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# Country Policy Review and Analysis

Methodology Report

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**EUROPEAN AGENCY**  
for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

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# **COUNTRY POLICY REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

**Methodology Report**



The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency) is an independent and self-governing organisation, supported by Agency member countries and the European Institutions (Commission and Parliament).



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document presents the methodology and materials developed within the first phase of the Country Policy Review and Analysis (CPRA) activities. This phase involved eight countries – France, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom (England) and United Kingdom (Scotland) – in piloting work.

The goal of the CPRA work is to aid country reflection regarding the development of policy for inclusive education. It aims to act as a tool for stimulating discussion in the country concerned. Its central focus is to analyse the available information about current country policy for inclusive education; the CPRA work does not in any way address the actual implementation of the policy being considered.

The CPRA work has been developed in order to provide a new form of individualised country information. This provides countries with a reflection on their current policy frameworks for inclusive education. It also offers them recommendations for priorities to be addressed that are specific to their country. The CPRA analysis provides a comprehensive, rich and very focused source of information on policy for inclusive education in countries.

The CPRA activities conducted since late 2014 have been implemented as a pilot project for analysing inclusive education policies in member countries of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency). This piloting work had the following objectives:

- Offering countries a new type of individualised policy analysis information
- Putting the Agency work into the broader European and international policy context
- Using Agency findings and outputs in a different way
- Exploring the potential for developing a cross-country analysis of information on policies for inclusive education across a number of countries.

These objectives led to the CPRA work being designed as a pilot activity that has been developed *with* country policy-makers *for* country policy-makers.

The CPRA methodology has developed via an *iterative process* involving a CPRA team of Agency staff members and the eight country policy-makers.

This different way of working with and for Agency member country representatives was based on collaborative, co-development working procedures that aimed to support a continuing learning and improvement process for all involved.

These results and recommendations are essentially addressed to ministries of education. They have the potential to be used according to national-level priorities



and needs. It is also anticipated that the CPRA work outputs will contribute to international-level requests directed to ministries of education. These may be, for example, in relation to European-level work associated with Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) and international-level work linked to the reporting process for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD; 2006 – [www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml](http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml)).

The policy context for the CPRA work is the three main priorities within the Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) strategic objectives ([ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/index_en.htm)) and European Council CSRs ([ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm)).

Twelve *European-level policy measures* for the CPRA work were identified. These were then complemented with selected *thematic recommendations* from a number of Agency projects and activities. A multi-analysis framework has been developed by mapping the 12 measures to Agency recommendations.

*Annex 1* of this report presents the full analysis grid.

The analysis grid has been used to identify and record *Findings*. These short descriptive texts identify in a non-judgemental way whether there is information – from Agency and country sources – indicating the existence or non-existence of a policy initiative linked to a specific recommendation in a given country.

In addition to the analysis grid information, a synthesis section was developed. This provides a shorter descriptive text of the grid information and what it means in relation to policy development for inclusive education. It aims to provide a ‘snapshot’ of a country’s policy for inclusive education in relation to European-level policy goals as outlined in the 12 measures. The synthesis section uses an agreed framework for analysing the country analysis grid findings. This framework is based on the three *types of policy actions* that are in line with European-level work (notably the CSRs), as well as wider thinking about quality for education, namely: *prevention, intervention and compensation*.

*Annex 2* of this report presents the synthesis section.

The CPRA piloting work has resulted in an agreed analysis framework comprising the grid and synthesis sections, agreed procedures for analysing country policy information, and the completion of policy analyses for the eight participating countries.





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In the next steps of the CPRA work, these concrete results will be built upon in two ways:

1. The CPRA analyses for the eight first phase countries will be used to develop a *cross-country analysis* of policy approaches being taken in countries. This cross-country analysis has the potential to provide individual countries with comparative information to relate to their own approaches. It may also highlight shared areas of concern for policy-making across countries. In the longer term, this work could potentially indicate trends and movements in policy developments and directions.
2. Alongside the cross-country analysis work, a *second phase* of the CPRA activities will begin with a new group of volunteer countries. The second phase work will use the agreed analysis grid and synthesis framework. However, it will incorporate changes to working procedures that improve the analysis methodology and ensure a final analysis synthesis report that better meets countries' needs and expectations.

At the end of the second phase, there will be a full review of the CPRA activities. All country representatives and Agency staff members involved in both phases will participate. Outcomes, findings and recommendations from Agency thematic project work will be integrated into the CPRA analysis framework. The lessons learned from the CPRA focus and working procedures will be integrated into other areas of Agency project activities.



## INTRODUCTION

This short report presents the methodology and materials developed within the first phase of the Country Policy Review and Analysis (CPRA) activities, conducted by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency). The CPRA work's overall purpose is to aid country reflection regarding the development of policy for inclusive education. It aims to act as a tool for stimulating discussion in the country concerned.

The CPRA activities conducted since late 2014 have been implemented as a pilot project for analysing inclusive education policies in Agency member countries. This piloting work had the following objectives:

- Offering countries a new type of individualised policy analysis information
- Putting the Agency work into the broader European and international policy context
- Using Agency findings and outputs in a different way
- Exploring the potential for developing a cross-country analysis of information on policies for inclusive education across a number of countries.

Within the past Multi-Annual Work Programme, Agency work has focused on developing recommendations that all countries agreed upon, based on country information collected through project work. The CPRA work examines how the general recommendations for policy developed in projects apply within individual country situations.

