

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION - A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING A PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

VERITY DONNELLY

AMANDA WATKINS

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education¹

Abstract

This paper describes the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education project on Teacher Education for Inclusion which involved experts from 25 European countries. It sets out the policy context in Europe and stresses the need to strengthen teacher education in order to meet current policy priorities. The authors provide a summary of the TE4I project findings from Agency member countries and outline the project key messages. They describe the development of a Profile of Inclusive Teachers and the early impact of this and other project outcomes.

Keywords

Teacher education, inclusion, profile, competences

(Correspondence to: Verity Donnelly, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Østre Stationsvej 33, DK-5000, Odense-C, Denmark. E. Mail: verity@european-agency.org)

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education issues are high on the policy agenda across Europe. It is widely accepted that teachers are the most important in-school factor influencing the quality of pupil learning (Barber, & Mourshed, 2007; Hattie, 2009) and it therefore follows that teacher educators also play an influential role in the development of more inclusive practice.

¹ As of 1st January 2014, the Agency changed its name to: European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

The World Report on Disability (2011) states: “The appropriate training of mainstream teachers is crucial if they are to be confident and competent in teaching children with diverse needs. The principles of inclusion should be built into teacher training programmes, which should be about attitudes and values, not just knowledge and skills” (p. 222).

This paper will describe recent work by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education on the Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project, including the development of a Profile of Inclusive Teachers, which could play a key role in the further development of teacher education across Europe.

THE CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT IN EUROPE

The Council Conclusions on the social dimension of education and training (Council of the European Union, 2010) note that education and training systems across the EU need to ensure both equity and excellence and recognise that improving educational attainment and key competencies for all are crucial not only to economic growth and competitiveness, but also to reducing poverty and fostering social inclusion.

A further stimulus for change is provided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2006) which is increasing awareness of the fact that inclusive education not only provides the best educational environment for learners with disabilities, but that it helps to break down barriers and challenge stereotypes.

Increasingly, there appears to be an acknowledgment of the need for holistic and inter-connected policies based on the idea that a move towards inclusive education cannot happen in isolation and requires systemic reform. The developments occurring throughout Europe include an important change in terminology: the term inclusion is now used to refer to a far wider range of pupils vulnerable to exclusion than those identified as having special educational needs. The 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) (2008) recommended that policy makers should acknowledge that: *inclusive education is an on-going process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination* (Acedo, Amadio, & Operti, 2008, p. 126).

D’Alessio and Watkins (2009) point out however, that although many countries are moving towards a broader definition such as the one above, policy makers and practitioners are not always talking about the same thing. It is important to note too, that a change in terminology also demands parallel developments in understanding the related ideology. This may include an acceptance of all difference as a natural part of life - and a valuable resource for mutual learning. Florian and Rouse (2009) state that teachers need to understand that difference

must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning.

Strengthening teacher education

The Ministers of Education in member states have identified priorities for improving teacher education (Council of the European Union, 2007, 2008, and 2009) which were summarised by Paul Holdsworth, European Commission, DG-Education and Culture, in 2010 as a contribution to the Teacher Education for Inclusion project debates. The following 10 priority policy areas can be identified:

1. Promote professional values and attitudes;
2. Improve teacher competences;
3. Effective recruitment and selection to promote educational quality;
4. Improve the quality of Initial Teacher Education;
5. Introduce Induction programmes for all new teachers;
6. Provide mentoring support to all teachers;
7. Improve quality and quantity of Continuing Professional Development;
8. School Leadership;
9. Ensure the quality of Teacher Educators;
10. Improve Teacher Education Systems.

More recently, the European Commission paper “Support the teaching professions for better learning outcomes” (European Commission, 2012) stresses that rapidly changing demands require the teaching professions to develop new competences. They state: *Teaching staff need to offer individualised teaching so that all learners achieve specified learning outcomes, whatever their particular learning needs, cultural or social background; they need to take maximum advantage of the latest technologies and methodologies* (p. 5).

There is wide recognition that teachers also play a key role in helping to address other European level priorities, in particular:

- the concern for underachievement as evidenced in national assessments and international comparisons such as PISA.
- the Europe 2020 strategy national targets agreed by member states to reduce early school leaving.
- the challenges and opportunities presented by migration and mobility as outlined by the Commission of the European Communities (2008).

