



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) FOR INCLUSION

Luxembourg

1. Policy Frameworks

This information was provided by Tom Erdel and Frank Groben (Institut pour déficients visuels).

1.1 Policies that impact on ICT for inclusion in the compulsory school sector

The use of information and communication technology can be found at many different educational levels in Luxembourg. EDIFF (EDUCATION DIFFERENCIÉE) promotes the use of this new technology, as long as its use is beneficial for students. As the application and use of such technical aids are different for each individual student, the relevant person in charge of EDIFF decides on the device to be used.

1.2 Current policy on ICT for inclusion in relation to the main project themes

1.2 (i) ICT as a tool for promoting equity in educational opportunities.

EDIFF uses various technical tools to improve equality in education. As EDIFF always tries to integrate children with special needs into mainstream classes as much as possible, the use of IT tools is essential.

1.2 (ii) Access to appropriate ICTs as an entitlement

Given that EDIFF strives to ensure equality for all students, it goes without saying that each student receives all the required tools and technologies.

1.2 (iii) Training of educational staff in the use of general and specialist ICTs

EDIFF offers its staff on-going training so that they are up-to-date with the latest technology and equipped to use the individual aid devices. After a new tool is purchased, its use and application are explained to the staff so that they can use it to its full potential, in accordance with EDIFF's guidelines.

1.2 (iv) The promotion of ICT research and development requiring a multi-stakeholder approach

EDIFF itself is involved in the process of developing and establishing ICT. For example, EDIFF develops and produces software packages for different platforms, which can be used immediately by students and their supervisors.

1.2 (v) Data collection and monitoring in the use of ICT in inclusion

EDIFF continually creates new statistics about the use and application of various aids. EDIFF tries to collectively evaluate them and gain new insights.

1.3 Strategic plans for implementing policy on ICT for inclusion

EDIFF's policy is that the use of technical information and communication aids should always be promoted, as long as it is in each child's interest. As their use is determined on a case-by-case basis, the stakeholders are involved in the decision process, as are the learners' supervisors and other experts. When general technical aids are introduced, the staff members concerned are also involved in the decision process.



1.4 Monitoring and evaluation of policies or strategic plans relating to ICT for inclusion

No information is available on this issue.

1.5 Main policy developments in ICT for Inclusion that have taken place since 2000

EDIFF's policy is that the use of technical information and communication aids should always be promoted, as long as it is in each child's interest. The child's autonomy should be the first criteria for deciding whether it is necessary to plan and implement ICT solutions.

1.6 Current issues in relation to ICT for Inclusion

Based on inclusion in Luxembourg, EDIFF always tries to encourage all new development in the ICT sector, as long as it is in the children's interest. Some specialised schools have developed appropriate expertise in implementing ICT solutions, while others have started developing them.

1.7 Important short and long-term developments in ICT for Inclusion

Through constant use of the latest technology and the development of customised software, EDIFF tries to support students as well as possible on a technical level. Today we are aware that, despite the most advanced technological solutions available, human resources are still a decisive factor in reaching our goal of maximum autonomy for children with special educational needs (SEN).

2. Country Practice

This information was provided by Tom Erdel and Frank Groben (Institut pour déficients visuels).

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

2.1 (i) ICT as a tool for promoting equity in educational opportunities

EDIFF consistently installs the latest hardware, such as a computer system for visually impaired children, in order to try to simplify the students' learning process and thus promote better educational opportunities.

2.1 (ii) Access to appropriate ICTs as an entitlement

In the area of special education, EDIFF uses specific software and hardware designed to promote, for example, communication skills. These range from simple learning programmes to special control arrangements, which offer children the possibility of decision-making and control processes.

2.1 (iii) Training of educational staff in the use of general and specialist ICT

EDIFF constantly offers advanced courses for technical aids and their use. This year, for example, several teachers and caregivers have been trained in reactive control of iOS devices.

2.1 (iv) The promotion of ICT research and development requiring a multi-stakeholder approach

Some ICT users with SEN are currently employed by the national resource system. They actively participate in the development of ICT solutions (hardware as well as software).



2.1 (v) Data collection and monitoring in the use of ICT for inclusion

EDIFF uses specific database systems, such as OLEFA, to manage its technical devices and to also collect various types of data. Through on-going feedback from maintainers and teachers, EDIFF collects information about the desirability of the assistive devices.

2.2 ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

2.2 (i) Country-based networks to support teachers in using ICT to promote inclusive learning

The IDV (specialised institute for visually impaired children), for example, offers courses for parents and teachers to train them in the use of ICT solutions and packages, implemented in their specific learning and teaching context.

2.2 (ii) Initial teacher education in using ICT to promote inclusive learning

No information is available on this issue.

2.2 (iii) Practical support in classrooms to help teachers' use of ICT to promote inclusive learning

Teachers and caregivers have the option of contacting computer scientists at any time, who will help with any kind of problems.

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

Through technical publications and knowledge portals, employees are always informed about innovations in the ICT field. Regular visits to trade shows give employees the opportunity to learn about new features.

2.3 Current obstacles to using ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

- Use of many technical aids creates the risk of over-dependence on them.
- Many specific tools are very expensive due to their individual nature and therefore they require a large budget.
- In cases of technology failure, repairs often take a very long time and the student concerned sometimes has to go a long time without their aid.

2.4 Factors that support using ICT to promote learning in inclusive settings

These include:

- the promotion of communication skills;
- increasing student autonomy;
- the facilitation of inclusive education.

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

The use of technical information and communication resources is an essential part of EDIFF's work. Further developments will hopefully bring enrichment for students.

We believe that the more successful and experienced schools in the use of ICT solutions should share their knowledge with other schools in order to enable them to also acquire the expertise needed. A co-ordinator at national level could help implement this goal.