During the first phase work, a small team of Agency staff worked closely with Representative Board members (RBs) from eight volunteer countries. They developed and then trialled the CPRA methodology. Four countries initially acted as a Pilot Group (PG) for the analysis activities:

- France
- Lithuania
- Norway
- United Kingdom (England).

Four other countries, acting as a Reference Group (RG), supported the piloting work:

- Italy
- Malta
- Portugal
- United Kingdom (Scotland).



Both the PG and RG regularly provided feedback on and inputs to the on-going activities that are outlined in the following sections of this report. The eight RBs' contributions to the piloting work were crucial for developing the methodology and materials used in the CPRA work. The activities have been based on an on-going iterative process of dialogue and revision of methods and materials.

The information in this document presents the rationale for the work, as well as the actual steps and procedures used. It also presents the frameworks used for collecting, analysing and synthesising policy information from countries.

### **Rationale behind the CPRA activities**

Numerous reasons for the Agency to undertake the CPRA activities can be identified:

- The Agency has conducted a significant number of thematic analyses in the past. The results of these analyses provide a solid and extensive knowledge base in key areas in the field of special needs and inclusive education. Until now, the Agency has provided countries with general recommendations related to the results of specific projects. The CPRA activity will be an opportunity to provide country-specific information linked to the recommendations generated in different Agency projects.
- The Agency's work needs to be placed within a European and international context. Results from Agency projects can contribute towards achieving the education and training objectives agreed by the European Ministers of Education and towards the reporting on Article 24 of the UNCRPD (2006).
- The Agency is the only European-level organisation able to complete an evidence-based analysis of individual countries' policies for inclusive education. Such an analysis will reflect where countries are against a range of *European-level policy measures* and may indicate areas for potential future focus.
- Based on the analysis of individual countries' policy, there is potential to develop a cross-country analysis of countries' policies for inclusive education. Identifying areas of policy advancement, as well as areas for policy development across countries, has clear benefits for national and European-level decision-makers in terms of identifying policy developments, challenges and – over time – trends.

These reasons have led to the CPRA work being designed as a pilot activity that has been developed *with* country policy-makers *for* country policy-makers.



## **A new way of working *with* countries**

The CPRA methodology has developed via an *iterative process* involving the whole CPRA team – the eight RBs and the Agency staff members. All of the decisions and steps taken, as well as materials developed, were collectively drafted, agreed upon and implemented. They were then collectively reviewed and re-worked before the next steps were taken.

The working principles underpinning this iterative process were:

- The CPRA activities involve working with volunteers.
- The individual countries are the ‘owners’ of the work.
- CPRA entails a new form of Agency team-working, involving both country representatives and staff members.
- On-going reflection on the CPRA team’s ways of working was crucial for agreeing next steps and outcomes.

This different way of working with and for Agency member country representatives was based on collaborative, co-development working procedures that aimed to support a continuing learning and improvement process for all involved.

## **A new way of working *for* countries**

The CPRA work has been developed to provide a new form of individualised country information on policy for inclusive education. The activities aim to support individual country policy developments by providing individual country policy analysis using an agreed framework of policy aims and actions. This policy analysis provides countries with a reflection on their current policy frameworks for inclusive education. It also offers them recommendations for priorities to be addressed that are specific to their country.

These results and recommendations are essentially addressed to ministries of education. They have the potential to be used according to national-level priorities and needs. It is also anticipated that the CPRA work outputs will contribute to international-level requests directed to ministries of education. These may be, for example, in relation to European-level work associated with CSRs and international-level work linked to the reporting process for the UNCRPD.

The information sources used in different ways in the CPRA work all exist within different national- or European-level contexts. However, this information had never been drawn together or applied as the Agency has now done within the CPRA work.



## THE COUNTRY POLICY REVIEW AND ANALYSIS WORK

### A pilot project framed by European objectives

The policy context for the CPRA work is the three main priorities within ET 2020 and the Council CSRs<sup>1</sup>. These areas are:

1. Ensuring equal opportunities in education and training
2. Improving educational outcomes
3. Reducing dropout from general and post-compulsory education.

The three priorities are directly related to the two ET 2020 strategic objectives that the Agency's work directly supports:

- Strategic objective 2 – Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
- Strategic objective 3 – Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship.

The Council CSRs identify a number of policy areas – measures – addressed by countries in order to support policy development work in line with the strategic objectives.

The various measures indicated in the Council CSRs were examined and re-framed so they were aligned with the agreed vision of inclusive education systems – that *all learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers*<sup>2</sup>.

Altogether, 12 *European-level policy measures* for the CPRA work were agreed upon. These were:

1. to improve inclusive education and to ensure that good quality education is accessible for all;
2. to support improved co-operation, including greater involvement of parents and local community;
3. to develop monitoring strategies, establishing a comprehensive accountability and evaluation framework for inclusive education;
4. to improve the cost-effectiveness of the education system, combining efficiency, effectiveness, equity and inclusion;

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<sup>1</sup> More information is available from: [ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2015. *Agency Position on Inclusive Education Systems*. Odense, Denmark



5. to increase participation in good quality inclusive early childhood education and care and enrolment rates in pre-school education;
6. to improve student-focused measures, such as mentoring, personalised learning approaches and improved guidance;
7. to improve the school ethos (such as the creation of supportive learning environments, adapting learning environments to specific learning needs);
8. to reduce the negative effects of early tracking (the early streaming of pupils by ability into different types of provision or schools) and to reduce the extensive use of grade retention;
9. to support improvement in schools with lower educational outcomes;
10. to improve the quality of school staff, focusing on the quality of teachers, quality in continuing professional development, developing teacher competences and reinforcing school leadership;
11. to improve transition from education to work by increasing the coherence between employment incentives, education and vocational education and training (VET); improving the quality and accessibility of apprenticeships; promoting cross-sector co-operation; simplifying the systems of qualifications;
12. to improve educational and career guidance across all phases of inclusive education.

