

# Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning

Including all education professionals in teacher professional learning for inclusion

T P L 4 I



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



# **PROFILE FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

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teacher professional learning for inclusion**



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## FOREWORD

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In 2018, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency) began its [Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion](#) (TPL4I) project, exploring professional learning for inclusive education. Phase 1 of TPL4I identified the key policy elements needed to ensure that all teachers are supported to promote equity in education and to develop their inclusive practice throughout their careers. A main outcome of this work was the identification of the need for policy to support the development of competence frameworks for inclusion for all teachers and other professionals working with teachers in inclusive settings.

This need was confirmed by the identification of numerous individual and separate professional learning initiatives addressing different education professionals. Although collaborative professional learning is widely seen as supportive, the TPL4I work shows that there is fragmentation and a lack of common strategies, guidelines and language for competence development for inclusive education. This finding set the agenda for Phase 2 of TPL4I: revisit the [Profile of Inclusive Teachers](#) (European Agency, 2012) and consider its relevance and use for **all** education professionals.

The original *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* was developed in the [Teacher Education for Inclusion](#) (TE4I) project, aimed at preparing pre-service teachers and teacher educators for inclusive education. Although there was some evidence of the *Profile's* broader use throughout a teacher's career (e.g. Hollenweger, Pantić and Florian, 2015), the need to overcome disparities between competence frameworks for different professionals working in inclusive education was apparent.

Phase 2 of TPL4I involved activities to explore and share professional learning opportunities for all education professionals, based on the *Profile's* core values and areas of competence. A conceptual working paper, [Aligning Competence Frameworks for Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion](#) (European Agency, 2021a) set the stage for key questions and dialogue among participants. Moreover, a survey of all Agency member countries was conducted to consider the relevance of the *Profile's* core values and areas for competence development among all relevant professionals. Next, a cluster of six Agency members addressed the *Profile's* use at the school and community levels in particular.

The Agency member countries' joint work in this process has led to this ***Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning***. The new *Profile* builds on the 2012 *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* to present a potential tool for a wider group of stakeholders. The Agency wishes to thank all those who participated in developing the updated *Profile*.

This work highlights the potential usefulness of a competence framework for inclusive education that is based on core values as a method of collaboratively exploring, aligning and deepening competences for inclusive practice for all education professionals throughout their careers.

**Cor Meijer**

**Director of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education**



## INTRODUCTION

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Although [diversity](#) is recognised as a resource for quality education, it is still seen as a significant challenge in education. Policy and practice have expressed an urgent need for professional learning opportunities that address diverse learners' needs and teachers' concerns for inclusion (European Agency, 2019; 2020a). Broad and continuous professional learning opportunities are needed to face the complexity of diversity in schools and to develop welcoming, inclusive learning environments for all.

In its [Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion](#) (TPL4I) project, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency) explored professional learning for inclusion for [all teachers](#) and other [education professionals](#) throughout their careers.

Phase 1 of TPL4I identified the key policy elements needed to support education professionals in developing inclusive practice throughout their careers. Based on a policy mapping activity of teacher professional learning (TPL) for inclusion in 26 countries (European Agency, 2020b), phase 1 concluded with the following recommendations:

- develop a policy vision for career-long TPL for inclusion, engaging all teachers – including specialist staff – in TPL for inclusion and enabling them to meet all learners' needs, rather than focusing on the needs of particular groups of learners;
- review policy goals for TPL for all teachers and, in particular, offer guidelines and strategies that consider the competence areas needed for inclusive education;
- emphasise collaboration among all stakeholders involved in TPL for inclusion (European Agency, 2020c, p. 9).

A clear vision of [TPL for inclusion](#) is needed, underpinned by a vision of [equity](#) and the recognition of career-long learning for all education professionals. To address and support [all learners](#) effectively, **policy must set common goals, offer guidelines and consider a common language for competence development for all professionals involved**. More broadly, a common language for competence development supports policy-makers in planning and monitoring professional development for inclusion. To strengthen teachers' and schools' commitment and agency in inclusive education, a framework of professional goals or competence areas based on a shared vision of equity is a key element for successful policies for TPL for inclusion.

This reasoning and the Phase 1 findings led to a second phase of TPL4I: developing a [competence framework](#) for TPL for inclusion by revisiting the [Profile of Inclusive Teachers](#) (European Agency, 2012) and **considering its relevance and applicability as a foundation for competence development for all education professionals**. A competence framework for inclusion that covers the [TPL continuum](#), for all teachers throughout their careers and for other education professionals, may encourage all professionals involved to commit to continuous learning for inclusion.



In addition, Phase 2 explored the use of such a competence framework for inclusion at all levels of the ecosystem of inclusive education systems (European Agency, 2017): an individual's personal professional learning, the school level, the community level and the broader policy level. By addressing all system levels, teachers and other professionals may feel more broadly supported, e.g. by collaborating across levels or discovering existing frameworks and standards reflecting inclusive principles.

The TPL4I Phase 2 activities led to the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*. It builds on the 2012 *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*, which identified the core values and competence areas for inclusion for initial teacher education (ITE), to consider the core values and [competences](#) necessary in all TPL opportunities. It addresses **all beginning teachers, in-service teachers, mentoring teachers, school leaders, support staff (including teaching assistants), specialists, teacher educators and other TPL providers**.

The 2012 *Profile* was based on the Agency's [Teacher Education for Inclusion](#) (TE4I) project activities, which involved experts and over 400 education stakeholders from 25 Agency member countries. It addressed questions on the kind of teachers that are needed for an inclusive society in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century school and the essential competences – including attitudes, knowledge and skills – that all teachers in inclusive education require.

TE4I focused on the education of mainstream, general education teachers and how their ITE prepared them to work in inclusive settings. Analysis of information from all country visits and meetings in the TE4I project led to agreement on the basic structure of the 2012 *Profile's* core values and essential competence areas.

Phase 2 of TPL4I revisited the 2012 *Profile*, adding a new iteration to the TE4I activities. Seventeen Agency member countries participated in a survey on the *Profile's* use for all education professionals, and experts from six member countries were involved in focus groups on broader [competence development for inclusion](#).

The outcome, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*, is an invitation to all education professionals and policy-makers to consider the competences for inclusive TPL from a whole-school and community perspective to move towards true quality education for all. Building on the core values and competence areas identified for newly-qualified teachers, the following sections describe the process and the final results of revisiting the 2012 *Profile* as a foundation for next steps in professional learning for inclusion:

- [Key questions for competence development for inclusion](#) throughout a teacher's career
- [Steps taken to develop the Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning](#)
- The [proposed framework for competence development for inclusive education](#)
- The [2022 Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning](#).

This document concludes with three annexes:

1. [Suggestions and outline guidance](#) for the possible use of the 2022 *Profile*
2. A [comparison of the 2012 and the 2022 Profiles](#) to highlight alignment within the frameworks and content
3. A list of [operational definitions](#) used in the TPL4I work.



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# 1. KEY QUESTIONS FOR CAREER-LONG COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT FOR INCLUSION

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To facilitate inclusive education, TPL for inclusion is recognised as an integral part of inclusive education systems development (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016). Within this process, competence frameworks for inclusion are regarded as essential policy elements to underpin TPL for inclusion (European Agency, 2020a).

