inclusivity of the learning opportunities it offers. Inclusive school learning programmes, or curricula, should emphasise the strength, as well as accommodate the needs of learners and aim to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities.
The principles of inclusion can be embedded in the learning frameworks on a number of different levels, from a national level, through to academic programmes and modules, down to individual teaching sessions (Anne Hughes, 2016, p.2 [106]).

Localisation – Revision of learning programmes/curriculum in schools – how you can change the topics children are taught.
Reference to UDL in Chapter II.

5.2 Teacher training for inclusion

For all learners to be fully included in the education system, it is paramount to have adequate teacher education and training. This training must be in-line with the core values of inclusive education, to ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and attitude to deal with diversity and inclusion (Essi Kesälahti and Sai Väyrynen, 2013, p.76 [107]).

> The core values of inclusive education include (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.10 [97]):
>
> - Valuing learner diversity: difference is considered a resource and an asset to education;
> - Supporting all learners: teachers have high expectations on all learners' achievements;
> - Working with others: collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers;
> - Personal professional development: teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning.

Investment into the adequate education and training for teachers and staff to ensure the understanding of Inclusive Education and Special Educational Needs of needed (EASPD, 2015, p.12 [29]). Providing the tools and knowledge to enable teachers to

meet the needs of all learners, regardless of their special education needs, should be included in teacher training curriculums from the very start of teacher training programmes.

Initial teacher training courses should:

- **Integrate training content on inclusive education across the entire teacher training course**

- **Promote inclusive attitudes and values**

If teachers are to support inclusive education, they must believe in the values that they embody. As a result, teacher training should provide student teachers with opportunities to critically discuss and reflect on their own attitudes and concepts of disability to overcome segregating attitudes (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.32 [97]).

- **Include practical training placements in inclusive schools and settings**

Quality inclusive school placements enable teachers to see inclusive education in reality and bridge the gap between theory and practice, helping them to develop the skills necessary to meet diverse needs in the classroom (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.32 [97]).

- **Incorporate inclusion into standard teacher competences**

Competences are the skills and knowledge that enable a teacher to be successful. A teacher's competences enable them to confidently take responsibility for all learners in their classes and need their learning needs, including those with a disability (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.66). By incorporating inclusive competences into the profile of teachers, national and regional authorities can provide a clear and consistent statement of what teachers are expected to know and to do as well as ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge that enable them to successfully implement inclusion (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.45 [97]).

Initial teacher training, which prioritises equipping teachers with the tools and knowledge to be able to meet the diverse needs of leaners can create the foundation for a flourishing inclusive education system. As more and more learners are educated in inclusive setting, the number of students entering the teaching profession with direct and positive experience of inclusion should increase. These experiences should positively impact student teacher's understanding, attitudes and values towards inclusion as well as the number of role models and mentors available to students and new teachers (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2011, p.65[97]).

- **Continual professional development for teachers**

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Continued training not only ensures that teachers remain able to support the needs of their students, but also provides teachers with the opportunity for ongoing professional development.

This professional development can help teachers to better respond to new challenges (such as curriculum changes or digitalisation) and acquire new competences and skills to support inclusive education. Ongoing training opportunities can also help teachers to feel supported in their role and can reinforce the status of teachers as professionals, helping teachers to feel more valued, which in turn can support the retention of teachers in the profession (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2015, p.42 [108]).

An array of training opportunities are available for the continual professional development of teachers. These opportunities include:

- Specialised, ad-hoc training courses, available through higher education invitations, NGOs, specialised organisations, charities or projects.
- These courses could vary from full-time course, which run over a number of days or weeks which can be completed by teachers during school holidays, in non-working days or during working days specifically allocated to training activities.
- Postgraduate Specialisation courses.
- Masters and doctoral studies.
- Distance learning or e-courses.
- Job shadowing or mobility opportunities (such as those provided by the Erasmus+ programme).

Ensuring that teachers are appropriately equipped to meet the learning needs of all students starts with initial teacher training courses. Teacher development is a continuous process however, and to ensure that teachers continue to be able to overcome new challenges, acquire new competences and skills to support inclusive education and feel valued in their role as professionals, ongoing teacher training is needed.