The 12 policy measures were identified and agreed upon as key levers for meeting international and European-level policy goals, as well as improving the quality of education systems for all learners. These measures pinpoint the areas of action that must be taken to successfully implement a comprehensive policy on inclusive education.

### **A framework of policy measures and recommendations for analysing country policy**

The 12 European-level measures provided the starting point for developing a framework for examining individual country policy documents. However, the 12 measures in themselves were too broad for analysis purposes. Therefore, they were complemented with selected *thematic recommendations* from a number of Agency projects and activities. A multi-analysis framework of measures and specific recommendations was developed by mapping the 12 measures to Agency thematic recommendations developed in relation to seven areas of Agency work:

- Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/early-childhood-intervention](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/early-childhood-intervention)



- Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion)
- Key Principles for Promoting Quality in Inclusive Education: Recommendations for Policy-Makers (KP-policy) and Recommendations for Practice (KP-practice), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/key-principles](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/key-principles)
- Mapping the Implementation of Policy for Inclusive Education (MIPIE), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/mapping-the-implementation-of-policy-for-inclusive-education](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/mapping-the-implementation-of-policy-for-inclusive-education)
- ICT for Inclusion (ICT4I), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/ict4i](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/ict4i)
- Vocational Education and Training (VET), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/vocational-education-and-training](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/vocational-education-and-training)
- Organisation of Provision to Support Inclusive Education (OoP), [www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/organisation-of-provision](http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/organisation-of-provision)


These Agency projects provide a lifespan perspective. They take into account existing provision at all levels of education, including early childhood education, compulsory schooling and transition to work. The focus of these projects also supports an examination of quality in inclusive education in light of the implementation of key principles for evidence-based policies for inclusive education.

Across all seven projects and activities, over 160 recommendations were collated. However, there was considerable repetition across recommendations from several projects, such as those relating to co-operation among stakeholders, parents' involvement, quality of teacher training, accessibility of learning materials, etc. Accordingly, a first task was to eliminate repetition. The final number of specific Agency recommendations used within the CPRA work was approximately 130.

These recommendations were then directly mapped onto the 12 measures within a framework – an *analysis grid* – for information gathering. Connecting the project recommendations to measures required the development of a rationale to identify and then – in co-operation with the PG country representatives – re-work them to reduce repetition.

The selection of recommendations was made in relation to:

- their alignment with international conventions or with ET 2020, such as consistency with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) and the UNCRPD, policies promoting inclusive education;
- their importance in relation to supporting the prevention of early tracking and school dropout, such as recommendations highlighting family involvement, early needs identification, teaching and support practices aiming at



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empowering learners, effective mechanisms for ensuring high-quality transition across educational sector and phases, flexible resourcing system promoting inclusion;

- their relevance for promoting quality in education, such as recommendations highlighting the role of learner-centred approaches, high-quality training of teachers, schools' ability to meet a greater diversity of needs, mechanisms for evaluating effectiveness and quality in inclusive education;
- their relevance for supporting schools to meet learners' needs, such as strategic plans at school level, accessible and flexible teaching and learning approaches, ensuring high expectations for all learners' achievement, existence of high-quality support.

Such an approach also required the definition of criteria for distributing the recommendations across the measures. The distribution of recommendations was implemented in relationship to:

- Their consistency. Some recommendations relate consistently to fundamental principles underpinning inclusive education and reflect general issues highlighted by some measures. For example, recommendations referring to alignment with the UNCRPD, to cross-sectoral or cross-territorial legislation and policy, or to the accessibility of learning materials appeared to be most appropriately included in Measure 1, which focuses on good quality inclusive education.
- Their specificity. Some recommendations were very specific to the topic addressed by a certain measure. For example, many of those developed within the VET project appeared to be strongly connected to measures 11 and 12. Connections between many recommendations made within the ECI project correspond with Measure 5 and many of those related to teacher education and training are inter-related with Measure 10.
- Their level of complementarity within each measure. Within each measure, recommendations had to complement each other. This was in order to avoid overlaps and allow for as complete an analysis as possible of country inclusive education policies in relation to a measure. Within the final analysis grid, over-arching recommendations are therefore presented first, followed by more specific points that support the over-arching recommendation.
- Their level of complementarity across measures. Providing complementary information across measures was an additional area of focus in distributing recommendations within the measures. For example, a recommendation in Measure 5, stating that 'Policy clearly respects the rights and the needs of children and their families', complements the recommendation in Measure 2





asserting that ‘The full involvement of families in all educational processes is outlined in legislation and policy’.

Due to the focus on project recommendations and the specificity of the measures, the distribution of recommendations across the 12 measures was unequal. Distribution depended both on recommendations made within the projects being focused upon and on the specificity of the measures. In particular, none of the project recommendations explicitly highlighted early tracking issues (Measure 8) or the improvement of schools with lower educational outcomes (Measure 9). Nevertheless, some project recommendations were indirectly related to these issues. In contrast, many projects included recommendations aimed at improving inclusive education to ensure that good quality education is accessible to all (Measure 1). Meanwhile, only a few focused explicitly on improving educational and career guidance across all phases of inclusive education.