These points further reinforce the need to take action to improve teacher education in order to ensure that the needs of all learners can be met in today’s increasingly diverse classrooms.

THE AGENCY PROJECT: TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION (TE4I)

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (the Agency) was established in 1996 by agreement between the Ministers of Education in member countries. The Agency is a permanent network of Ministerial representatives acting as the member countries' platform for collaboration regarding the promotion of quality and equity in education as a means to achieving social cohesion.

The Agency is maintained by the member countries² and is supported by the European Union Institutions, although it works independently from these institutions. The developing co-operation between European policy makers in the area of teacher education has highlighted a range of common concerns and priority areas for future work. These formed the basis for the project on Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) which aimed to answer the following questions:

What kind of teachers do we need for an inclusive society in a twenty-first century school?

What are the essential teacher competences for inclusive education?

It was agreed the project would focus upon the education of mainstream, general teachers and how they are prepared to work in inclusive settings with a focus on initial teacher education.

The fact that, across Agency member countries there was so much agreement on priorities for teacher education presented a major opportunity – shared problems motivated collaborative working at both policy and practice levels. Such a collaborative approach has been the basis for the Agency project.

The project began in early 2009 and, following initial preparatory activities developed three activity 'tracks' involving 55 experts from 25 European countries. These experts – from policy and teacher education backgrounds – worked together on the overall theme of how mainstream teachers are prepared via their initial education to be 'inclusive'. Study visits and project meetings also made an important contribution by providing opportunities for debate about key issues. Representatives from the European Commission DG-EAC, OECD-CERI and UNESCO-IBE were also involved in the project to ensure consistency with other European and international initiatives in this area of work.

The TE4I project set out to examine the essential skills, knowledge and understanding, and attitudes and values needed by those entering the teaching profession, regardless of the subject, specialty, type of school, or age range being taught. Agency member countries also requested information on the competences required for all teachers working in inclusive settings, so the project

² Austria, Belgium [Flemish and French speaking communities], Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom [England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales]

has developed a profile of inclusive mainstream teachers based upon national-level information, agreed upon at the European level.

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to put the Agency project activities into a wider context, an extensive review of literature was undertaken with inputs from experts from 18 countries participating in the Agency project³. Many common themes emerge and these are summarised below.

Guojondottir, et al. (2008) stress the need to develop a *holistic approach to inclusion*, including issues of equity, poverty and diversity. Saloviita (2005) notes the importance of developing *shared terminology and appropriate use of inclusive language* while Esteve (2009) and Nuova (2009) state that *teaching practice* is key in developing knowledge of the 'professional culture of teaching'. Hajkova (2007) also stresses the importance of reflection in transformational learning.

Other key issues discussed include: the need to *close the theory- practice gap* (Munoz, 2009; Mattson, Dage Hore, & Pisila, 2006; Molina, 2006) and to *develop critical skills in research* and develop a 'research attitude' (Rodrigues, 2009). Dispositions such as resilience, positive attitudes towards disability and beliefs regarding the potential of learners with diverse needs are considered to be essential (Tubele, 2008; Vandeputte, Vanacker, & Vanbuynder, 2007). Many other researchers point to the need to *remove the 'experience based barriers'* which arise because students themselves were not educated in inclusive settings (Nakkarinen, 2008).

The development of skills to ensure positive relationships with peers and pupils and *regard for pupil voice* (Molina, 2006; Kaikkonen, Maunonen-Eskelinen, & Aidukiene, 2007); *knowledge of learning* (i.e. constructivist approaches), personalisation and support strategies (Casonova et al. 2006; Kavkler, 2009; ONFRIH, 2008; Cefai, Fenech, & Galea, 2007) and the need to undertake research and improve networking among teacher educators (Franzkowiak, 2009) are also described together with the importance of developing initial teacher education institutions' *understanding of disability and inclusion* (Cardona, 2009).

Collaboration is widely considered to be an essential skill for inclusive teachers but is also key for teacher educators teaching on special and mainstream teacher education programmes who need to work to 'merge' content in order to better prepare all teachers to meet diverse needs (Pugach & Blanton, 2009). Acedo, et al. (2008) express the view that due to the diversity of difficulties with which all teachers are confronted, separate pre-service education tracks (special and mainstream), are unhelpful and this view is supported by Young (2008) who

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

suggests that the implied need for an ever greater range of qualifications and specialisms limits who teachers think they can teach.