Highlights:
- It is important to ensure that school learning programmes and curricula are flexible to the learning needs of all students, enabling them to learn as well as demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- Teacher training must be in-line with the core values of inclusive education, to ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and attitude to deal with diversity and inclusion.
- Continuing professional development can help teachers to better respond to new challenges and acquire new competences and skills to support inclusive education.

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6. The role of school places in the inclusion process

For a student to be able to fully participate in a school's culture and social activities a school must be accessible to all, including those with an intellectual disability. The social and learning activities of a school extend outside the classroom into all areas of the school site. The playground, school dining hall or the library, must promote the inclusion and full social partipation of all learners in the school community, enabling them to contribute to the school's culture and social activities.

To ensure that all school spaces are inclusive to all learners, including those with an intellectual disability schools need to consider making certain adjustments:

Easy to read signs

Important information, such as signs or notices should be made avalible in plain language or easy to read text throughout the school to ensure that all children are able to understand them. It is also important that key school documents, including the school's vision and mission statements are available and easy to read.

Visual environment

Bright colours and complex patterns can overstimulate some students. Walls painted with neutral or pastel colours are more soothing while brighter colours can be introduced through display boards. Colour can also be used as a visual aid, such as in marking routes and using contrasting colours or layers of colour to define spaces or objects, such as step edges (New Zealand Ministry of Education, p.1 [109]).

Quiet spaces

Quieter spaces with seating should also be provided for all students. While these spaces should not be exclusionary, they should be quite enough to allow children to rest and allow their sensory system to calm down.

Case study:

In 2013 a study carried out by Georgia State University investigated the impact participation in extracurricular activities had on the social competence (their ability to handle social interactions effectively) of 7-12-year-old children with a learning or a mild-to-moderate intellectual disability (Bianca A. Brooks, 2013, p.33 [110]).

The study found that more time spent participating in unstructured activities, such as free play in the playground, was related to higher rating of social competence. Greater participation in unstructured activities was found to have a particularly strong effect on children with intellectual disabilities, and their partipation in unstructured activities had a greater impact on them than their peers who did not have a disability (Bianca A. Brooks, 2013, p.33 [110])

Find out more about how to make learning environments more inclusive in Chapter VI of this training course.

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> **Highlights:**
> - The social and learning activities of a school extend outside the classroom into all areas of the school site.
> - Every aspect and area of a school must promote the inclusion and full social partipation of all learners in the school community, enabling them to contribute to the school's culture and social activities.

7 Conclusions

For a fully inclusive school, it is crucial that all aspects of the school environment support inclusion. In this chapter we explored how a school's vision, culture, cooperation with stakeholders and surrounding community, learning programme, teacher training opportunities and social activities can contribute to an inclusive school environment which enables the full participation of all learners.

8 Summary

- A school's environment can be broadly defined as its facilities, classrooms, school-based support, policies, practices and activities. Together these elements create a wider environment or atmosphere to either support or discourage inclusion.
- A school's vision can create an initial framework for an inclusive school environment. This must be followed by an inclusive school culture and a school environment which supports the active participation of its stakeholders and the inclusion of all learners in every aspect of school life.
- To be successful, inclusive education requires the appropriate initial and ongoing training of teachers, to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of their students and feel valued in their role as a professional.

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IE+ Training Course: Chapter VI

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PROMOTING POSITIVE
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BASED POLICY FOR
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Acknowledgements

Contents

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1. Inclusive education and an inclusive classroom

In an inclusive education system, the framework changes to adapt to the individual needs of the learner and applies attitudes, approaches and strategies that include all learners in all activities, regardless of their support needs, with respect to their individual learning level.

An inclusive classroom is one that creates a supportive environment for all learners, including those with learning disabilities by building a more responsive learning environment.

Inclusivity also means respecting people from all backgrounds and cultures. By teaching our students the importance of this, we can create a much more tolerant and understanding environment, not just in the classroom and school but also in wider society.

An inclusive school or classroom can only be successful when all students feel they are truly a part of the school community. This can only happen through open, honest discussion about differences and understanding and respecting people from all abilities and backgrounds. An inclusive environment is one where everyone feels valued.

Highlights:
- In an inclusive education system:
    - every person has the same possibilities to enjoy a high-quality education;
    - the framework changes to adapt to the individual needs of the learner.
- An inclusive classroom is:
    - one that creates a supportive environment for all learners;
    - a place where all students feel they are a part of the school community.