The combination of the recommendations and the measures was presented within a grid template. This was used for recording relevant information on country policy as *Findings* – precise information from project country reports indicating the implementation of recommendations linked to the 12 measures.

*Annex 1* of this report presents the full analysis grid.

### **An analysis procedure that was collectively designed**

The work involved identifying and wording the 12 measures, as well as mapping and re-working the Agency recommendations onto the measures. This was the result of an *iterative process* developed within the whole CPRA team – the eight RBs and the Agency staff members. All steps were agreed upon and implemented, then collectively reviewed and re-worked before the next steps were taken.

This iterative process was central to trialling and agreeing the procedures for the actual analysis of country policy information.

Once the draft analysis grid of measures and recommendations was agreed upon, a first stage in the analysis work was to identify information in the individual country thematic reports from the ECI, TE4I, ICT4I, VET and OoP projects that provided a clear indication that some form of policy initiative was in place in relation to a specific recommendation.

Using the information provided in country reports, the staff team drafted a grid for a single PG country with findings – available information that clearly exemplified that the country’s policies accounted for specific thematic recommendations.

The whole CPRA team then examined the completed grid. The team members discussed the relevance and usefulness of some recommendations, possible improvements in the way findings were worded and other areas of improvement.



This iterative process led to re-drafting of the analysis grid and a further process of synthesising the thematic recommendations to avoid duplication and re-wording them to make them as precise as possible.

This process also led to ‘expanding upon’ some recommendations, where necessary, with *supplementary information* presented in brackets and italic text after the recommendation itself. Supplementary information was provided in order to avoid misunderstandings and to support comparability in the final analysis.

The process also led to the agreement to insert a new section – Section 1. Here, RBs were asked to insert text to identify their country’s *main priorities for education*, paying special attention to the development of inclusive education.


Using the revised analysis grid, the project country reports for all PG countries were analysed to identify and record the findings. It was agreed with the PG members that findings would be identified linked to seven agreed criteria underpinning the information provided within the analysed reports:

1. *Existing legislation*, in order to relate inclusiveness to the rights of learners and their families
2. *Policy statements*, outlining the inclusiveness of education policies in light of the commitment to build capacity in mainstream education
3. *Requirements outlined to schools*, describing the commitments required from school stakeholders to ensure inclusive education is embedded within schools’ policies and strategic action plans
4. *Quality assurance mechanisms*, supporting high-quality inclusive education policies and practices
5. *Tools and guidance*, empowering stakeholders to be innovative and inclusive on a daily basis
6. *Existing standards*, supporting practice that aims at high expectations for all learners, as well as effective and equitable education systems
7. *Monitoring mechanisms* (e.g. existing data) to ensure effectiveness, quality, equity and cost-effectiveness.

The first four of these criteria refer to types of policy documents. The final three refer to strategies for policy implementation and monitoring.

Two kinds of findings were identified:

- *general findings* that were considered to apply across the education system, and

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- *examples* that were considered to only apply to a specific thematic area and present innovative projects reflecting trends in policy changes towards the inclusiveness of education systems.

Findings were presented in the analysis grids as a short extract from the country thematic project report and a citation (project title abbreviations as listed above and country report page reference). Examples were presented separately, with the text clearly marked as an example.

The findings are essentially descriptive; they identify in a non-judgemental way whether there is information indicating the existence or non-existence of a policy initiative linked to a specific recommendation in a given country.

The central focus of the CPRA work is to analyse the available information about current country policy for inclusive education; it does not in any way address the actual implementation of the policy being considered.

### **The importance of country updating work**

Agency staff members worked in pairs to complete the analysis grids. This pairing involved an initial draft from one staff member, with the second staff member checking for consistency before a final analysis draft was agreed upon. This process supported greater consistency and accuracy within and between country analyses.

The drafts of the completed grids were sent individually to the RBs concerned for comments and *updating*. RBs were asked to provide updated policy information, in line with the seven criteria listed above. Updates included deletions and amendments to existing analysis information, updates of new information and reducing any repetition of findings.

Finally, RBs were asked to provide *evaluative comments* for each measure. These comments describe perceived challenges or areas for development, as well as relevant planned next steps and or/scheduled policy initiatives.

The staff members then checked the updated grid. Once the final analysis was agreed, the initial and updated information was merged into a document with overall country information.

Within the first piloting phase work, the process outlined above was initially completed with the four PG countries. Based on their inputs and the agreements reached, the procedures were revised, improved and then repeated with the four RG countries.

The final analysis grids for each country were comprehensive and detailed. It was decided to provide a summary of the overall policy analysis information for each country. Therefore, in parallel to the analysis work with the RG countries,



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discussions were held with all eight RBs to determine how best to develop and frame a summary section; the following section describes this stage of the CPRA work.



## SYNTHESIS OF COUNTRY ANALYSIS INFORMATION

The CPRA work's goal is to aid country reflection and discussion regarding policy development. In line with this, it was agreed to develop a *synthesis* of the overall analysis information. This synthesis aims to summarise the policy information presented in the full grid analysis and provide a 'country profile' of policy approaches being taken in relation to the measures.