Overall, Hollins, and Gunzman (2005) suggest that teacher education requires the reduction of prejudice, development of an 'equity pedagogy' and field experiences to increase understanding of and sensitivity to cultural diversity. The literature therefore supports the need to move towards initial teacher education that prepares all teachers to work in increasingly inclusive settings.

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN EUROPE: COUNTRY INFORMATION FROM THE AGENCY PROJECT

Country information for the TE4I project was collected via a questionnaire in order to provide a description of the reality of teacher education situations in countries as well as information on practice that indicates ways forward and effective innovations.

All country reports have been analysed to identify trends, similarities, challenges and features of innovative practice. The country reports are available on the Agency website and the information has also been put into a searchable thematic database of key topics. The project final report 'Teacher Education for Inclusion across Europe - Challenges and Opportunities' also draws upon this content to provide a synthesis of national-level information (e.g. trends, similarities, differences) together with findings from other project strands: the literature review and country study visits. This report also:

- identifies key issues and common challenges for policy makers and ITE institutions in moving towards teacher education for inclusion.
- shares information about innovations and approaches to overcoming barriers to changing policy and practice for teacher education.
- offers recommendations based on evidence from national-level reports and project research.

The synthesis report is available in all Agency member country languages⁴ but the main findings and recommendations are summarised here.

In considering the wider policy context for teacher education for inclusion, differences in terminology become evident. A few countries do not use the term "inclusion" but use alternatives such as "school for all" or "attention to diversity".

Countries are also at different points in the move away from using the term "integration". To date, this term has mostly been associated with issues around placing learners with disabilities into mainstream settings, with a focus on the individual deficits of the child rather than the limitations of the

4 <http://www.european-agency.org/publications/ereports/te4i-challenges-and-opportunities/te4i-challenges-and-opportunities>

school environment. While many countries have moved towards using the term “inclusion” and a much broader understanding of this concept, wide variations still exist in understanding, and therefore in practice. Overall, the lack of agreed definitions for key terms remains a challenge as, despite changes in terminology, the concepts often remain unchanged.

The report mentions recent debates at the national policy level in a number of countries, who are considering whether inclusion refers to all children being “under the same roof” or to being engaged in a common learning endeavour (a view compatible with education in specialist settings). Such uncertainties reflect differences about the aims and functions of schooling in society which, in turn affects the development of clear and coherent policies and methods of accountability that support inclusive approaches.

Reports from Agency member countries showed that there is common ground regarding entry requirements and routes into the teaching profession, although a number of countries are introducing five-year master’s programmes. There are variations in the amount and structure of school practice, in the links between schools and teacher education institutions, and in the ways such practice is supervised.

Across countries, there is broad agreement about content of courses designed to prepare teachers for work in inclusive settings. What is less clear is how teacher education can move from using discrete courses on inclusion and diversity issues to a more integrated approach and, finally, to the development of an initial training that is infused with the content needed to develop the necessary inclusive competences, attitudes, and values in all teachers. For this to happen will require a more systematic approach to the induction and professional development of “general” teacher educators, and closer collaboration with colleagues who have experience and expertise in inclusion. Experts in the Agency project agreed that teacher educators should “practice what they preach”, so they provide examples of a variety of teaching approaches and assessment methods.

The majority of countries taking part in the project have established competences or standards for teachers. Of these, some have specified competences related to inclusion, while others adopt an ‘integrated’ approach. The following teacher competences summarise key areas seen by these countries as relevant to the development of inclusive practice:

- Collaborate with others (professionals, parents) to assess and plan to meet the diverse needs of learners, attending to issues of equality and human rights.
- Address language learning in multilingual contexts and value cultural diversity as a resource.
- Use a variety of “inclusive” teaching methods and group and independent work appropriate for the aims of learning, the learners’ ages, and their abilities/stage of development, and evaluate their learning and the

- effectiveness of methods used.
- Plan curricula and content that engage all learners and promote a positive ethos and good relationships.
 - Attend to the health and well-being of learners.

