
Introduction to the work of the European Agency

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The Agency's Network

- 29 European countries: 26 countries from the European Union plus Norway, Iceland and Switzerland
- Ministries of Education form the Board
- RBs: decision making: WP and MAWP
- NCs: national networks: info gathering and dissemination



Some facts

- Almost 20 years of operations
- 1996 - established as an initiative of the Danish Ministry of education following the end of the EU HELIOS programme
- Secretariat based in Odense, Denmark
- Centre of Activity in Brussels, Belgium



Funding

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



Strategic objectives

- The promotion of quality in the field of special needs and inclusive education through the maintenance of a long-term framework for extended European collaboration
- Our work is in line with the EU Council priorities as identified in the ET 2020 strategy and in accordance with international agreements, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006)



Focus

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



Working parameters

- Countries are at different starting points and have different ‘histories’ in terms of education generally and inclusive education specifically
- No-one country has all the answers – many countries have clear examples of innovative practice, but all countries are still ‘moving ahead’



Activities

- Collection, analysis and dissemination of information on priority themes
- Participation in and organisation of conferences, seminars and political events
- Liaison with European institutions and international organisations – UNESCO and its institutes (IBE, IITE), OECD, Eurostat, Eurydice, Cedefop, World Bank



Information Provision

- The Agency offers various information resources, which can be accessed via the website: www.european-agency.org
 - Project web areas
 - Country information area
 - Reports, literature reviews, policy flyers
 - News section, newsletter and the eBulletin
- Agency publications can be freely downloaded in up to 22 European languages



Special Events

- European Parliament Hearing in Brussels 2003
- Portuguese Parliament Hearing in Lisbon 2007
- European Parliament Hearing in Brussels 2011
- Luxembourg Hearing in October 2015



Parliament Hearing in Brussels November 2011



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



We see a lot of benefits in inclusive education: we acquire more social skills; we live more experiences; we learn about how to manage in the real world; we need to interact with friends with and without special needs



Some Recent and Current projects

- Teacher Education for Inclusion
- Vocational Education and Training
- Organisation of Provision to Support IE
- Financing
- Raising Achievement for All Learners in IE
- ICT for Information Accessibility in Learning
- Inclusive Pre Primary Education
- Early school leaving



Recent new activities

- Audits
 - Malta: 2014-2015
 - Iceland: 2015-2016
- Country review and Analysis work



Percentage of pupils with SEN in segregated settings

Up to 1.0% 1.01 %- 2.0% 2.01%- 4.0% 4.01% and above

Italy	Austria	Czech Rep.	Belgium (Fl)
Luxembourg	Cyprus	Finland	Belgium (Fr)
Malta	Iceland	France	Denmark
Norway	Ireland	Greece	Estonia
Portugal	Lithuania	Hungary	Germany
Spain	Poland	Netherlands	Latvia
UK (Wales)	Sweden	Slovenia	Slovakia
	UK (England)		Switzerland
	UK (N.I.)		
	UK (Scotland)		



Inclusion as systemic change

- Understood to concern a far wider range of learners vulnerable to exclusion than those identified as having disabilities or SENs
- Inclusion is a process and not a state; educators will always need to move their work forward to enable the learning and participation of all learners



More Information

www.european-agency.org

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Finally

I wish you a fantastic, inspiring and fruitful
conference!