The synthesis section provides a short descriptive text of the grid information and what it means with regard to policy development for inclusive education. It aims to provide a 'snapshot' of a country's policy for inclusive education in relation to European-level policy goals, as outlined in the 12 measures.

### Framework for the synthesis section

The synthesis section uses an agreed framework for analysing the country analysis grid findings. This framework is based on the three *types of policy actions* that are in line with European-level work (notably the CSRs), as well as wider thinking about quality for education: namely *prevention*, *intervention* and *compensation*.

For each of the 12 policy measures used in the analysis grid to be effectively and comprehensively implemented, a balance of prevention, intervention and compensation policy initiatives needs to be in place. Depending on the focus of each measure, this balance may necessarily be more in favour of prevention, or intervention, or compensation policy actions.

Inclusive education systems are most effectively supported by a complementary combination of prevention, intervention and compensation policy actions. The goal of inclusive education systems is supported by policy actions that are designed to:

- *prevent* different forms of educational exclusion before they happen;
- *intervene* to ensure that good quality inclusive education is available for all learners at all times;
- *compensate* with specific actions and provision when prevention and intervention are not enough to ensure learners' needs are adequately met in inclusive settings.

Long-term, sustainable developments towards inclusive education systems can be seen as a combination of these three type of approaches in order to provide high-quality education for all learners, including those requiring additional support. A country's journey to an effective and equitable inclusive education system can be identified by movements away from mainly compensatory policy actions, towards more intervention- and prevention-focused policy actions.



## P-I-C coding of the analysis grid findings

The findings in each country's analysis grid were identified and categorised. They were then coded (using a three-colour coding system) as having the main policy purpose of prevention (P), intervention (I) or compensation (C). The P-I-C identification was based on the measure's perceived policy purpose and used an operational definition of P-I-C actions agreed with the eight country RBs as a guide:

- *Prevention* – policy initiatives that aim at **avoiding** educational exclusion and longer-term social exclusion, before these issues emerge (for example, anti-discrimination legislation promoting a rights approach, avoidance of disabling policies that lead to gaps in provision, lack of qualifications, etc.).
- *Intervention* – policy initiatives **supporting** the effective implementation of inclusive education (for example, the existence of clear policies leading to high-quality flexible support systems for mainstream education).
- *Compensation* – policy initiatives **addressing** the inability of legislation and/or provision to support meaningful inclusive education for all learners (for example, separate educational programmes or provision, support for failing schools, second-chance educational programmes).

The terms highlighted in bold and italics in each operational definition indicate the essential focus of each policy approach.

Once again, two staff members working collaboratively completed this analysis work for the each of the eight countries (PG and RG). Both the findings in the grid, as well as the information in 'Section 1: Country priorities for education', were P-I-C coded.

The country RB checked and approved this coding. Then, the overall profile of policy initiatives was written up as a summary providing a 'country profile' of approaches being taken in relation to each of the 12 measures.

The final section of the synthesis provides a *summary of areas of strength and for development*. This section aims to take a 'time-span' approach and summarise where the country currently is on its journey towards inclusive education. It is framed around the P-I-C model and five evaluative questions for policy-making that were collaboratively formulated by the CPRA PG and RG representatives:

### *Prevention:*

1. Do policy initiatives for an inclusive education system in [the country concerned] take all learners into account?
2. Do policy initiatives in [the country concerned] safeguard the rights of all learners to high-quality inclusive education?



- 
3. Do policy initiatives in [the country concerned] promote the active participation of learners and their families in decision-making that affects them?

*Intervention:*

4. Do policy initiatives in [the country concerned] monitor, evaluate and secure the effective implementation of an inclusive education system?

*Compensation:*

5. Do policy initiatives in [the country concerned] identify and address barriers to the inclusive education system?

*Annex 2* of this report presents the template for the synthesis section.



## NEXT STEPS IN THE CPRA WORK

This methodology report has been prepared at the end of the first phase of the CPRA activities. This piloting phase of the longer-term work has resulted in:

- an agreed analysis framework comprising the grid and synthesis sections;
- agreed procedures for analysing country policy information;
- the completion of policy analyses for the eight participating Agency member countries – France, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom (England) and United Kingdom (Scotland).

In the next steps of the CPRA work, these concrete results will be built upon in two ways. Firstly, the CPRA analyses for the eight first phase countries will be used to develop a *cross-country analysis* of policy approaches being taken in countries. This analysis will not focus upon – or name – individual countries. Rather, it will provide information on the common patterns of approaches that countries are taking in relation to the measures and specific thematic recommendations.

This cross-country analysis has the potential to provide individual countries with comparative information to relate to their own approaches. It may also highlight shared areas of concern for policy-making across countries. In the longer term, this work could potentially indicate trends and movements in policy developments and directions.

Alongside the cross-country analysis work, a *second phase* of the CPRA activities will begin with a new group of volunteer countries. The second phase work will use the agreed analysis grid and synthesis framework. However, it will incorporate changes to working procedures that improve the analysis methodology and ensure it is closer to countries' needs and expectations.

At the end of the second phase work, there will be a full review of the CPRA activities. All country representatives and Agency staff members involved in both phases will participate. At this time, decisions will be made about necessary developments and changes to the working procedures, as well as the analysis tools and templates.

In the short, medium and longer term, the CPRA activities will continue to be an integral part of the Agency's work programme with member countries. Within the current Agency Multi-Annual Work Programme, the intention is to involve all member countries in CPRA activities. There are also plans to initiate a second cycle of country policy reviews by repeating the analysis activities with those countries involved in the first phase of the work.





