



Bulgarian Presidency
of the Council of the
European Union



Towards a European Education Area – Promoting Common Values and Inclusive Education

21 June 2018, 10.00 – 12.30

Council of the European Union, Justus Lipsius Building, Room 20.45

This event is organised by the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. It builds upon the [Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching](#) and the [Council conclusions on moving towards a vision of a European Education Area](#) adopted by the Council of the EU on 22 May 2018.

Inclusive education is the approach for education in the XXI century. It involves relevant concepts and values. First of all, inclusive education is an effective means to avoid discrimination and exclusion. Inclusive education is always related to the provision of high quality education for all, combining excellence and equity. Recent research on the link between inclusive education and social inclusion indicates that inclusive education increases opportunities for peer interactions and close friendships between learners with and without special educational needs and/or disabilities. At the same time, learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities educated in inclusive settings may perform academically and socially better than learners educated in segregated settings.

The ET 2020 Working Group on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education has clearly indicated that education should go beyond equal opportunities and ensure the inclusion of the diverse range of learners and, that values need to be shared by teachers and learners. Values are part of the 'whole school approach', where learners, parents, teachers and the wider community are all actively involved.

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education is aware of the challenges of putting in place inclusive systems of education. The Agency position on Inclusive Education Systems approved by the representatives of the Ministries of Education states that inclusive education systems are seen as a vital component with the wider aspiration of more socially inclusive societies that all countries align themselves with, both ethically and politically. The ultimate vision for inclusive education systems is to ensure that all learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers.

The Bulgarian Presidency has highlighted inclusive education as one of its horizontal priorities. The Presidency fully supports policies aimed at reducing the number of school drop outs and increasing the quality of education where no learner is left behind.

This event will provide an opportunity to share and discuss what the implementation of values within inclusive education means at both policy and practical levels.

Draft agenda

Moderator: **Daniel Bognar**, Ministry of Education, Hessen, Germany

09.00 – 10.00	Registration
10.00 – 10.15	Welcome remarks
	Denitsa Sacheva , Deputy Minister for Education and Science of Bulgaria
	Tibor Navracsics , European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport
	Ana Magraner , Chair, European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education
10.15 – 11.15	Session 1: Council Recommendation on promoting Common Values, Inclusive Education and the European dimension of teaching Moderator: Rodrigo Ballester , Member of Cabinet (Education, Culture, Youth and Sport) Introduction by Andrea Sebastianelli , Student, Liceo Scientifico e Musicale 'G. Marconi', Italy
	João Costa , Secretary of State for Education, Portugal
	Marie-Martine Schyns , Minister of Education, Wallonia-Brussels Federation
	Brando Benifei , Member of the European Parliament, Italy
	Stefaan Hermans , Director, European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture
	Q&A session (Questions)
11.15 – 12.15	Session 2: Practical Examples of Implementing Common Values and Inclusive Education Moderator: Cor J.W. Meijer , Director, European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education Introduction by a student, Athénée St. Jean Molenbeek, Belgium
	Leen Van Heurck , Deputy Head of Cabinet Minister of Education, Belgium Flemish Community
	Alen Kofol , Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia
	Patricia Perez-Gomez , Structural Reform Support Service
	Representative from European Parliament (TBC)
	Q&A session (Questions)
12.15 – 12.30	Closing remarks
	Denitsa Sacheva , Deputy Minister for Education and Science of Bulgaria
	Ana Magraner , Chair, European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education
	Devora Stancheva , Student, Sava Dobroplodni High School, Shumen, Bulgaria
12.30 – 13.30	Networking and refreshments