Supporting the rationale of developing a competence framework for inclusion for a wide range of education professionals, this chapter argues for a new approach. First, by reviewing competence development for inclusion, it highlights the need to revisit the [Profile of Inclusive Teachers](#) (European Agency, 2012), as recommended in [An Analysis of Country Policies in Europe](#) (European Agency, 2020a). Next, it proposes a new approach in competence development for inclusion. It concludes with the key questions to address, drawing upon the TPL4I conceptual working paper, [Aligning Competence Frameworks for Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion](#) (European Agency, 2021a).

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## Reviewing competence development for inclusion

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International policy has recognised the need for key competences and core values to work in inclusive education (Allan, 2011; Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016; Council of the European Union, 2017; 2021; European Agency, 2012; 2020a; European Commission, 2017; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018).

Two reference frameworks on equity and inclusion focusing primarily on ITE have been developed in Europe: teacher competences for diversity (Allan, 2011) and the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012). Both frameworks reflect all teachers' responsibility for equitable quality education and all teacher educators' responsibility to prepare all teachers to work in inclusive settings (ibid.). The two frameworks identify competence areas or dimensions that suggest the essential knowledge, effective communication, collaboration and teaching skills required to support teachers to develop agency in inclusive educational settings, such as agency for intercultural dialogue or for learner support.

However, only focusing on pre-service teachers to demonstrate agency in inclusive education increases the risk of narrowing the meaning of competences for diversity and inclusion to the management of skills. Instead, competences must be understood as the ability and capability of social groups, institutions or individuals to meet the context's demands, rather than pursuing ready solutions, methods or activities. Essentially, agency for inclusion requires a readiness to respond to diversity, in whatever shape or form, and, more broadly, a responsiveness to change, reflection and adaptation (Allan, 2011). This broad definition sets high expectations for ITE and consequently implies continuous competence development for all education professionals.



## From initial teacher education to career-long professional learning for inclusion

Indeed, reference frameworks of teacher competences aim to ensure quality not only in ITE, but throughout teachers' career-long professional development, in teacher selection, and in facilitating dialogue between different stakeholders (European Commission, 2013). Competence frameworks can provide a reference for curricular design and reform in teacher education and continuing professional development (CPD). Underpinned by inclusive pedagogy (Rouse and Florian, 2012) or culturally responsive pedagogies (Villegas, Ciotoli and Lucas, 2017; Waitoller and King Thorius, 2016), these competence frameworks have the power to effectively prepare teachers for inclusive education.

In particular, teacher practice and reflection are crucial (European Agency, 2012; 2020a), alongside areas of curricular design identified to elaborate competences for inclusion. These include legislation and policy for inclusion, awareness of mechanisms of exclusion, prejudice and discrimination, intercultural education, information and communication technology (ICT), universal design and blended learning, as well as basic sign language and Braille (Berry, 2011; European Agency, 2020a; European Commission, 2016; Forlin and Chambers, 2011; UNESCO, 2015).

Overall, along the TPL continuum and reaching out to a wider range of education professionals working with teachers, competence development for inclusion must emphasise:

- 'integrating inclusion and diversity topics' across ITE, induction and CPD;
- including all teacher educators, i.e. those who work in ITE, those who work in postgraduate/specialised programmes, mentoring teachers and other TPL providers;
- a shift in the roles of support teachers and other education professionals towards collaborative-consultative roles and inclusion facilitators;
- collaborative reflective practice for all education professionals involved in inclusion;
- teacher leadership competences;
- the need to underpin 'all professional learning for inclusion with competence frameworks, curriculum design and core content' that reflect 'the values and assumptions needed to develop inclusive learning environments' (European Agency, 2019, pp. 45–46).

## Revisiting the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*

Initially designed for pre-service teachers' competence development, the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012) offers a coherent and detailed example of a framework for competence development for inclusion. Its objectives were 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 [to be developed during ITE, and used as a foundation for further development within [induction](#) and later CPD opportunities];

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 [...] 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 (ibid., p. 6).

The 2012 *Profile* (ibid.) identified four core values relating to teaching and learning as the basis for the work of all teachers in inclusive education. These core values are associated with eight areas of competence, each made up of three elements: suggested attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain attitude or belief demands certain knowledge or a level of understanding and skills to implement this knowledge in practice. The *Profile* was developed around this framework of core values and areas of competence:

**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 (ibid., p. 7).

### **Exploring the *Profile's* use as a foundation for TPL for inclusion policy and practice**

Over the last decade, researchers have used the 2012 *Profile* for diverse research and TPL purposes. Cornwall (2013) used its core values to analyse policy elements in the United Kingdom's education system. Other researchers used it as part of their theoretical framework or as a tool for analysing data on teachers' practices (e.g. Finkelstein, Sharma and Furlonger, 2019; Isosomppi and Leivo, 2015).

The *Profile* has been part of TPL opportunities, such as a UNICEF booklet (2014) that accompanied a webinar on inclusive teaching and pedagogy. Hollenweger, Pantić and Florian (2015) used it as a basis to develop a TPL tool. Work conducted using the *Profile* shows that scholars have found it useful for areas beyond ITE. Since its publication, the *Profile* has inspired ITE and CPD courses (Andresen, 2015; Baldiris-Navarro, Zervas, Gesa and Sampson, 2016).

Clearly, throughout the continuum of professional learning and beyond the boundaries of professional specialisms, further competence development for inclusion is needed. More specifically, the TPL4I *Analysis of Country Policies in Europe* (European Agency, 2020a) indicated that the use of separate competence frameworks – some that apply to all learners and others that apply to learners identified as having special educational needs – reflects different understandings of inclusive education and leads to gaps across the TPL continuum. The TPL4I findings stress the need for collaborative TPL for inclusion among teachers and [specialist staff](#).

Based on these findings, a preliminary exploration took place of the *Profile's* use and relevance for all education professionals. The findings suggested that the *Profile's* use can be extended to:

- inform policy development on competences for all teachers: this would allow countries to benefit from a set of core values for all phases of the TPL for inclusion continuum and on all aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion, eliminating current gaps in key competence development for inclusion;
- enhance the continuum of TPL for inclusion opportunities and ensure TPL for inclusion for all education professionals, rather than offering segmented professional learning opportunities leading to specific professional qualifications;
- improve policies on the implementation of TPL for inclusion, to build capacity for inclusion through collaboration and to monitor TPL for inclusion opportunities along the professional continuum (European Agency, 2020a).



Further exploration of the relevance of the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* in developing a competence framework for inclusion for all education professionals requires a closer look at competence development for inclusion and the approach to take in this process.

## Key questions for a new approach

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The TPL4I conceptual working paper, [Aligning Competence Frameworks for Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion](#) (European Agency, 2021a), closely examines the key questions to consider regarding competence development for inclusion throughout a teacher's career. Facing rapid changes and uncertainty in education – in policy, pedagogy, technology, roles and responsibilities – TPL needs a new approach to prepare all teachers effectively for inclusion. With only a limited range of professional learning paths for inclusion to rely on, which are predominantly add-on courses for teachers and separate courses for specialists, a different approach is recommended.

In ITE, adding or infusing content on difference and diversity has proven to be ineffective (Blanton and Pugach, 2011). In particular, it risks marginalising learners and leads to the assumption that only some teachers need the knowledge and skills to respond to individual learners' needs. Instead, teacher education programmes must offer the opportunity to rethink difference as a feature of all learners and diversity as an opportunity for all. By adopting the attitude that difference is normal, all teachers share responsibility and are considered competent to teach all learners. This view aligns with the strategies put forward in the science of learning (Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey, 2018) and underpins inclusive pedagogy that has been implemented successfully in ITE programmes (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011).