TE4I - KEY MESSAGES

Drawing on all project activities, the project report highlights the following key messages:

- The reform of teacher education must be part of wider societal reform to support greater inclusion. This requires collaboration between policy makers to ensure a holistic approach and recognition of the role of inclusive education as one of the main strategies to address the challenges of marginalisation and exclusion.
- There is a need for further debate around standards, accountability and equity in education to ensure that 'measures' support inclusive practice
- Reform must include clarification of the language around inclusion and diversity and a clear understanding of the underpinning premises associated with and the implications of using different terminology. This should include a move away from the categorisation and 'labelling' of children and young people.
- Preparation for teaching must maintain academic rigour, 'educating' rather than 'training' teachers. The status of teachers must be raised and reinforced by the development of training parallel to other professional groups to ensure lifelong learning. In order to select appropriate teacher candidates and reduce drop out from training and teaching, further research is required to look at the selection process, bearing in mind the need to increase diversity in the teacher workforce.
- While there is wide agreement on the content required to effectively prepare teachers for diversity in the classroom, there is, as yet, little research evidence to indicate the most effective approaches to teacher education and how best to support a move from discrete modules dealing with 'inclusion' towards integrated content – single courses that prepare all teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners. More rigorous follow-up of new teachers and evaluation of new initiatives is also needed to gather evidence on the most effective routes into teaching.
- Teaching practice needs to be supported by intellectual analysis and a clear understanding of theoretical issues to close the theory-practice gap. Student teachers ideally need to be placed in inclusive settings with mentors/supervising teachers who are themselves trained for this important role and are able to demonstrate attitudes and values that support inclusion.
- There is a need for closer collaboration between training institutions and schools (e.g. demonstration schools, communities of practice). Teacher educators should 'model' effective practice for teachers in training (in schools and during

teacher education courses) and use a wider range of more flexible methods of assessment, such as portfolios.

- The research and the work of the project show the need for competences for teachers (adapted to countries' own contexts) that can help to support a shared understanding of 'quality' inclusive teaching and, therefore, consistent judgements about effective teacher education. Competences are a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities, developed during the process of learning and will also require new approaches to assessment.

DEVELOPING A PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

At the start of the TE4I project, Agency country representatives requested information on the necessary competences, attitudes and standards required of and for all teachers working in inclusive settings in mainstream schools. This concern is also identified in the international documents and statements on priorities for teacher education.

It was therefore agreed that a Profile of Inclusive Teachers should be developed in order to:

- 1 - Identify a framework of core values and areas of competence that are applicable to any initial teacher education programme;
- 2 - Highlight the essential core values and areas of competence necessary for preparing all teachers to work in inclusive education considering all forms of diversity;
- 3 - Highlight key factors supporting the implementation of the proposed core values and areas of competence for inclusive education within all ITE programmes;
- 4 - Reinforce the argument made within the TE4I project that inclusive education is the responsibility of all teachers and that preparing all teachers for work in inclusive settings is the responsibility of all teacher educators working across ITE programmes.

In order to develop a profile of inclusive mainstream teachers, the following key aspects were considered:

- What attitudes do mainstream teachers working in inclusive settings need?
- What knowledge and skills do they need?
- What initial training to develop both the above do they need?
- What are the implications for training all teacher trainers?
- What systemic changes are needed to allow them to implement their training?
- What policy framework is needed for all of the above to happen?

These questions were discussed with project experts during five study visits

that took place during 2010 to UK (Northern Ireland), Portugal, Hungary, Sweden, Netherlands.

A draft profile was produced following the five visits and this was discussed at a project conference held in Zürich in 2010.

In order to validate findings, feedback on the draft profile was collected from a wide range of stakeholders during visits to Cyprus, Malta, Norway, Latvia and Finland and then analysed by the project staff team in order to identify emerging themes and ideas across the visits.

These key trends and messages were then presented to participants in the visits to Denmark, Spain, UK (England) and Austria. Participants were asked to specifically comment on the trends identified in the first phase of visits in order to see if the findings were verified or contested.

All visit discussion activities ranged from conversations with small groups, to large plenary debates with audiences of over 50 stakeholder group representatives. In addition to the country project experts, over 300 participants were involved in the nine validation and verification visits. These included:

- Learners (both with and without special educational needs), their parents and family members;
- Local community representatives;
- Class teachers, school leaders, specialist teachers and support staff;
- Multi disciplinary team members (including school psychologists, social workers and health care professionals);
- School inspectors, local area administrators and policy makers;
- Newly qualified teachers;
- Student teachers – studying both ITE and in-service education programmes;
- Teacher educators working in inclusive, special needs and subject based programmes;
- Teacher education institution senior managers (rectors, deans, heads of departments and faculties);
- National level policy makers for inclusive education and teacher education.