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The CPRA work will both be informed by and impact upon other areas of Agency work with member countries. Outcomes, findings and recommendations from Agency thematic project work will be integrated into the CPRA analysis framework. Most importantly, the lessons learned from the CPRA focus and working procedures will be incorporated into other areas of Agency project activities.



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## ANNEX 1: ANALYSIS GRID

### **Section 1: Country priorities for education**

*The text below presents the main country priorities in the field of education, with special attention to the development of inclusive education.*

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## Section 2: Analysis of findings

### ***Measure 1: To improve inclusive education and to ensure that good quality education is accessible for all***

Agency recommendation	Findings
1.1 There is a clearly stated policy for the promotion of quality in inclusive education. <i>(Policy aims to widen access to education and to promote full participation and opportunities for all learners vulnerable to exclusion to realise their potential. Policy outlines how education policy-makers need to take responsibility for all learners.)</i>	
1.2 Legislation and policy are consistent with the principles of the UNCRC and the UNCRPD. <i>(Legislation and policy uphold the right of all learners to full participation in school with their own local peer group.)</i>	
1.3 The concept of inclusion is clarified in education policy as an agenda that increases quality and equity for all learners. <i>(Policy aims to address underachievement of all vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities.)</i>	
1.4 Legislation and policy for inclusive education is cross-sectoral. <i>(Policy outlines procedures to ensure the efficient co-ordination of services, as well as clearly defining roles and responsibilities.)</i>	
1.5 There is a long-term multi-level policy framework for implementing quality inclusive education at national, regional and/or organisational levels.	
1.6 Policy outlines how education policy-makers need to take responsibility for all learners.	
1.7 Policy has the goal of supporting all teachers to have positive attitudes towards all learners.	
1.8 Policy requires learning material to be accessible.	



Agency recommendation	Findings
1.9 Policy describes an effective framework of support for schools to implement inclusive education. <i>(Support structures focus on different forms of educational resource centres that are locally organised to offer support to individual or clusters of schools.)</i>	
1.10 Policies outline a continuum of support for children and young people in schools, to meet the full diversity of learners' needs.	
1.11 Policy outlines strategies for awareness-raising with all stakeholders in inclusive education.	
1.12 Policy outlines the development of the role of special schools as a resource to increase the capability of mainstream schools and improve support for all learners. <i>(The specialist knowledge and skills of special school/resource centre are maintained and further developed so as to enhance support for learners, such as those with low-incidence disabilities.)</i>	
<b>Measure 1 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 2: To support improved co-operation, including greater involvement of parents and local community***

Agency recommendation	Findings
2.1 The full involvement of families in all educational processes is outlined in legislation and policy.	
2.2 Policy for inclusive education places learners and their families at the centre of all actions.	
2.3 Sharing information among professionals and families is a policy priority.	
2.4 Policy has the goal of supporting parental interaction and communication with professionals.	



Agency recommendation	Findings
2.5 Schools are expected and supported to involve a wider range of partners and foster formal and informal networks that support their practice.	
<b>Measure 2 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 3: To develop monitoring strategies, establishing a comprehensive accountability and evaluation framework for inclusive education***

Agency recommendation	Findings
3.1 Policy describes clear mechanisms to evaluate effectiveness and quality in inclusive education.	
3.2 Monitoring procedures ensure that inequalities in access to educational resources at regional or organisational levels are addressed.	
3.3 Accountability measures that impact upon educational professionals' work reflect the importance of wider learner achievements.	
3.4 Policy outlines common standards for service and provision evaluation for use across health, education and social services.	
3.5 Policy outlines how to involve families in the process of evaluating quality of services.	
3.6 Policy describes mechanisms to evaluate demand for services.	
3.7 Policy supports opportunities for school teams to evaluate their practice through involvement in research and development activities.	



Agency recommendation	Findings
<b>Measure 3 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 4: To improve the cost-effectiveness of the education system, combining efficiency, effectiveness, equity and inclusion***

Agency recommendation	Findings
4.1 National-level inclusive education strategies are linked to long-term financial support.	
4.2 Funding policies and structures provide flexible resourcing systems that promote inclusion.	
4.3 There are long-term funding commitments to support collaborative initiatives between various school-based, resource centre and research teams.	
4.4 Policy outlines mechanisms for systematic data collection on expenditure and implementation that informs cost-effectiveness issues.	
<b>Measure 4 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 5: To increase participation in good quality inclusive early childhood education and care and enrolment rates in pre-school education***

Agency recommendation	Findings
5.1 Policy clearly respects the rights and the needs of children and their families.	