If this approach can more effectively prepare newly-qualified teachers for inclusive education, then it may also inform and empower beginning and experienced teachers and other education professionals. The basic assumptions should be that difference is intrinsically present in mainstream classrooms and may enrich learning for all and that, consequently, all teachers are competent to teach all learners and to work with others. Supported by evidence (Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey, 2018; Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011), these assumptions offer all teachers and their colleagues a powerful starting point to learn the knowledge and skills to respond to diversity in ways that include learners in mainstream classrooms and schools.

### Aligning competence frameworks to include all learners

Such a new approach to TPL does not add a new layer of competences to a professional's skills and capabilities, as may be expected from add-on or specialised courses. To enhance a positive response to rapid change in schools, TPL must be underpinned by the knowledge and skills education professionals need in varying inclusive education contexts. Therefore, it may be more effective to link this approach to existing frameworks that already reflect the principles of inclusion.

As an example of introducing inclusive pedagogy in ITE, Rouse (2007; 2008) refers to Shulman's (2004) three apprenticeships for newly-qualified teachers – the head, the heart and the hand, i.e. the essential knowledge, beliefs and skills all teachers require – and how these can enable inclusive education. By linking the essential features identified for



teacher education for inclusion to existing frameworks, the main principles and elements may be adopted effectively. A similar approach may advance the implementation of professional learning opportunities for inclusion throughout a professional's career.

This raises two key questions for competence development for inclusion for all education professionals. These questions have guided the process of developing a profile for TPL for inclusion:

- What are the essential features of a framework for professional learning that can support all teachers and other education professionals to develop the knowledge, beliefs and practices that facilitate inclusion and can shape an inclusive professional's identity?
- How do existing frameworks (e.g. professional standards, competences or school development plans) meet the essential features of a framework for professional learning for inclusion?

The next chapter describes the methodology of revisiting the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*, developing the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* and exploring its possible use.



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## 2. DEVELOPING A PROFILE FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: A MULTI-LEVEL ENQUIRY

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To address the questions raised in chapter 1, the development of the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* consisted of a survey and a participatory cluster. The cluster approach was based on the Agency's ecosystem model of inclusive education systems (European Agency, 2017).

### Survey

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First, a survey was designed. The survey consisted of two sections with a total of 48 questions. The sections examined:

- which professionals are involved in inclusive education, the kind of professional learning goals that exist for inclusive education professionals, and their shared professional goals and identity;
- the relevance of the core values and competence areas for inclusion identified in the 2012 *Profile* and the missing competence areas for all (teacher) professional learning opportunities for inclusion.

In addition, the survey asked Agency member countries how they currently used the 2012 *Profile* for professional learning opportunities and whether they were interested in participating in a cluster activity to explore these topics in more depth.

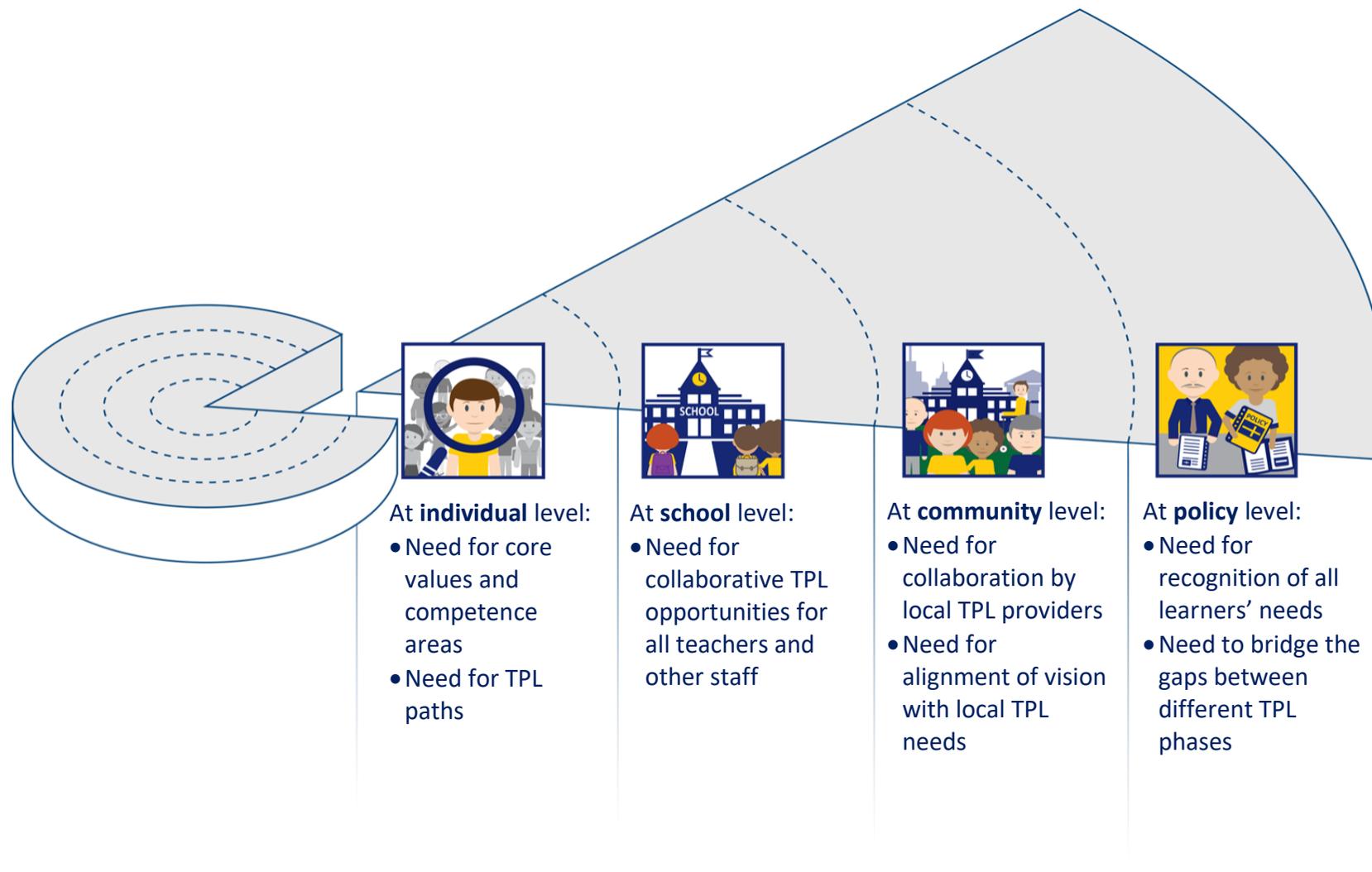
### Cluster activities

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Second, a cluster of six Agency members was set up, based on interest expressed in the survey. The cluster consisted of policy representatives and inclusive education experts from each of the following countries: Belgium (Flemish Community), Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece and Sweden.

The cluster activity aimed to review the 2012 *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012) and consider its broader use. A kick-off meeting set out the development and content of the 2012 *Profile*. This was followed by four online cluster meetings, focusing on the *Profile's* relevance and potential at different system levels, as defined in the Agency's ecosystem model of inclusive education systems (European Agency, 2017).

The ecosystem model explains how different structures, processes and outcomes of inclusive policies and practice – e.g. TPL – interact with each other and impact on learners. Each system level may influence a learner's development in education. Phase 1 of TPL4I identified the main challenges for [TPL for inclusion policy](#) at the individual, school, community and policy levels of the TPL for inclusion system (European Agency, 2020a), as [Figure 1](#) shows.