2. Benefits for all students

Over the last few decades, studies have shown that all learners, both those with and without disabilities, benefit from an inclusive education (Kalambouka et al., 2007 [117]; Cole et al., 2004 [116]). For students with disabilities these benefits include the full enjoyment of their human rights; being able to realise the development of their personality, talents and creativity to their fullest potential; better communication and social skills, as well as more friendships. More time

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in mainstream classrooms is also associated with fewer absences and referrals for disruptive behaviour.

For their peers without disabilities, inclusive classrooms have been shown to foster more positive attitudes towards diversity. Participating in a class alongside students with disabilities can yield positive impacts on the social attitudes and beliefs. Staub and Peck (1995)[119] identify five main benefits of the inclusion for peers without disabilities:

- Reduced fear of human differences accompanied by increased comfort and awareness (less fear of people who look or behave differently);
- Growth in social cognition (increased tolerance of others, more effective communication with all peers);
- Improvements in self-concept (increased self-esteem, perceived status, and sense of belonging);
- Development of personal moral and ethical principles (less prejudice, higher responsiveness to the needs of others);
- Warm and caring friendships.

Research shows the presence of learners with differing learning styles and needs provides students with new kinds of learning opportunities. One of these is that students can serve as peer-coaches. By supporting other students, learners also improve their own performance. In addition to this, as teachers take into greater consideration the diverse learning needs of their learners, they provide instructions in a wider range of learning modalities (visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic), which is for the benefit of all students (Dell'Anna et al., 2019 [111]).

Highlights:
- All learners, both those with and without disabilities, benefit from an inclusive education.
- The presence of learners with differing learning styles and needs provides students with new kinds of learning opportunities.

3. Role and attitudes of peers and teachers in an inclusive classroom

To understand how to create inclusive classrooms, especially where children with intellectual disabilities are present, teachers must develop their knowledge and skills, and an understanding

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of key strategies critical to achieving success. Successful inclusion practices highlight the significance of not only the presence of children in the class, but also the quality of their experiences and their achievement across the curriculum. Teachers play a pivotal role in mainstreaming inclusive education. An inclusive classroom welcomes, nurtures, and educates all children regardless of their gender, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other characteristics. An inclusive classroom is thus one in which the teacher understands the value of this diversity in the classroom and takes steps to ensure that all girls and boys come to school.

The implementation of inclusive education requires teachers to reconsider their teaching practice, but many teachers do not feel competent doing this, so professional development should support teachers by providing good practices (see Chapter V).

Evidence from multiple countries suggests that teachers generally support the concept of inclusive education but question their own ability to teach in an inclusive classroom. Although teachers approve inclusion in theory, few are willing to include students with disabilities in their own classrooms. Many teachers attribute their hesitation to include students with disabilities to a lack of proper training. Providing training for teachers can influence teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Multiple studies have found that teachers who have received training on inclusion are more likely to have positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities. (Van Mieghem et al., 2018 [112])

Training programmes focusing on specific student needs or disabilities were found to be more effective than general training programmes. It is suggested that tools and strategies, related to specific teachers' concerns and their teaching context (e.g. curriculum), are the most helpful and effective in encouraging change in teachers' practice. Practices to enhance inclusive education for students with special educational needs can be divided into two categories: additional support by teachers and support by peers. (Van Mieghem et al., 2018 [112])

Additional support by teachers/teaching assistants for students with intellectual disabilities include:

1. *Co-teaching*

   Co-teaching is found to be an effective instrumental and pedagogical model for handling diversity from which students with and without SEN can benefit. Fluijt, Bakker, and Struyf (2016) [113] define co-teaching as: "Multiple professionals working together in a co-teaching team, with a shared vision, in a structured manner, during a longer period in which they are equally responsible for good teaching and good learning to all students in their classroom". Co-teaching teams develop an attitude in which they embrace the complexity in their work as an opportunity for professional development. In addition, team-reflection is suggested to empower co-teachers and increase normative

professionalism in co-teaching teams. To implement co-teaching models effectively, training for teachers is required and organisational aspects should be considered, such as training and time for co-planning, co-instruction, co-assessment, and co-reflection. Effective co-teaching strategies focus directly on student learning goals and provide adequate planned instructions.

