INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) FOR INCLUSION

France

Country Practice

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Main developments in practice in ICT for Inclusion since 2000 in relation to the main project themes

ICT as a tool for promoting equity in educational opportunities

The use of equipment and adapted software is permitted during examinations. Pupils who cannot handwrite can use computers. Materials transcribed in Braille, in large print or with high contrast can be requested.

Access to appropriate ICTs as an entitlement

There has been a paradigm shift. Computers have become portable (lighter and more powerful), while smartphones and tablets (e.g. iPad, Android) are of great service to students with disabilities because they are mobile and can be used both in the classroom and at home.

The Internet has become a very common tool and is a particularly useful medium for students with disabilities (when communicating through a forum or via chat, using a nickname or avatar that masks their disability). Focus groups for people with similar special needs provide valuable information.

Technologies that are controlled by sight, head movements or brainwaves are readily available (and often free).

Interactive whiteboards allow teachers to keep track of their classes in digital format and easily transmit this information to students who are absent due to illness or for other reasons. Learner response systems are very useful, as they mean that students with a disability or those in wheelchairs (or indeed shy pupils) do not have to leave their desks.

The dematerialisation of software (software as a service, cloud computing, etc.) makes it more accessible to students with disabilities, as they can work at home. This also facilitates collaborative work.

Training of educational staff in the use of general and specialist ICT

Information is available through websites, including http://www.ecolepourtous.education.fr/ and http://www.orna.fr

ICT modules are included in exam preparations for CAPA-SH (certificate of professional competence in specialised assistance, adapted teaching and schooling of students with disabilities) and 2CA-SH (complementary certificate for adapted teaching and schooling of students with disabilities) and in Master's degree courses offered by INS HEA for teachers who will work with children with disabilities.

'ICT and disability' modules are also incorporated into Master's degree courses offered by INS HEA for aspiring accessibility consultants.

E-learning courses are also available.

The promotion of ICT research and development requiring a multi-stakeholder approach

Work has been conducted with associations and through partnerships with private companies, while research and development has been carried out within the framework of European projects.

Data collection and monitoring in the use of ICT for inclusion

There is little data available. *L'Observatoire des ressources numériques adaptées* (Digital and Adapted Resources Observatory) conducts regular surveys on this topic (www.orna.fr).

ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

Country-based networks to support teachers in using ICT to promote inclusive learning

The INS HEA network service (in particular the Digital Resources Department) responds to queries from teachers and parents and produces films about the use of software and hardware by students with disabilities.

The Digital and Adapted Resources Observatory and the *Lecolepourtous* website (http://www.ecolepourtous.education.fr/) aim to connect teachers who use ICT with students with disabilities in inclusive settings.

There are also local resources, such as regional centres of educational materials (*centres régionaux de documentation pédagogique* – CRDP).

L'Agence nationale des usages des TICE (Agency for the Promotion of ICT; http://www.cndp.fr/agence-usages-tice/) produces a number of films to promote the use of ICT by students with disabilities.

The network of educational inspectors responsible for the schooling of pupils with disabilities can also help teachers to identify best practices.

Initial teacher education in using ICT to promote inclusive learning

The Computer Science and Internet Certificate (C2i) is now compulsory for student teachers, but disability is rarely addressed in initial teacher education.

Practical support in classrooms to help teachers' use of ICT to promote inclusive learning

At the institutional level, teachers can ask questions of INS HEA experts and through the *Lecolepourtous* website. Forums and associations can also help.

Important information sources about new developments, hardware and software products and ideas for using ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

- The *Réseau Nouvelles Technologies de l'Association des Paralysés de France* website (http://rnt.over-blog.com/)

- The *Handimobility* website (http://www.handimobility.org/blog/)

- The National Digital and Adapted Resources Observatory was created in November 2007 by the Minister of National Education. Under the auspices of INS HEA, its mission is to identify, analyse and evaluate digital resources for use by non-specialist teachers involved in the education of students with disabilities. These resources can be software, hardware, websites, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, digital libraries and so on. The Observatory is also responsible for disseminating the results of its observations.

The resources listed are not intended to only provide solutions for a given type of disorder or disability; rather in most cases all students in the class can use them. The main aim is to remove barriers to learning.

The Observatory's intent is not to present an exhaustive list of products available on the market. Indeed, many products appear each week, while others are removed. The main selection criteria are that these products are actually used in the classroom and that their teaching quality is proven.

To assist the Observatory in its monitoring mission, any publisher or any user (teacher, parent, student, etc.) can submit a resource through these two websites:

Lecolepourtous: http://www.ecolepourtous.education.fr/

L'Observatoire des ressources numériques adaptées: http://orna.inshea.fr

Current obstacles to using ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

- The absence of genuine teacher training in this field (for specialised and non-specialised teachers);
- Few teachers practice ICT competently (even including younger teachers);
- Lack of awareness of ICT best practices in inclusive settings among experienced, non-specialised teachers.

Factors that support using ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

- Develop initial teacher training so that teachers will be able to use ICT with students with disabilities in inclusive settings;
- Develop specialised teacher training in this field;
- Increase funding for the National Digital and Adapted Resources Observatory.

Perceived short and long-term developments that will have an impact on ICT for Inclusion practice

- Increase funding and the roles of the National Digital and Adapted Resources Observatory;
- Assist in the development of educational websites promoting ICT for students with disabilities in inclusive settings;
- Promote the development by INS HEA of hardware and software solutions through partnerships and European projects and by offering funding (see the calls for e-education projects in '*Investissements d'avenir – Economie numérique*': http://www.dgcis.redressement-productif.gouv.fr/secteurs-professionnels/economie-numerique/appels-a-projets-technologies-education).