**Figure 1. TPL policy needs in the ecosystem of inclusive education systems**



Cluster meetings were structured around the initial challenges for TPL for inclusion, as highlighted in literature and in the survey findings. They explored and discussed how, in an inclusive education system, a competence framework for inclusion can support:

- **personal professional learning for inclusion** for diverse education professionals. Looking at the responses to section 2 of the survey, the cluster discussed:
  - the relevance of the core values and competence areas for all educators;
  - using the *Profile* for personal competence development for inclusion;
- **school-level professional learning for inclusion** to build capacity for inclusive education. The cluster explored:
  - the essential features of a school-level instrument for TPL for inclusion;
  - suggestions for using the *Profile* and incorporating it into TPL activities;
- **professional learning for inclusion in the wider community** to expand capacity for inclusion. The cluster explored:
  - who is involved at the community level;
  - suggestions for using a competence framework for inclusion based on TPL examples;
- **the policy level** to develop competence for inclusion. Looking at the responses to section 1 of the survey, the cluster discussed:
  - using the *Profile* to bridge the gap between TPL phases;
  - the *Profile's* dissemination and alignment with existing competence frameworks.

Along all system levels, participants considered the *Profile's* core values and areas of competence to underpin all TPL for inclusion activities. In addition, cluster members presented examples of competence development for inclusion in their countries, developed for a variety of TPL for inclusion opportunities.

## Analysis and peer review

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Analysis of the survey and cluster input focused on:

- the key features of competence development for inclusion for all professionals involved;
- identifying potential suggestions and outline guidance for using a competence framework for inclusion at the different system levels of TPL for inclusion.

The analysis followed an iterative approach, summarising and building upon former project outcomes in each cluster meeting. For this purpose, meeting preparations were supported by an external expert and former team member who acted as a critical friend.



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Cluster activity participants, Agency project managers and member country representatives carried out peer review of the full *Profile*.

The cluster meetings systematically explored the above questions within the different education system levels. The next chapter describes the [essential features](#) that were identified throughout the process and must remain in place whenever adaptations to or new alignments with existing standards are needed. It is followed by the final outcome: the [Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning](#) or the **competence framework** of core values for inclusion and the associated areas of competence that were found to be relevant for all education professionals.

In addition, the outcomes of the discussions on using a competence framework for inclusion were incorporated into the outline guidance for using the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* presented in [Annex 1](#). This guidance seeks to promote a multi-level approach aimed at all education professionals, by exploring the *Profile's* potential use in different contexts and existing collaborative TPL practice that illustrates competence development for inclusion.



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## 3. A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Based on the TPL4I survey and the cluster activity, seven essential features were identified as applicable to any framework that aims to support TPL for inclusion or varying processes of revisiting existing frameworks for inclusive education. This resulted in the *Profile's* new framework of four core values and ten areas of competence.

### Essential features

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The seven essential features identified refer to the main principles for developing, revisiting or aligning a competence framework for inclusion.

#### 1. Connecting education professionals

Inclusion and equity are considered the foundations for quality education (UNESCO, 2015). However, implementing inclusion in schools is complex and teachers alone cannot be held accountable for its success. Teachers do not work in isolation, nor do they work in homogeneous groups of just teachers. Inclusive practice is performed by teams of diverse professionals. Therefore, a broader perspective is needed to prepare and support school staff and school professional networks to implement and sustain inclusive practice. As system levels of TPL for inclusion are linked, so are the professional learning needs of all stakeholders involved. A competence framework for inclusion has the power to connect education professionals by sharing professional needs and experiences in inclusive education.

The *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* reaches out to all teachers throughout their careers and to all professionals working with teachers at any point in their careers. Taking a broader perspective, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* offers a tool for competence development for **pre-service, beginning and in-service teachers, mentoring and support teachers, school leaders, teacher educators, specialists and teaching assistants**. With teachers at the centre of inclusive practice, the *Profile* invites all professionals involved to take part in a common process of professional learning for inclusion.

#### 2. Encouraging team reflection

Professional standards and existing competence frameworks were found to serve two purposes. First, a competence framework for inclusion serves as a benchmark for TPL policy and recruitment, to guide TPL provision and to build capacity for inclusive education. Second, a competence framework offers a handhold for individual professionals' self-reflection, supervision and peer-to-peer feedback.

However, the complexity of inclusive education requires a broader reflection and engagement than the personal, individual learning of teachers and other professionals. In particular, to support capacity building, team reflection is acknowledged as essential in the process of competence development for inclusion. By shifting the emphasis from an



individual's performance and self-efficacy to **team reflection, collective professional learning and, ultimately, team agency in inclusion**, a competence framework for inclusion may have a broader impact in implementing inclusive education.

In professional learning communities and in personal, collegial relationships, a competence framework for inclusion invites teachers and other professionals to:

- discuss and illustrate the meaning of inclusion, the values underpinning inclusion and the competences needed to enact and sustain inclusive education;
- share practice and skills;
- map, if possible, team agency and school development for inclusion.

The aim is to lift professional learning beyond training, empower school staff for inclusive teaching, adopt a whole-school perspective and develop professional vision for inclusion. Inclusive professional learning communities can raise awareness of the '[grammar of schooling](#)' (i.e. the system's established structures and mechanisms that tend to reproduce inequalities). From there, teachers and other professionals can start re-imagining structures and collaboration, free from what was previously considered impossible.

### **3. Sharing a teacher perspective, sharing a whole-school view**

For mutual understanding among education professionals, competence development for inclusion must sufficiently reflect **teacher skills and practice**. Survey and cluster findings strongly confirm the relevance of teacher competences for all education professionals involved in inclusive support.

Building on the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* stresses what teachers must know and be able to do to teach and support all learners. Developing a TPL *Profile* for broader use does not diminish the teachers' role. On the contrary, the *Profile* invites other professionals to take part in teachers' crucial tasks and to have conversations and reflections closely related to these: in teaching, co-teaching and teacher support, to include all learners and to develop inclusive learning environments and welcoming school cultures.

Likewise, the *Profile* invites teachers to look beyond the classroom and take a whole-school view in developing competence for inclusion. In times of crises and disruption to regular school routines, the need for mutual understanding and openness to change in professional roles becomes more apparent than ever. For instance, in the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers took on the role of addressing learners' socio-emotional needs and changed their teaching processes (European Agency, 2021b). Taking a whole-school perspective influences teachers' roles and strengthens shared competence development.

### **4. Focusing on equity, focusing on all learners**

Competence development for inclusion must highlight both diversity assets and diversity issues. To represent all learners – both the needs of all and the specific needs of some – it must acknowledge different perspectives while focusing foremost upon quality education for all. Waitoller and King Thorius (2016) refer to interdisciplinary and intercultural dialogue, as well as universal design models and, for instance, sign language skills, to account for equity and disability.



The *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* invites education professionals to take a multi-dimensional view, taking into account all diversity perspectives and their intersections. It aims to allow teachers, other school staff and educators to question, reflect upon and re-imagine efforts to respond to diversity, to value their meaning and the meaning given to inclusion in a specific context and in the complexity of its implementation (Naraian, 2017).

In this respect, it is necessary that education professionals are aware of the multiple forms of discrimination – such as racial discrimination and, more generally, direct and indirect discrimination – that operate in a given context and how these marginalise and exclude groups and individuals, based on the notion of the superiority of one group of persons and contempt for another group of persons (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, 2018).