The final draft profile document was also discussed at the project end conference in Brussels in 2012.

The final document is available from: <http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion/profile>

A VALUES-BASED APPROACH

Inclusive education is concerned with the ‘ethic of everybody’ (Hart, Dixon, Drummond, & McIntyre, 2004) and aims to increase individuals’ meaningful participation in learning opportunities and reduce their exclusion from education and wider society. As stated above, thinking has moved on beyond the narrow idea of inclusion as a means of understanding and overcoming a deficit and it

is now widely accepted that it concerns issues of gender, ethnicity, class, social conditions, health and human rights encompassing universal involvement, access, participation and achievement (Ouane, 2008).

In the report on the 2008 International Conference on Inclusive Education, it is argued that: *Inclusive education is based on a series of conceptions and values regarding the type of society to be built and the ideal person to be developed. If we want to have more inclusive societies, which are more peaceful and respectful of differences, it is essential that students have the opportunity to develop and experience these values in their education, whether in schools or non-formal settings* (p. 11).

Within the project, there was widespread agreement that inclusion is essentially a principled, rights-based approach to education underpinned by a number of central values: equality, participation, developing and sustaining communities and respect for diversity.

Rights-based, inclusive education for all learners consequently needs a holistic approach and this requires a view of teachers as more than deliverers of content. The 2011 Peer Learning Activity centred upon Teacher Professional Development (2011) suggests that *not every aspect of teaching can be fully described or defined; aspects such as the teacher's professional values, dispositions and attitudes can be as important as more measurable and quantifiable aspects* (p. 7). The report suggests that across Europe: *Components of teacher competences often include: knowledge, skills and values* (p. 10).

As the values a teacher holds are an essential determinant of their actions, the starting point for exploring teachers' competences for inclusive education was agreed to be such core values which would serve as the foundation for acquiring knowledge, developing understanding and implementing skills for all teachers. These core values:

- Are principles that can be evidenced in a teacher's actions;
- Become 'theory enriched practical knowledge' through learning that occurs during teacher education course;
- Express and demonstrate 'values in action' through the components of attitudes, knowledge and skills
- Are made up of three elements: attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain attitude or belief demands certain knowledge or a level of understanding and then skills in order to implement this knowledge in a practical situation.

THE PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS RATIONALE

Within the TE4I project synthesis report it is proposed that: *the terms 'competences' and 'standards' are not inter-changeable* and as a result of project discussions, the following definitions have been agreed with experts for use within the TE4I project:

Standards generally refer to a set of measures against which student teachers/ teachers/teacher education courses can be evaluated – the summative outcomes at the end of a programme of study.

Competences are seen as developing over time with ITE students and teachers demonstrating progressive mastery in a range of settings and situations. As such, they form both the foundation for ITE and the basis for continuing professional development (European Agency, 2011).

During project debates, country experts agreed that there are practical and conceptual difficulties in focussing upon ‘isolated competences for teaching’ and stressed the need for caution against:

- Repeating work already done in participating countries in identifying and cataloguing specific competences for particular contexts;
- Developing an over simplistic profile of teachers’ competences that could be interpreted as mechanistic;
- Proposing a prescriptive tool that could not be considered within and used as a basis for taking forward national level work in this area.

The following statements outline the agreed rationale for the Profile of Inclusive Teachers.

1. The areas of competence for working in inclusive education are necessary for all teachers, just as inclusive education is the responsibility of all teachers. The areas of competence reinforce this critical message.
2. The areas of competence for inclusive education do not only focus upon meeting the needs of specific groups of learners (e.g. those with special educational needs); they provide all teachers with the foundations they need to work with learners with a diverse range of needs within a mainstream setting. The areas of competence therefore reinforce this critical message – that inclusive education is an approach for all learners, not just an approach for particular groups with additional needs.
3. The areas of competence identified for ITE in this document are the foundation of key attitudes, knowledge and skills that need to be built upon during induction and further teacher education opportunities. Clear progression routes are crucial and areas of competence must be seen as an integral part of a continuum of professional development, including specialist special needs education courses. These areas of competence should be continuously developed during every teacher’s professional career.
4. The areas of competence all teachers need to work in inclusive settings are not in contradiction to the specialist education and training for special needs education teachers who may support mainstream teachers in their work. These areas of competence are the foundations for all teachers’ work – generalists, specialists and experts. The areas of competence identified in this profile are deliberately broad to support the development of teachers as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners through experiential

learning and action-based research. The model of ITE should focus on the development of learning and competence with a reduced emphasis on a content-based curriculum.