2. *Teaching assistants*

Teaching assistants provide special education services within regular education. Clear role clarification for teaching assistants is vital for success. Their roles should be restricted to supplemental, teacher-designed instruction as well as essential non-instructional roles (e.g. clerical duties, materials preparation, personal care, group supervision) that help create time and opportunities for general and special educators to collaborate with each other and spend more time directly instructing students with disabilities.

Peer support is a technique that involves putting learners in pairs or small groups to engage in learning activities that facilitate academic education and social competencies. This approach to teaching does not require additional personnel or additional funding. It is an evidence-based approach that delivers positive results related to academic achievement and a feeling of "belonging" over time. Peer supports offer a good learning tool for educators to improve student instruction with and without disabilities. (de Boera, Pijla, Minnaerta, 2012 [114])

Next are three innovative ways where peer aid can be used to meet students with disabilities' educational and social needs in general educational settings. Furthermore, each of these models requires an up-front preparation that entails choosing the right type of approach, using it at the right time, with perhaps individualised results, all consistent with the lesson's goals. (Szumski, Smogorzewska, Karwowski, 2017 [115])

Collaborative Training – An instructional method used to enhance the skills provided by the teacher. This teaching approach provides time for practice, analysis and opportunities for learners to develop higher-level thinking skills.

Cross-Age Peer Support is another technique which assists with learning in general education. This method typically involves older students, primarily of high school age, who provide educational support to primary or secondary school pupils.

Peer Modeling is another tool that can be used to help students understand instructional content, procedures and classroom habits. It also offers classroom teachers with ways to use classmates to help with guidance, explain instructions and provide contextual feedback with little or no interruption to the instructional process. It is a great way for peers to provide effective behavioural patterns for students who need to develop their interpersonal skills.

> Highlights:
> - Teachers play a pivotal role in mainstreaming inclusive education.
> - Teachers who have received training on inclusion are more likely to have positive attitudes towards inclusive education.
> - Co-teaching is an effective instrumental and pedagogical model for handling diversity from which students with and without intellectual disabilities can benefit.
> - In a co-teaching team two or more specialists/teachers are working together by teaching a lesson.
> - Peer support is a strategy that involves placing students in pairs or in small groups to participate in learning activities that support academic instruction and social skills.

4. Role and attitudes of families

4.1 Parental contribution to the process of building an inclusive classroom

In recent decades, there has been a trend that schools are becoming more open to parental involvement as full participants in the school community. They are a valuable partner in building, respectively, an inclusive learning environment and an inclusive classroom.

The collaboration of teachers and other professionals at school with parents is often not easy. Sometimes conflicts may arise and different perspectives need to be reconciled. Such difficulties may lower teachers' motivation to seek parental collaboration by the process of building an inclusive classroom.

Despite the obstacles, parental involvement can make a significant contribution to building an inclusive classroom. A number of benefits of the active parental involvement can be listed, to motivate the collaboration of teachers, parents and other specialists in that process. Some of them, reviewed in the International Journal of Advanced Educational Research (Monika, 2017, p. 259) [120] are:

- Parents know their children best. They know their likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, needs and desires, abilities, capacities, capabilities and challenges. This information shared with teachers is invaluable while developing an educational plan for the child.

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- Family members can provide important information about the strengths and weaknesses of their child.
- Families and community groups can take an active role in promoting inclusive education by helping and cooperating with the school authorities in making or providing necessary arrangements and accommodations for the education of special peers.
- When families get involved in their children's education, the students achieve more, stay in school longer and engage in school more completely.
- The participation of family members in all spheres of a child's life plays a vital role in shaping and determining his/her personality.
- Parental involvement in inclusive education programmes builds positive relationships, encourages new behaviours, and increases self-satisfaction and optimism among themselves, their children and teachers.
- The parents may see whether the child with special needs benefits from the school experience or not.
- Parents and teachers working together can ensure children acquire as many necessary skills and abilities to be successful in life as possible.
- As a parent it is important to be fully involved in all the aspects of decision-making that go on during a child's education.
- In some cases where the children are identified very early in their lives by family members, it becomes the responsibility of the parents or family to inform the school authorities about their child's special needs.
- If parents will work with their children at home, not only will they progress more quickly and show better results, but they will also realise how dedicated and committed their parents are to their education.