### **5. Taking a holistic perspective on competence development**

A competence framework for inclusion must take a holistic and dynamic view of competences for education professionals, to be gradually enacted and achieved and continuously developed. Competences for education professionals are thereby understood as the **capability, effectiveness and skills** of individual teachers and their colleagues, school teams, schools and other institutions related to education, to meet the context's demands (Allan, 2011; Caena, 2014; European Agency, 2019).

To understand how effective performance is put together in varying situations, it is necessary to 'unpack' the underlying competences and the processes they reflect (Blömeke, Gustafsson and Shavelson, 2015). Competences are understood as **complex combinations of attitudes, knowledge and skills** that underpin well-considered actions in a specific situation and successful performance. This distinction marks professional learning as a process of three interrelated elements that show a strong reciprocal relationship. None of these is sufficient on its own (Rouse, 2007; Shulman, 2004).

Moreover, the *Profile* takes a holistic approach by associating **areas of competence** with the core values identified for TPL for inclusion, instead of isolated competences. Made up of interrelated attitudes, knowledge and transversal skills, 'areas of competence' stress the need to caution against an oversimplistic, mechanistic and prescriptive use of competences (European Agency, 2012).

To make a difference to the quality and effectiveness of teaching and schooling, a range of competences must be reflected upon and activated. Areas of competence are the starting point for reflection and discussions among professionals. They can be revisited throughout a professional's career at 'increasingly deeper levels of learning and understanding' (ibid., p. 23).

### **6. A professional learning tool for multi-level use**

As a consequence of broadening competence development for inclusion across the professional continuum and for all professionals involved, a competence framework has a place at all TPL system levels. To develop and maintain inclusive practice, professionals need continuous professional learning opportunities in which they can engage collaboratively. More broadly, school teams need peer support, feedback and exchange



beyond their own practice. The individual, school, community and policy levels are complementary to raise professional capacity for inclusive education.

The *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* values all levels of TPL for inclusion by inviting all education professionals to engage in inclusive professional learning communities.

## 7. A values-based approach

Above all, to ensure sustainable inclusive practice and effective dialogue among professionals, competence development for inclusion must reflect the shared values of inclusion.

The *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* identified four core values relating to teaching and learning as the basis for all teachers' work in inclusive education (European Agency, 2012). The same values are considered relevant to underpin TPL for inclusion and inclusive professional learning communities more widely, as the next section outlines. They align with international policy and literature on inclusion, in which core values have also been referred to as:

- respect for human dignity, human rights, diversity, equality, equity and democracy, fighting stigmatisation and discrimination and catering for everyone's needs (Council of the European Union, 2019; European Agency, 2021a; UNESCO, 2020);
- the ethical notion of true engagement and responsibility for others (Allan, 2011);
- underlying basic teacher assumptions on learning, teaching and collaboration: difference is an essential aspect of human development, teachers are capable of teaching all learners and teachers continually develop creative new ways of working with others (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; Spratt and Florian, 2015);
- critical thought and affirmative interventions to support inclusive teaching (Naraian, 2017);
- dispositions such as empathy, bonding, forgiveness, acceptance, community, positive school climate and well-being (Yin, Loreman, Majid and Alias, 2019);
- core community values of participation, belonging, mastery, independence and generosity, which are central to inclusion, to ensure young people's resilience and well-being (Peterson and Taylor, 2009).

Supported by literature and the survey results, discussions among TPL4I cluster participants led to strong agreement on the relevance of the 2012 *Profile's* original core values. Additionally, more input was provided on the associated areas of competence.

The final *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* framework reflects the aggregated findings of all TPL4I Phase 2 activities, to support competence development for inclusion among all education professionals.



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## The *Profile's* core values and areas of competence

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As a result, a framework of four core values and ten areas of competence underpins the 2022 *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*. This framework largely aligns with the initial 2012 *Profile*. [Annex 2](#) presents a comparison of the new *Profile's* core values and areas of competence with the 2012 *Profile's* framework on which it builds.

**Collaborative professional learning** is highlighted as a main feature of all TPL for inclusion. The associated areas of competence further set out the core values' meaning for the professional learning of all education professionals, as outlined below.

- **Valuing learner diversity** – learner difference is considered a resource and an asset to education. Areas of competence within this core value relate to:
  - conceptions of inclusion, equity and quality education;
  - education professionals' views of learner difference.
  
- **Supporting all learners** – teachers and other education professionals are deeply committed to all learners' achievements, well-being and belonging. Areas of competence within this core value relate to:
  - promoting all learners' academic, practical, social and emotional learning;
  - supporting all learners' well-being;
  - effective teaching approaches and flexible organisation of support.
  
- **Working with others** – advocacy, collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers and other education professionals. Areas of competence within this core value relate to:
  - giving learners a true voice;
  - working with parents and families;
  - working with a range of education professionals.
  
- **Personal and collaborative professional development** – teaching and supporting learners are lifelong learning activities for which teachers and other education professionals take personal and shared responsibility. Areas of competence within this core value relate to:
  - teachers and other education professionals as members of an inclusive professional learning community;
  - professional learning for inclusion that builds on initial teacher education and the competences of other education professionals.



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The associated areas of competence identified in the TE4I project (European Agency, 2012) and in the TPL4I Phase 2 project discussions effectively reflect and further develop the core values. Two areas of competence have been added: to highlight competences to support all learners' well-being and to listen to learners' voices.

Within the areas of competence, the listing of essential factors does not imply a hierarchical order or isolation of competences, as they are all closely interconnected and highly interdependent. Rather, the areas of competence show a continuum towards inclusive education, leading to a professional vision and actions and to effective inclusive practice within school teams and among all school staff members. The next chapter presents the full [\*Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning\*](#).

The core values and associated competence areas are the basis for learning opportunities and paths towards quality inclusive education for all education professionals and for inclusive professional learning communities at different levels of an inclusive education system, as [\*Annex 1\*](#) illustrates.



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## 4. PROFILE FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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The *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* aims to support all education professionals in committing to quality education for all learners.

Throughout the *Profile*, the terms ‘teachers’, ‘school staff’ and ‘education professionals’ refer to **pre-service and in-service teachers, mentoring and support teachers, school leaders, teacher educators, teaching assistants and specialists**. Connecting school-based and non-school-based staff, ‘education professionals’ is regarded as a comprehensive term that considers all professionals as equal members of an inclusive professional learning community.

Built upon the core values for inclusion and the associated areas of competence identified for teachers and other education professionals, competences are understood as complex combinations of attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain attitude or belief demands certain knowledge or a level of understanding, and then skills to implement this knowledge in practice (European Agency, 2012). None is sufficient on its own. In what follows, attitudes, knowledge and skills are referred to as:

- ‘Attitudes and beliefs’ or the basic assumptions, the crucial ethical and moral dimensions of inclusion and how these are shown in ways of working, discourse, communication and relationships.
- ‘Knowledge and understanding’ or the essential knowledge and insights, the theoretical basis of the profession, the evidence, basic concepts and principles underpinning quality education.
- ‘Skills’ or the practical skills required to carry out the essential tasks, and the decision-making and efficacy to put knowledge into practice in varying situations and contexts, to assert basic assumptions and to re-imagine practice for quality education.

Their listing within competence areas does not imply a hierarchical order or isolation of competences, as they are all closely interconnected and interdependent.