6. The areas of competence can support the professional development of student teachers and be a source of guidance to teacher educators.
7. The integration of the areas of competence for inclusive education within ITE needs to be debated with a wide range of stakeholders within different national situations and contexts. Through such dialogue, the areas of competence can potentially be a mechanism for reducing the disconnection that is thought to exist between classroom teachers and other stakeholders in education.
8. The areas of competence for inclusive education should be seen as one starting point for ITE course design/planning. The principle of inclusive education as a systemic approach should apply to ITE as well as school-based curricula.

A MODEL FOR THE PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

Four core values were identified as essential for all teachers working in inclusive education. These core values were used as the basis for describing the areas of competence required by all teachers and each area of competence is seen as inter-connected and highly inter-dependent. The basic Profile model is presented below, with core values indicated in bold font and areas of competence in italics:

Valuing Learner Diversity - learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

Conceptions of inclusive education;

The teacher's view of learner difference.

Supporting All Learners - teachers have high expectations for all learners' achievements.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

Promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all learners;

Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes.

Working With Others - collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

Working with parents and families;

Working with a range of other educational professionals.

Personal Professional Development - teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

Teachers as reflective practitioners;

Initial teacher education as a foundation for ongoing professional learning and development.

The core values for inclusive education on which the Profile of Inclusive Teachers is based underpin the current policy priorities outlined in this paper that may need to be accounted for in European level policy initiatives for teacher education – most importantly inclusive education as a human rights issue and inclusive education as an approach to support all learners.

It should be made clear that the Profile document is not a final product that can be ‘transplanted’ into country contexts. It has been developed in order to stimulate further debate in a way that may take policy makers and teacher educators in particular forward in their thinking

During his keynote address at the project meeting in Zürich in Autumn 2010, key note speaker Tony Booth suggested that: *The power we have as educators is to engage others in dialogue – that is all.* This insight reinforces the intentions of this profile document and it is hoped that the Profile and the supporting materials, will be used in different ways to inform national, European and international level work relating not only to teacher education for inclusion but also about the wider goal of inclusive education.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Council of Europe (Arnesen, Allan, & Simonsen, 2009) states that quality in education implies an active recognition and appreciation of diversity with the process of inclusion transforming communities and schools to become “diversity sensitive” rather than being seen as an “add on” to existing structures. They say: *It is urgent that teachers in their classroom practices are able to see the individual behind group labels and to make constructive use of this diversity in developing new ideas and solutions which will increase the opportunities for recognition, equality, achievement and development for all* (Arnesen et al., 2009, p. 49).

Similarly, there is wide agreement among the professionals working with the Agency TE4I project that educating teachers to respond to diversity is likely to be the policy having the greatest impact on the development of more inclusive schools and communities.

Feedback provided to the Agency has highlighted the impact of the TE4I project both on the individuals involved (who benefit on both a personal and a professional level) and also on developments at national level. Project recommendations and, in particular the Profile of Inclusive Teachers are increasingly seen as influencing teacher education practice. The Profile and project materials have also been used as a ‘starting point’ for collaborative work within and between countries. In other

countries, the project is seen as strengthening a diversity orientation in education and reinforcing the influence of other sources such as the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities.

It is hoped that the TE4I project materials - and in particular the Profile of Inclusive Teachers - can be used by all stakeholders in teacher education to stimulate change in policy and practice, both in countries and at the European level, to support the journey to provide a quality education for all learners.