4.2 The involvement of parents/families in the team that supports the child

There are different models for the collaboration of the parents and specialists from the team for personal development of a student at school. They differ by the degree of joint planning, the joint work of the participants of the team. Other differences can be found in the degree of involvement of the family and the parents respectively in the planning and implementation of the child support plan. It is important to stress that none of these models are better than the others. A model can be chosen according to the characteristics of the child, the family, the school, and their cultural characteristics.

Three basic models can be distinguished. These are the models of Multidisciplinary team, Interdisciplinary team and Transdisciplinary team:

The model of multidisciplinary team

In this model the team members recognise the importance of contribution from several disciplines. The family meets with the team members separated by discipline.

The model of interdisciplinary team

In this model the team members are willing and able to share responsibility for services among disciplines. The family might be considered as a team member. Families may work with the whole team or with a team representative.

The model of transdisciplinary team

In the model of transdisciplinary team, the team members commit to teach, learn and work across disciplinary boundaries to plan and provide integrated services. The parents are always members of the team and they determine their own team role. The basic principles of the model of the interdisciplinary team are:

-   Parents are full members of the team;
-   Parents are understood as competent experts on their family and child;
-   The team shares responsibilities;
-   The team communicates in only one language;
-   Within concrete support processes the team shares who will do what;
-   The parents might choose one key person within the team;
-   Professionals might give up a bit of their professional identities;

Highlights:
- Families and community groups can help the school authorities in making or providing necessary arrangements and accommodations for the education of special peers.
- Family members can provide important information about the strengths and weaknesses of their child.
- There are different models for the collaboration of parents and specialists at school. A model can be chosen according to the characteristics of the child, the family, the school, and their cultural characteristics.

5. Building inclusive classrooms

Providing an appropriate learning environment can be as central to a student's success as any teaching strategy or educational tool. Students with intellectual disabilities, as well as all the students in the class, will be the most prepared to learn in places where they can relax and feel

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secure and belonging. In order to create environments most conducive to learning, teachers may need to examine ways in which classroom spaces are organised. When we are thinking about the physical space in the classroom, we have to keep in mind the sounds, smells and the lighting in the classroom, as high frequency of sensory processing dysfunctions is prevalent among children with intellectual developmental disabilities and contributes to their maladaptive behaviours (Engel-Yeger et al., 2011) [118].

In general, we will look at three directions in which we can make changes by creating a more inclusive classroom: the changes we can make in the physical space, in the activities of the class and in the way of teaching.

5.1 Physical space

- **Classroom arrangement:**
  - The arrangement of the student desks in a half-circle can help the learners know each other better, learn some important social skills from each other and be more concentrated when their classmates are talking. This type of classroom arrangement encourages the communication between the students and fosters the emotional connections between them (see the example in fig. 1).
  - Chairs and desks that are easy to move are convenient in moments of switching the activities (e.g. when the teacher wants to switch from group discussion or lecture to work in small groups). This flexibility allows the teacher to respond to the different social, emotional and educational needs of the different learners in the class.
  - It is important for the teacher to consider if, for some of the students, it will be more beneficial that their place in the classroom is closer to the teacher or that their place is near a classmate that can support the learner with difficulties with the current tasks and activities in class.
  - Creating a rest area or a place in the classroom where the students can relax. For example, sitting on the floor on a carpet may encourage the communication and can become a good place to get to know each other in a different context beyond learning.
- **Visual prompts:**

Different types of visual prompts can be used to make the learning environment and process more understandable for all the students and mostly for the students with intellectual disabilities. The visual prompts can be prepared by the teacher, by the parents or by the learner with some help from the adults if needed. Different visual prompts can also be found online and can be free printed and used at school (e.g. at http://www.victoriesnautism.com/schedule-activity-and-task-cards.html).