Particular attention should be paid to the *Profile’s* focus on the **collaborative task** of implementing inclusive practice, its value for a growing **professional community** involved in inclusion and its use in **work-based learning**. It is important to note that this wider perspective does not affect the *Profile’s* value for teachers, who remain the first and most significant practitioners among all professionals involved.

As a competence framework for inclusion and equity in education, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* offers education professionals, including TPL providers, a **common language**, a **common repertoire** and a **reference** for professional learning for inclusion for all school staff.



The following **core values**, associated areas of **competence**, suggested **attitudes and beliefs, knowledge and understanding**, and **skills** address all education professionals to engage in competence development for inclusion.

## Valuing learner diversity

Learner diversity is considered a resource and an asset to quality education.

Areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- conceptions of inclusion, equity and quality education;
- education professionals' views of learner difference.

### Conceptions of inclusion, equity and quality education

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

... education is based upon a belief in equality, a commitment to human rights and the promotion of democratic values in school communities;

... inclusive education is about social justice in education and societal reform more broadly; it is non-negotiable;

... inclusive education and quality in education cannot be viewed as separate issues;

... access to mainstream education alone is not enough; participation means that all learners are engaged in learning activities that are meaningful for them;

... inclusive education is based upon a commitment to each and every learner's belonging, achievement, well-being and mental health.



*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... theoretical and practical concepts and principles, as well as international conventions underpinning inclusive education within global and local contexts;
- ... the wider system of educational institutions' cultures and policies that impacts on inclusive education; the local education system's possible strengths and weaknesses regarding equity;
- ... inclusive education as an approach to make schools welcoming, supportive and challenging for all learners, not just those who are perceived to have different needs and may be at risk of exclusion from educational opportunities;
- ... the language of inclusion and diversity and the implications of using different terminology to describe, label and categorise learners;
- ... inclusive education as the presence (access to education), participation (quality of the learning experience) and achievement (learning processes and outcomes) of all learners;
- ... inclusive education as an approach to ensure the representation of all learners' experiences, the recognition of all learners' outcomes, and effective resource distribution.

*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... critically examining one's own beliefs and attitudes and the impact these have on actions;
- ... engaging in ethical practice at all times and respecting confidentiality;
- ... the ability to deconstruct educational history to understand current situations and contexts;
- ... coping strategies that enable teachers to challenge non-inclusive attitudes and segregated situations;
- ... being empathetic to learners' diverse strengths and needs;
- ... modelling respect in social relationships and using appropriate language with all learners and stakeholders in education;
- ... as an inclusive leader, setting the direction to foster and sustain an inclusive school culture that is characterised by generosity and the true belonging of all.



## Education professionals' views of learner difference

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... variability in human development is natural and should be considered the norm;
- ... learner diversity must be respected, valued and understood as a resource that enhances learning opportunities for all and adds value to schools, local communities and society;
- ... the teacher is a key influence on a learner's self-esteem and, consequently, their learning potential;
- ... categorisation and labelling of learners can negatively affect learning opportunities;
- ... each staff member in education has a responsibility to contribute to a school culture that welcomes diversity.

*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... that it is 'normal to be different';
- ... essential information about learner diversity arising from support needs, culture, language, socio-economic background, etc., the interactions between diversity characteristics and their interaction with the school context;
- ... concepts underpinning different aspects of learners' identities (disability, gender, multilingualism, etc.) and the impact of discriminatory practices (based on racism, ableism, etc.);
- ... that learners learn in different ways, and these can be used to support their own learning and that of their peers;
- ... that the school is a community and social environment that affects learners' self-esteem and learning potential;
- ... that the school and classroom population are constantly changing; diversity cannot be seen as a static concept.



*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... learning how to learn from learner diversity;
- ... identifying the most appropriate ways of responding to diversity in all situations, including dealing with racist incidents and avoiding deficit-oriented approaches to learner behaviour;
- ... addressing diversity in curriculum implementation;
- ... using diversity of learning approaches as a resource for teaching;
- ... intercultural dialogue, mediation and peace education to create cohesive classroom communities;
- ... contributing to building schools as learning communities that respect, encourage and celebrate all learners' achievements;
- ... offering guidance among colleagues, pre-service and newly qualified teachers in responding to diversity.

## **Supporting all learners**

Teachers and other education professionals are deeply committed to all learners' achievements, well-being and belonging.

Areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- promoting all learners' academic, practical, social and emotional learning;
- supporting all learners' well-being;
- effective teaching approaches and flexible organisation of support.

### **Promoting all learners' academic, practical, social and emotional learning**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... learning is primarily a social activity;
- ... from a holistic view, academic, practical, social and emotional learning are equally important for all learners;
- ... teachers' expectations are a key determinant of learner success and therefore high expectations for all learners are critical;
- ... parents and families are an essential resource for a learner's learning;
- ... each learner's learning potential must be discovered, stimulated and valued.



*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... that the development of intelligences and capacities is malleable;
- ... the value of prevention and early interventions;
- ... typical child development patterns and pathways, particularly in relation to social and communication skills;
- ... different models of learning and approaches to learning that learners may take;
- ... learners' individual needs, the planning of support and monitoring of learners' outcomes;
- ... the need for reasonable accommodations and supports (physical, social, emotional, and/or academic) to address individual circumstances that need attention at a point in time.

*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... effective verbal and non-verbal communication to respond to the varied modes of communication of learners, parents and other professionals;
- ... supporting the development of learners' communication skills and possibilities;
- ... assessing and developing effective learning strategies and skills in learners;
- ... facilitating peer learning and other co-operative learning approaches;
- ... facilitating safe learning environments where learners can take risks and even fail;
- ... assessment for learning approaches that take account of social, emotional and academic learning.

### **Supporting all learners' well-being**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... the importance of building a positive teacher-learner relationship with every learner;
- ... the importance of being sensitive to learners' emotional needs;
- ... the importance of taking care of one's own well-being as a professional.



*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... positive behaviour and classroom management approaches;
- ... how mental health affects general well-being and learning;
- ... understanding that emotions and social contexts can trigger or block learning.

*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... using classroom leadership skills that involve systematic approaches to positive classroom management;
- ... removing social barriers in group arrangements;
- ... implementing positive behaviour management approaches that support learners' social development and interactions;
- ... developing resilience and coping strategies to deal with challenging behaviour.

### **Effective teaching approaches and flexible organisation of support**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... effective teaching seeks to represent all learners;
- ... teachers take responsibility for facilitating the learning of all learners in a class;
- ... learners' abilities are not fixed; all learners have the capacity to learn and develop;
- ... heterogeneous classrooms have the potential to support the learning of all;
- ... learning is a process, and the goal for all learners is to develop effective learning strategies and skills, not just content or subject knowledge;
- ... the learning process is essentially the same for all learners; there are very few 'special techniques' required;
- ... sometimes, particular learning difficulties require responses based on adaptations to the curriculum and teaching approaches;
- ... adaptations for some learners are not at the expense of others but contribute to building universal teaching approaches.



*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... how learners learn and pedagogies that support the learning process;
- ... managing the classroom's physical and social environment to support learning;
- ... how to identify and then address different barriers to learning and their implications for teaching;
- ... developing basic skills – in particular, key competences – along with associated teaching and assessment approaches;
- ... assessment of learning focused on identifying each learner's strengths;
- ... culturally responsive pedagogies and differentiation of curriculum content, learning processes and learning materials to include all learners and meet diverse needs;
- ... the principles and guidelines of universal design, differentiation and other frameworks to develop inclusive learning environments and ensure meaningful learning experiences for all;
- ... personalised learning approaches that support all learners to develop autonomy in their learning;
- ... developing, implementing and effectively reviewing individual education plans or similar individualised learning programmes for some learners, when appropriate.