REFERENCES

- Acedo, C., Amadio, M., & Opertti, R. with Brady, J., Duncombe, L., Weyermann, M., Huang, Y., Xu, X. (Eds.). (2008). *Defining an Inclusive Education Agenda: Reflections around the 48th session of the International Conference on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO IBE.
- Arnesen, A., Allan, J., & Simonsen, E. (Eds.). (2009). *Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity: Concepts, principles and challenges in teacher education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Barber, M., & Mourshed, M. (2007). *How the World's Best Performing School Systems Came Out On Top*. McKinsey and Company.
- Booth, T. (2010). *Teacher Education for Inclusion: How can we know it is of high quality?* Keynote given at the Teacher Education for Inclusion project conference; Zurich. Available on request from the Agency Secretariat secretariat@european-agency.org
- Cardona, C.M. (2009). Teacher Education Students' Beliefs of Inclusion and Perceived Competence to Teach Students with Disabilities in Spain. *Journal of the International Association of Special Education*, 10(1), 33-41.
- Casanova, R., Charentin, P., Cosnard, B., Croisy, J. P., Jollec, M. P., & Rault, C. (2006). French beginning teachers confront special educational needs in some of their pupils. In Gash, H. (Ed.), *Beginning teachers and diversity in school: A European Study*. (Instituto Politécnico de Bragança Report of research undertaken within Comenius Project 94158-CP-1-2001-FR).
- Cefai, C., Fenech, L., & Galea, E. (2007). Initial teacher education for individual educational needs: Newly qualified Maltese teachers' views in Bartolo et al. (Eds), *Responding to student diversity: Teacher Education and classroom practice*. University of Malta.
- Commission of the European Communities. (2008). *Green paper: Migration and mobility: challenges and opportunities for the EU education systems*. Brussels, COM 423 final.
- Council of the European Union. (2007). *Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 15 November 2007, on improving the quality of teacher education*. Retrieved from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:300:0006:0009:EN:PDF>

- Council of the European Union. (2008). *Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st Century: An agenda for European Cooperation in schools*. Retrieved from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0425:FIN:EN:PDF>
- Council of the European Union. (2009). *Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders*. Retrieved from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0006:0009:EN:PDF>
- Council of the European Union. (2009). *Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET2020)* (2009/C 119/02). Retrieved from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:0002:0010:en:PDF>
- Council of the European Union. (2010). *Council conclusions on the social dimension of education and training*. 3013th Education, Youth and Culture meeting, Brussels, 11th May 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.european-agency.org/news/news-files/Council-Conclusions-May-2010-Social-Dimension.pdf>
- D'Alessio, S., & Watkins, A. (2009). International comparisons of inclusive policy and practice: Are we talking about the same thing? *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 4(3), 233–249.
- Esteve, J. M. (2009). La formación de profesores; bases teóricas para el desarrollo de programas de formación inicial [Teacher training. Theoretical basis for the development of pre-service training programs]. *Revista de Educación*, 350, 15-29.
- European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. (2011). *Teacher Education for Inclusion Across Europe – Challenges and Opportunities*. Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.
- European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. (2012). *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*. Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.
- European Commission, DG Education and Culture. (2011). *Thematic Working Group 'Teacher Professional Development'*. Report of Peer Learning Activity: Policy Approaches to Defining and Describing Teacher Competences.
- European Commission. (2012). *Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes*. Commission staff working document. Communication from the Commission Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes. SWD (2012) 374 final. Strasbourg: European Commission.
- Florian, L., & Rouse, M. (2009). The inclusive practice project in Scotland: Teacher education for inclusive education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(4), 594-601.
- Franzkowiak, T. (2009). *Integration, Inklusion, Gemeinsamer Unterricht – Themen für die Grundschullehrerbildung an Hochschulen in Deutschland? Eine Bestandsaufnahme*. [Integration, inclusion, inclusive education – topics of