- o Visual prompts may be used for visualising the curriculum for the day, as well as the different cabinets and rooms in the school (music, arts, chemistry, teachers' room etc.).
- o Student desk name plates – As it is hard for some students to remember the names of their classmates, each of them can make and put on their desk a tablet with their names and a picture. The teachers can also have such a tablet on their desk during the classes.
- o A classroom plan with the names of the students - a small plan of the classroom with the names of the students can also support the adaptation and socialisation of a student in class (see the example in fig. 1)
- o Locker tags with pictures on the school lockers.
- o Although visual prompts can be helpful for students' orientation and for enhancing their sense of security, they should not be too much in the classroom. A classroom with walls filled with boards, colours and pictures could be also distracting or confusing to some students.
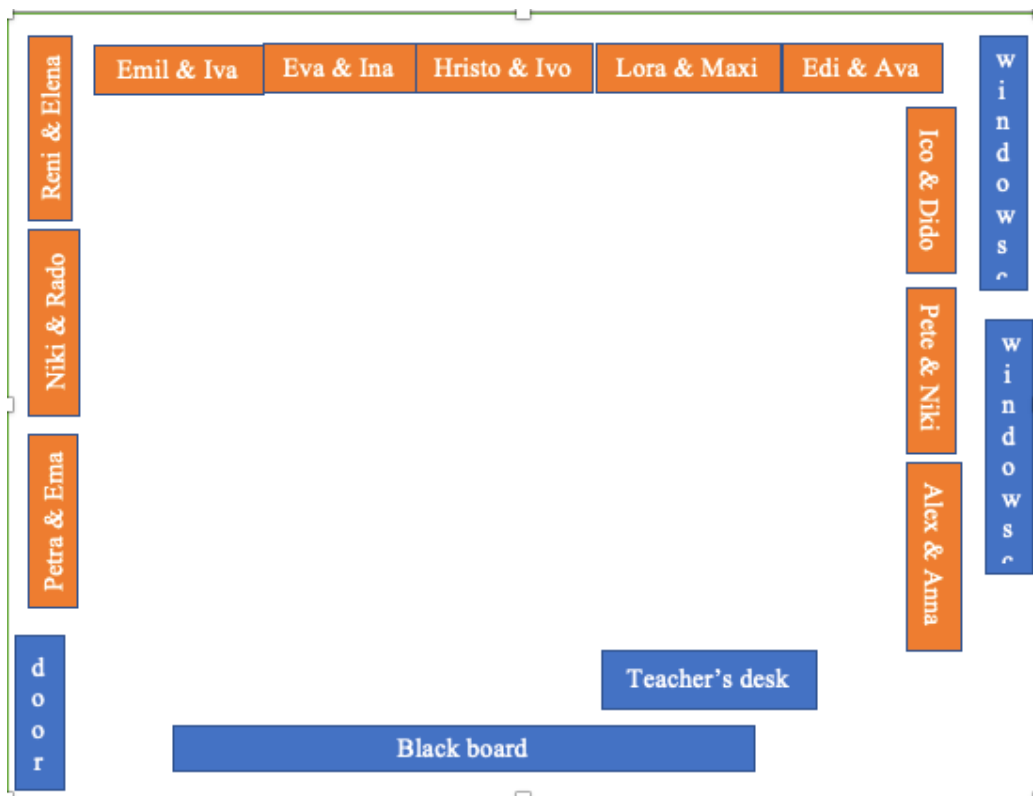
Figure 1 Classroom arrangement plan

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- **Reducing unpleasant and distracting noises:**
  o Installing curtains, carpets, poufs or other textile elements in the classroom may create a cozier atmosphere and reduce echoes and noise.
  o Teachers may provide earplugs or headphones for some students that are hypersensitive to sounds by the noisy activities.
  o Soft patches or textiles can be put/stuck on the bottoms of chair or desk legs so that noise can be reduced when furniture are moved.
  o The clapping by celebrations or by congratulations on a task well done may be replaced by finger-clicking or some hand signal (waving, ring gesture) if there are children with hypersensitivity to sound.
  o Pleasant sounds (music, sound of water) may be used during the breaks.
- **Reducing strong smells:**
  o If there are children with heightened sensory system the teacher can avoid room fragrances, strong perfumes, cleaning agents.
  o It may be better to keep food outside the classroom.
  o For students with heightened sensory system it may be better to sit by the window, so they have access to fresh air if needed.

A smell/fragrance that all the students find pleasant, relaxing or calming may be used in the classroom (e.g. lavender, mint, cinnamon).

5.2 Activities for fostering the emotional connections in the classroom

Next to the educational activities, as we have already stressed, activities that are fostering the positive emotional climate and the friendships in the classroom are also important. They give the students a sense of belonging and make the learning process easier and calmer. The most of these activities and practices do not cost a lot of time and special resources. Here are some examples of such practices in the classroom:

- Initiation of discussions about favourite activities, hobbies, movies;
- Leaving the last 5 minutes after each lesson for relaxing while sitting on the floor and reflecting (talk about the experiences, emotions, relationships in the class);
- Encouraging the conversation in small groups during the breaks by giving each group a different discussion topic to discuss and share their ideas with the class the next day/week.
- Giving students time to present and play their favourite games with their classmates.