Agency recommendation	Findings
5.2 Support is available for families to recognise and understand the needs of their child. <i>(Support focuses upon what is in the child's best interests.)</i>	
5.3 Policy outlines how ECI services should be provided for children and families as early as possible and as quickly as possible, following identification of need.	
5.4 Policy states that, in risk situations, the child's rights should come first.	
5.5 Policy measures and guidelines clearly define quality standards for early childhood services and provision.	
5.6 Early childhood guidance is developed jointly by departments of health, education and social services.	
5.7 Policy for early childhood services supports cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary working at regional and local levels.	
5.8 Policy ensures there are pre-school places offered to children coming from ECI services/provision.	
5.9 Policy outlines how cost-free services/provision are made available for families.	
5.10 Policy ensures the same quality of service irrespective of differences in geographical location. <i>(Such as isolated or rural areas.)</i>	
<b>Measure 5 evaluative comments:</b>	



***Measure 6: To improve student-focused measures, such as mentoring, personalised learning approaches and improved guidance***

<b>Agency recommendation</b>	<b>Findings</b>
6.1 High expectations for all learners' achievements underpin policy for inclusive education.	
6.2 Policy outlines that learners' voices should be listened to in decision-making that affects them.	
6.3 Teaching, support and guidance has the goal of empowering all learners.	
6.4 Appropriate educational support is available as necessary and is fit for purpose in meeting personal learning needs.	
6.5 The learning process is based on flexible curricula based on learner-centred approaches and the development and implementation of individual learning plans as necessary.	
<b>Measure 6 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 7: To improve the school ethos (such as the creation of supportive learning environments, adapting learning environments to specific learning needs)***

<b>Agency recommendation</b>	<b>Findings</b>
7.1 Policy supports school leaders to value diversity among staff as well as learners, encourage collegiality and support innovation.	
7.2 Policy outlines the responsibility of school leaders to effectively communicate their vision for inclusive education to the school teaching team and wider school community.	





Agency recommendation	Findings
7.3 Policy aims to ensure the recruitment of teaching staff from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities.	
7.4 Policy supports schools to ensure teaching staff are able to meet diverse learning needs. <i>(Teaching staff have competence and expertise to develop individual plans, implement learner-centred approaches and support learners in personalised learning.)</i>	
7.5 The school ethos and culture is guided by school strategic plans that have high expectations for the academic and social achievements of all learners.	
7.6 School strategic plans describe how universal design for learning approaches are used to provide individualised learning tools and opportunities.	
7.7 School strategic plans stipulate that all learners are entitled to be active participants in the life of the school and community.	
7.8 School strategic plans have clear statements on the value of diversity.	
7.9 School strategic plans describe mechanisms for shared leadership, teamwork and collaborative problem solving.	
<b>Measure 7 evaluative comments:</b>	



***Measure 8: To reduce the negative effects of early tracking (the early streaming of pupils by ability into different types of provision or schools) and to reduce the extensive use of grade retention<sup>3</sup>***

<b>Agency recommendation</b>	<b>Findings</b>
8.1 Legislation across relevant public sectors has the goal of ensuring educational services enhance developments and processes working towards equity in inclusive education.	
8.2 Policy outlines how support structures that impact upon inclusive education are diverse and easily available. <i>(Support structures prevent early tracking and streaming of pupils at an early age.)</i>	
8.3 Assessment mechanisms are in place to identify the support needs of learners at an early stage.	
8.4 Data is available relating to learners' rights to age-appropriate education.	
<b>Measure 8 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 9: To support improvement in schools with lower educational outcomes***

<b>Agency recommendation</b>	<b>Findings</b>
9.1 Clear mechanisms exist to identify schools with lower educational outcomes. <sup>4</sup>	

<sup>3</sup> Early tracking means the early streaming of pupils by abilities into different types of provision or school; this includes placing children into separate schools. The extensive use of grade retention means holding pupils back to repeat school years, instead of providing flexible individual support.

<sup>4</sup> This recommendation does not come directly from the Agency work covered in the CPRA activities. A number of project recommendations have implicitly, but not explicitly, referred to this issue. However, the piloting work and detailed discussions with PG countries showed it is necessary to have this explicit recommendation linked to this measure.



Agency recommendation	Findings
9.2 Policy outlines how methods of assessment, inspections and other accountability measures contribute to school improvement processes. <i>(Accountability measures support inclusive practice and inform further improvement of provision for all learners.)</i>	
9.3 Policy aims to increase the capacity of all schools to meet a greater diversity of needs and support learners within their local communities. <i>(Schools are supported to use innovative teaching methods, practical learning approaches and individual plans, focusing on learners' capabilities.)</i>	
9.4 Policy outlines clear incentives for schools to take all learners from their local community.	
9.5 Policy requires school strategic plans to outline preventive educational action against dropouts. <i>(Including necessary measures so that learners who become disengaged find new educational alternatives.)</i>	
<b>Measure 9 evaluative comments:</b>	

***Measure 10: To improve the quality of school staff, focusing on the quality of teachers, quality in continuing professional development, developing teacher competences and reinforcing school leadership***

Agency recommendation	Findings
10.1 Policy outlines how all school staff develop the skills to meet the diverse needs of all learners. <i>(Appropriate training and professional development is provided to all school staff, including teachers, support and administrative staff, counsellors, etc.)</i>	



Agency recommendation	Findings
10.2 Policy supports the development of high-quality and appropriately trained teacher educators. <i>(With improvements in recruitment, induction and continuing professional development.)</i>	
10.3 Policy supports flexible training opportunities in initial and continuing professional development, for all teachers. <i>(Schools and teacher education institutions will work together to ensure good models in practice schools and appropriate placements for teaching practice.)</i>	
10.4 All teaching staff are supported and develop a clear understanding of effective learning strategies. <i>(Such as learning to learn and active learning approaches.)</i>	
10.5 Policy supports schools to develop strategic plans of staff training in inclusive education.	
10.6 Policy outlines the specialised training pathways for specialists who support school communities to implement inclusive education.	
10.7 Policy supports research into the effectiveness of different routes into teaching. <i>(Including course organisation, content and pedagogy to best develop the competence of teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners.)</i>	
<b>Measure 10 evaluative comments:</b>	