- primary school teacher training at universities in Germany? A Survey] Bidok Digitale Volltextbibliothek. Retrieved from <http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/franzkowiak-integration.html>
- Guðjónsdóttir, H., Cacciattolo, M., Dakich, E., Davies, A., Kelly, C., & Dalmau, M. C. (2008). Transformative Pathways: Inclusive Pedagogies in Teacher Education. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 40 (2)165-182
- Hajkova, V. (2007). Nová profesionalita pedagogů v inkluzivní školní praxi. In Šimoník, O., Škrabánková, J., Št'áva, J. (Eds.) *Dimenze pedagogické práce s nadanými žáky*. Sborník referátů z mezinárodního semináře [CD-ROM]. Brno: MSD, spol. s.r.o., 94-103.
- Hart, S., Dixon, A., Drummond, M.J., & McIntyre, D. (2004). *Learning without Limits*. Maidenhead:Open University Press.
- Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible Learning. A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London: Routledge.
- Hollins, E.R., Gunzman, M.T. (2005). Research on preparing teachers for diverse populations. In M. Cochran-Smith & K.M. Zeichner (Eds.), *Studying Teacher Education* (pp.477-548). Mahwah N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Holdsworth, P. (2010). *Improving Teacher Quality: the EU agenda*. Paper prepared for the European Agency for Development of Special Needs Education TE4I Project. Brussels: European Commission DG Education and Culture.
- Kaikkonen, L., Maunonen-Eskelinen, I., & Aidukiene, T. (2007). *Supporting Teachers' Competences towards the Development of a More Inclusive School – Listening to the Voices of Students with Special Educational Needs in Educational Transitions*. Latvijas Universitātes Raksti, 715, 132-144. Retrieved from <http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00005366/01/715.pdf#page=132>
- Kavkler, M. (2009). Vloga pri uresničevanju inkluzije [The teacher's role in inclusion]. *Vzgoja in izobraževanje, letnik*, 40, 5-11.
- Mattsson, M., Dage Ore, H., & Pisila, S. (2006). *Vad är värdefull specialpedagogisk kunskap?* [What knowledge is of value in Special Education?]. Stockholm: Lärarhögsk.
- Molina, S. (2006). Teacher education students' and first year in-service teachers' perceptions about their initial education in relation to the special educational needs of Spanish pupils. In Gash, H. (Ed), *Beginning teachers and diversity in school: A European Study*. (Instituto Politécnico de Bragança. Report of research undertaken within Comenius Project 94158-CP-1-2001-FR).
- Muñoz, E. (2009). La formación del profesorado de Educación Secundaria: contenidos y aprendizajes docentes [Secondary Education Teacher Training; teaching content and teacher's learning]. *Revista de Educacion*, 350, 79-103.
- Naukkarinen, A. (2008). *Developing inclusive primary school teacher education: Experiences of Department of Teacher Education at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland*. Paper presented at: Cross-National Invitational Symposium on Teacher Education for Inclusion, University of Aberdeen.
- Nuova, A. (2009). Para una formación de profesores consruida dentro de la profesion

- [Towards a teacher training developed insider the profession]. *Revista de Educacion*, 350, 203-218.
- OECD. (2005). *Teachers matter: attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/document/52/0,3343,en_264939263231_34991988_1_1_1_1,00.html#EO
- ONFRIH. (2008). *Observatoire national sur la formation, la recherche, et l'innovation sur le handicap* [National observatory for training, research and innovation upon disability report]. Retrieved from http://www.travaissolidarite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Rapport_ONFRIH_2008.pdf
- Ouane, A. (2008). *Creating education systems which offer opportunities for lifelong learning*. Paper presented at UNESCO International Conference on Education 'Inclusive education: the way of the future' 48th session. Geneva.
- Pugach, M., & Blanton, L. (2009). A framework for conducting research on collaborative teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(4), 575-582.
- Rodrigues, D. (2009). *Inclusion and Teacher's Education: who reforms the reformers?* Cross-National Invitational Symposium Teacher Education for Inclusive Education University of Aberdeen.
- Saloviita, T. (2005). Erityisopetus opettajankoulutuksen sisältöalueena. [Special education as a content area of teacher education] (339-351). In R. Jakku-Sihvonen (Ed.), *Uudenlaisia maistereita*. Keuruu: Otava.
- Tübele S. (2008). *The study course 'Introduction to Special Needs Education – a step towards teacher education for inclusive education at the University of Latvia*. Paper presented at: Cross-National Invitational Symposium on Teacher Education for Inclusion University of Aberdeen.
- UNESCO. (2008). *Inclusive Education: the Way of the Future - Conclusions and Recommendations of the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE)*. Geneva.
- United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the rights of people with disabilities*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>
- Vandeputte, I., Vanacker, S., & Vanbuynder, G. (2007). *Vorming van de basiscompetenties van leraren in de initele lerarenopleiding voor het werken in een inclusieve setting via actieonderzoek* [Composing the basic teacher competences in initial teacher education for inclusive settings through action-research]. Katholieke Hogeschool Sint-Lieven Campus Sint-Niklaas.
- World Health Organisation. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. World Health Organisation/ World Bank.
- Young, K. (2008). I don't think I'm the right person for that: theoretical and institutional questions about a combined credential program. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 28(4), 1-16. Retrieved from <http://dsq-dsd.org/>