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5.3 The process of teaching

The process of teaching can be organised according to the UDL framework that presents different ways of creating more inclusive teaching practices (see Chapter II).

There are three key things educators need to remember when creating a fully inclusive classroom.

1. The pedagogy they have been creating.
2. The material that they create and teach.
3. Techniques and equipment used in the classroom.

5.4 Inclusive Pedagogy

Thinking of pedagogy inclusively means potentially rethinking how learning is done and providing the means to help students excel.

- Explore the curriculum for ways to ensure these methodologies throughout the course.
- A curriculum has been distributed within the course and is easy to access to all pupils.
- The goals of the course and the learning outcomes are properly outlined, either in the curriculum or in the course components themselves.
- Where appropriate, you have taken the time to establish distinct practices. Give the students choices on how to best demonstrate their knowledge and understanding improves interaction and guarantees that all learning styles and requirements can be fulfilled without complicated accommodation.
- You've created opportunities for collective learning all through the classroom.
- Clear guidelines are given for all units, tests and tasks. It is important for students to understand exactly what is expected of them.
- You used the ideas of Universal Design for Learning in the programme.

5.5 Inclusive Content

Thinking inclusively requires updating content and making sure that it is designed for widespread use. It also means rejecting content that does not meet that standard. In your course, review all of the material for the following criteria:

- All pictures have replacement text or have been explicitly labeled as decorative.
- You do not use pictures that are made up of text in your material.

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- In your course you don't have any flashing pictures or animations. If you do, the animations are vital to the content, not just enjoyable and amusing. If you keep them make sure you have properly described what the animation conveys in alternate text or comprehensive text explanations.
- All Word and PowerPoint files are well organised.
- All PDFs are labeled for accessibility.
- All video clips are captioned.
- All the colours you use have the right contrast between the background and the foreground. Tables are not used for formatting anywhere in the text.

5.6 Inclusive Technology and Tools

Inclusive thinking entails understanding how people need to communicate with the various tools that you use and adapt or modify as appropriate. Recognise how it can impact people with diverse needs when selecting tools and technology to use in class.

- Will colors have enough contrast in the application?
- Is the whole page magnified, and not the text only?
- Can all controls be accessed using just a keyboard?
- When form labels are clicked, does it move the cursor to the appropriate element?
- Do you provide audio and visual alerts in more than one format?
- When style sheets are disabled in the browser, is the content still understandable?
- Does it require additional plug-ins and downloads?

Highlights:
- Providing an appropriate learning environment can be as central to a student's success as any teaching strategy or educational tool.
- Different types of visual prompts can be used to make the learning environment and process more understandable for all the students and mostly for the students with intellectual disabilities.
- The arrangement of the classroom may support the adaptation of the learners with ID in the class.
- Keep in mind: the sounds, smells and the lighting in the classroom are important. High frequency of sensory processing dysfunctions is prevalent among children with intellectual developmental disabilities.
- Not only educational activities, but also activities that are fostering the positive emotional climate and the friendships in classroom are important.

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7 Conclusions

To change the classroom into an inclusive classroom is significant to a student's success. The inclusive classroom provides a supportive environment for all learners, including those with learning differences. It is one that can also challenge and engage gifted and talented learners by building a more responsive learning environment.

There are different practices to enhance inclusive education for students with special educational needs. An additional support by teachers and support by peers are as important as the collaboration with parents and specialists at school. A model can be chosen according to the characteristics of the child, the family, the school, and their cultural characteristics.

An inclusive classroom is one that creates a supportive environment for all learners, including those with learning disabilities by building a more responsive learning environment. Inclusivity also means respecting people from all backgrounds and cultures. By teaching our students the importance of this, we support them to be more aware, tolerant and understanding of each other, not just in the classroom and school but also in wider society.

8 Summary

- In order to make a classroom more inclusive, changes in three directions can be undertaken:
  o changes in the physical space,
  o in the activities of the class and
  o in the way of teaching.
- It is important to use inclusive technologies and tools in the classroom.
- Additional support by teachers and support by peers are as important as the collaboration with parents and specialists at school.

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