**Measure 11: To improve transition from education to work by increasing the coherence between employment incentives, education and VET; improving the quality and accessibility of apprenticeships; promoting cross-sector co-operation; simplifying the systems of qualifications**

Agency recommendation	Findings
11.1 Policy ensures that VET programmes should address labour market skill requirements.	
11.2 Policy aims at matching labour market skill requirements and learners' skills, wishes and expectations.	
11.3 Policy outlines the development of partnerships and networking structures. <i>(Partnerships with a pool of local employers to ensure close co-operation with regard to learners' supervised practical training and finding employment after graduation.)</i>	
11.4 Policy outlines how transition from education to employment is supported by adequate provision.	
11.5 Policy supports the availability of meaningful VET options for learners to choose from.	
11.6 Policy supports the availability of supervised practical training.	
11.7 Policy outlines how sustainable employment opportunities are supported through the availability of appropriate, on-going support.	
11.8 Policy outlines how VET programmes are reviewed periodically. <i>(Both internally and/or externally in order to adapt to current and future skill needs.)</i>	
<b>Measure 11 evaluative comments:</b>	



**Measure 12: To improve educational and career guidance across all phases of inclusive education**

Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>12.1 Policy outlines the mechanisms for ensuring effective transition across educational sectors and phases. <i>(There are well-organised transition processes among services to ensure continuity in the support required when learners move from one form of provision to another.)</i></p>	
<p>12.2 Policy outlines how career counsellors/officers support learners and employers regarding employment possibilities. <i>(Support is provided with job applications, inform and support employers and facilitate contact between both parties.)</i></p>	
<p><b>Measure 12 evaluative comments:</b></p>	



## ANNEX 2: SYNTHESIS SECTION

This 'synthesis section' presents a descriptive summary of the findings presented in the CPRA grid for xx. It aims to present a 'country profile' of policy approaches being taken. This provides a 'snapshot' of xx's policies for inclusive education in relation to the European-level policy goals (the 12 measures) and what this means with regard to policy development for inclusive education.

The findings – from Agency reports and the updated country information – presented in the grid have been categorised as taking an approach that is aimed at prevention, intervention or compensation. This identification is based on the measure's perceived policy purpose in line with the operational definitions agreed with the pilot work RB members:

- *Prevention* – policy initiatives that aim at **avoiding** educational exclusion and longer-term social exclusion, before these issues emerge (for example, anti-discrimination legislation promoting a rights approach, avoidance of disabling policies that lead to gaps in provision, lack of qualifications, etc.).
- *Intervention* – policy initiatives **supporting** the effective implementation of inclusive education (for example, the existence of clear policies leading to high-quality flexible support systems for mainstream education).
- *Compensation* – policy initiatives **addressing** the inability of legislation and/or provision to support meaningful inclusive education for all learners (for example, separate educational programmes or provision, support for failing schools, second-chance educational programmes).

The terms highlighted in bold and italics in each operational definition indicate the essential focus of each policy approach.

For the purposes of the CPRA work, compensation policy initiatives are understood to be those focusing upon system deficiencies and not learner needs, i.e. special educational needs/additional support that addresses a system 'omission' or lack of provision within an inclusive setting is compensation. Special educational needs/additional support that meets individual learner needs within an inclusive setting is considered a form of intervention.

The three policy purposes of prevention, intervention or compensation are complementary. They can potentially be used in different ways to achieve given policy goals.

### 1. Stated priorities for inclusive education

xx's stated policy priorities for education (as outlined in Section 1 of the analysis grid) ...



## **2. Policy actions in relation to the 12 measures**

In relation to the policy initiatives taken by xx in relation to the specific recommendations linked to the 12 measures (as presented in Section 2 of the analysis grid), the following approaches are suggested by information provided by xx.

*Measure 1: Improving inclusive education and ensuring that good quality education is accessible for all ...*

*Measure 2: Supporting improved co-operation, including greater involvement of parents and local community ...*

*Measure 3: Developing monitoring strategies, establishing a comprehensive accountability and evaluation framework for inclusive education ...*

*Measure 4: Improving the cost-effectiveness of the education system ...*

*Measure 5: Increasing participation in good quality inclusive early childhood education and care and pre-school education ...*

*Measure 6: Improving student-focused measures ...*

*Measure 7: Improving the school ethos ...*

*Measure 8: Reducing the negative effects of early tracking and grade retention ...*

*Measure 9: Supporting improvement in schools with lower educational outcomes ...*

*Measure 10: Improving the quality of school staff ...*

*Measure 11: Improving transition from education to work ...*

*Measure 12: Improving educational and career guidance across all phases of inclusive education ...*

## **3. Summary of areas of strength and for development**

The use of the framework for analysis based on the concepts of prevention, intervention and compensation has helped to identify a number of evaluative questions for policy-making. These were formulated by the CPRA PG and RG representatives.





Each of these questions is addressed below using the policy information available for xx:

1. *Do policy initiatives for an inclusive education system in xx take all learners into account?*

...

2. *Do policy initiatives in xx safeguard the rights of all learners to high-quality inclusive education?*

...

3. *Do policy initiatives in xx promote the active participation of learners and their families in decision-making that affects them?*

...

4. *Do policy initiatives in xx monitor, evaluate and secure the effective implementation of an inclusive education system?*

...

5. *Do policy initiatives in xx identify and address barriers to the inclusive education system?*

...



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