*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... using classroom leadership skills that involve systematic approaches to positive classroom management;
- ... working with individual learners as well as heterogeneous groups;
- ... using the curriculum as a tool for inclusion that supports access to learning;
- ... addressing diversity issues in curriculum development processes;
- ... differentiating methods, content and outcomes for learning;
- ... using evidence-based teaching approaches to achieve learning goals, such as flexible instruction, alternative learning routes, collaborative problem-solving and clear feedback for learners;
- ... facilitating co-operative learning where learners help each other in different ways – including peer tutoring – in flexible learner groupings;
- ... using ICT and assistive technology to support flexible approaches to learning;
- ... using formative and summative assessment that support learning and do not label or lead to negative consequences for learners;
- ... drawing on a range of verbal and non-verbal communication skills to facilitate learning.

## **Working with others**

Advocacy, collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers and other education professionals.

Areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- giving learners a true voice;
- working with parents and families;
- working with a range of education professionals.



## **Giving learners a true voice**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... learners are a resource for quality education;
- ... learners' opinions must be heard on matters that concern their school experiences, support for learning and planning for their future;
- ... learners' personal dreams, goals and fears matter and must be heard, particularly those of learners with complex needs or who belong to vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups, and including those of learners who are out of formal education or in pre- or post-school education.

*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... learners' voices include the values, opinions, beliefs, views and perspectives of learners and their families, as well as the degree to which these are considered and acted upon when important decisions that affect their lives are being made;
- ... the risk of marginalisation of particular groups of learners and families;
- ... developing autonomy and self-determination in learners, which requires relatedness/connectedness and the belief that everyone can learn;
- ... different ways of inviting learners to express their views;
- ... the importance of self-advocacy, self-expression and the role of advocacy groups that represent the most vulnerable learners.

*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... listening to learners' views attentively and respectfully;
- ... considering learners' views and acknowledging them as an equal and integral part in discussions;
- ... giving learners opportunities to initiate ideas or plans that are taken forward for joint discussion and that can be acted upon and embedded in policy decisions at the local, regional and/or national level;
- ... developing independent and autonomous learners;
- ... ensuring all learners can be active decision-makers in the learning and assessment processes in which they are involved;
- ... working with learners and their families to personalise learning and set targets.



## **Working with parents and families**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... teachers and school teams share responsibility in developing learners' self-advocacy skills;
- ... giving a voice to parents and families is an added value;
- ... working collaboratively with parents and families is an added value;
- ... respect for parents' and families' cultural and social backgrounds and perspectives;
- ... school teams are responsible for effective communication and collaboration with parents and families.

*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... the importance of issues of identity, representation and self-advocacy of marginalised groups;
- ... the impact of inter-personal relationships on achieving learning goals;
- ... inclusive teaching being based on a collaborative working approach;
- ... the importance of positive inter-personal skills.

*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... supporting learners', parents' and families' self-advocacy;
- ... effectively engaging parents and families in supporting their child's learning;
- ... communicating effectively with parents and family members of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and social backgrounds;
- ... understanding learners' and families' own realities;
- ... facilitating school-parent partnerships and creating and sustaining opportunities for parental involvement in school development.



## **Working with a range of education professionals**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... an awareness that teachers do not work in isolation;
- ... awareness of colleagues' professional backgrounds, experience and perspectives;
- ... inclusive education requires all educators to work in teams, to share and to recognise different needs, interests and concerns;
- ... in developing team agency, inclusive education requires flexible role-taking among different professionals, in view of the common goals;
- ... collaboration, partnerships and teamwork are essential approaches for all education professionals and should be welcomed;
- ... collaborative teamwork supports professional learning with and from other professionals.

*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... the value and benefits of collaborative work among teachers and other education professionals;
- ... the support systems and structures available for further help, input and advice;
- ... multi-agency working models, where teachers in inclusive classrooms co-operate with other experts and staff from a range of different disciplines;
- ... collaborative teaching, where teachers take a team approach involving learners themselves, parents, peers, other teachers, support staff, and multi-disciplinary team members, as appropriate;
- ... the language/terminology and basic working concepts and perspectives of all professionals involved in education;
- ... the power relationships that exist between different stakeholders that must be acknowledged and dealt with effectively.



*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... implementing classroom leadership and management skills that facilitate effective multi-agency working;
- ... co-teaching and working in flexible teaching teams;
- ... working as part of a school community and drawing on the support of internal and external school resources;
- ... building a class community that is part of a wider school community;
- ... contributing to whole-school evaluation, review and development processes;
- ... collaborative problem-solving among all education professionals;
- ... contributing to wider school partnerships with other schools, community organisations and other educational organisations;
- ... drawing on a range of verbal and non-verbal communication skills to facilitate co-operation with other professionals;
- ... adult education coaching skills to support and mentor all educators at different stages of their careers.

## **Personal and collaborative professional development**

Teaching and supporting learners are lifelong learning activities for which teachers and other education professionals take personal and shared responsibility.

Areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- teachers and other education professionals as members of an inclusive professional learning community;
- professional learning for inclusion that builds on initial teacher education and the competences of other education professionals.



## **Teachers and other education professionals as members of an inclusive professional learning community**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... teaching is a problem-solving activity that requires on-going and systematic planning, evaluation, reflection and then modified action;
- ... reflective practice facilitates educators to work effectively with parents, as well as in teams with others working within and outside of the school;
- ... evidence-based practice is important to guide a school team's work;
- ... teaching and collaborative practice in education are unpredictable, multi-dimensional and always unfinished;
- ... valuing the importance of developing a personal pedagogy to guide an educator's work;
- ... valuing the importance of peer-to-peer feedback in professional learning.

*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... personal, meta-cognitive, learning-to-learn skills;
- ... what makes a reflective practitioner and how to develop personal and peer-to-peer reflection on and in action;
- ... methods and strategies for evaluating one's own work and performance;
- ... the value of professional learning communities for developing inclusive learning environments;
- ... action research methods and the relevance for educators' work;
- ... participatory research methods and their relevance for inclusive education;
- ... the development of personal and collaborative problem-solving strategies.



*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... critically examining one's own beliefs and attitudes and the impact these have on staff relationships, shared beliefs, repertoire and actions;
- ... systematically evaluating one's own performance in acting jointly as agents of change for inclusion;
- ... the capacity to 'unlearn' former practices found to be ineffective or not in line with the core values of inclusion;
- ... rationalising challenging, unpredictable teaching and learning by acknowledging and weighing competing philosophies and avoiding a purist stance;
- ... effectively involving others in reflecting upon teaching and learning;
- ... involving families in a team's professional growth process;
- ... contributing to the school's development as a learning community.

### **Professional learning for inclusion that builds on initial teacher education and the competences of other education professionals**

*Attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... teachers and other education professionals are responsible for their own continuing professional development;
- ... initial teacher education is the first step in teachers' professional lifelong learning;
- ... teaching competences are a crucial element of the professional learning of all education professionals involved in inclusive learning communities;
- ... teaching and providing learner support are learning activities; being open to learning new skills and actively asking for information and advice are a good thing, not a weakness;
- ... an educator cannot be an expert in all questions related to inclusive education; basic knowledge for those beginning in inclusive education is crucial, but continuous learning is essential;
- ... educators need the skills to manage and respond to changing needs and demands throughout their careers.



*Essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence include ...*

- ... the educational law and the legal context that education professionals work within and their responsibilities and duties towards learners, families and colleagues;
- ... the professional standards of teachers and/or of other education professionals;
- ... possibilities, opportunities and routes for in-service teacher education or other in-service professional routes to develop knowledge and skills to enhance education professionals' inclusive practice;
- ... the added value of teacher competence development for non-teaching professionals in inclusive education and, likewise, the added value of specialised professional learning for teachers.

*Crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include ...*

- ... flexibility in teaching strategies that promote innovation and personal learning;
- ... using time management strategies that accommodate possibilities for pursuing in-service development opportunities;
- ... being open to and proactive in using colleagues and other professionals as sources of learning and inspiration;
- ... sharing insights with colleagues in professional learning communities;
- ... contributing to whole-school community learning and development processes;
- ... facilitating professional learning opportunities and peer-learning activities for inclusion among school staff.



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## CONCLUDING REMARKS

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Phase 2 of TPL4I took place to respond to the request for a competence framework for all teachers throughout their careers and for all education professionals involved in inclusive education, as identified in previous project stages (European Agency, 2020a). The assumption that such a widespread stance on competence development for inclusion could lead to a meaningful step in TPL for inclusion and inclusive education systems development needed careful exploration.

The conceptual working paper, [\*Aligning Competence Frameworks for Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion\*](#) (European Agency, 2021a), set the scene for this exploration. The paper argues that, if all teachers need to be supported to develop and sustain inclusive practice throughout their careers, there is a need to search for and value the points of convergence between what teachers already do or are expected to do, and reference frameworks to guide further development.

Building on this argument, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* is the result of a participatory process that explored the essential features of a competence framework for inclusion and its alignment with existing practice in TPL for inclusion. More importantly, the process demonstrated its necessary alignment with ITE for inclusion competence development. By exploring the relevance and use of the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012) for all education professionals involved, it was possible to build a **comprehensive competence framework** around it.

In this respect, the outcome is in line with Biesta's (2019) suggestion that the structure of teacher education curricula must be spiral rather than linear-cumulative. It shows that, rather than the measurable [learning outcomes](#) of ITE or other professional qualifications, a more multi-dimensional view of the purposes of education, such as the core values of inclusion, must guide ITE and, more broadly, TPL opportunities. Teaching is an act of communication and interpretation based on judgement of a particular situation, instead of an intervention to reach certain effects (ibid.). Therefore, TPL – from initial professional learning throughout all stages of a professional's career – must provide the tools to **gradually build and strengthen competences around an initial point or axis, such as the core values** identified for inclusion.

As such, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* does not replace the 2012 *Profile* as a framework for ITE. Rather, it is a *Profile* in its own right, building upon a foundation of attitudes, knowledge and skills in relation to equity and inclusion. Stressing the need for collaborative practice and team reflection, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* offers all education professionals a shared tool for diverse TPL pathways towards inclusion. Its use in inclusive learning communities at school and community levels is expected to enhance team agency for inclusion in the field, as a missing link to increase teacher self-efficacy and true competence development for inclusion.

At the same time, it is not a final outcome for competence development for inclusion. Instead, the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* addresses all education professionals at all stages of their professional careers and at all education system levels,



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inviting all education practitioners, teacher educators and policy-makers to join an on-going conversation on quality inclusive education and TPL.

The detailed examination of TPL focusing on equity and inclusion within the Agency's TPL4I work has shown alignment with the *Profile's* core values and competence areas and, in turn, has inspired its outcome. Similarly, as more TPL pathways and inclusive professional learning communities emerge, competence frameworks for inclusion will evolve as needed.

The essential features of a competence framework for inclusion are the core values of inclusion, a whole-school view and focus on equity, the goal of connecting education professionals and a holistic view of competence development. Keeping these in mind, the *Profile* also offers a foundation for other reference frameworks for TPL for inclusion to build on, sharing the goal of preparing all teachers and their colleagues for inclusive education.



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## ANNEX 1. GUIDANCE FOR USING THE *PROFILE*

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This Annex presents suggestions and outline guidance for the possible use of the *Profile* during an education professional's career. Based on the TPL4I project survey, cluster discussions and examples collected while developing the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*, this guidance aims to move competence development for inclusion forward by adding:

- ways of [using the Profile at each of the system levels](#) – the individual, school, community and policy levels – on which TPL for inclusion operates within inclusive education systems development;
- more detailed suggestions for each level along the different roles and/or stages of a professional's career and according to whether a professional holds a teaching qualification, in [Table 1](#);
- [questions for \(team\) reflection](#) for education professionals to discuss competence development and team agency across the system levels;
- [examples of school- and community-level TPL programmes](#) that focus on competence development for inclusive education.

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### Multi-level use of the *Profile*

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While it is clear that all levels of TPL – the individual, school, community and policy levels – are relevant in this process, two TPL system levels stand out. Unlike initial teacher education (ITE), when it comes to promoting reflective practice in the competence areas for inclusion throughout a teacher's career, professional learning at the **school** and **community** levels, not at the individual level, is the main focus of attention.

Based on examples of practice discussed in the cluster activities and as illustrated more broadly in the TPL for inclusion mapping exercise (European Agency, 2020b), the school and community levels are seen as the most effective system levels for career-long competence development for inclusion. Moreover, both levels work closely together as they are mutually dependent: the school level, supporting staff personal and collaborative competence development, inspires and offers reflective practice for a wider group of professionals and, in turn, is supported and joined by community-level TPL opportunities.

Guidance for both levels is therefore combined into a **merged school-community system level**. Around this, there are suggestions for using the *Profile* at the **individual level** (addressing the individual's needs for professional learning for inclusion) and for effective dissemination and monitoring of the need for career-long competence development for inclusion among education professionals at the **policy level**.



## Individual level

*How can teachers and other professionals use the Profile for personal competence development?*

For the individual professional, several pathways exist for competence development for inclusion that may incorporate the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*. School and classroom practice and school-level support, irrespective of previous qualifications and current roles, are essential to understand the complexity of competence development for inclusion.

Professionals can use the *Profile*:

- to look back on how inclusive values and their associated competence areas have been addressed in ITE and/or other qualification programmes and have been meaningfully integrated in personal competence development;
- to reflect upon contemporary challenges and the broadest equity perspective when looking at personal competence development for inclusion;
- to reflect upon how inclusive values and their associated competence areas are currently enacted in school and classroom practice, e.g. in the professional's teacher-learner interactions and/or interactions among colleagues;
- to reflect upon competence areas and their associated attitudes, knowledge and skills, not as a checklist, but as an adaptable instrument for personal reflection and growth, in the complexity of the context;
- for peer feedback and peer support in relation to competence development for inclusion;
- in particular, for peer support within (larger) secondary education staff;
- in particular, for peer support across different professional roles and identities, focusing upon common goals and a shared language and structure for working together;
- for school leadership feedback and leadership support.

## School and community levels

*How can teams of education professionals use the Profile for personal and collaborative competence development?*

While personal reflection on competence development for inclusion is of utmost importance throughout a professional's career, school practice and peer feedback are already essential at the individual level of TPL for inclusion. To broaden TPL for inclusion to all education professionals and to deepen competence development in the areas identified, the principal use of the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* is not



at the individual level. Competence development for inclusion will not easily turn education professionals into individual agents of change.

Moreover, in inclusive education, there are no individual successes or failures. Teacher self-efficacy and teacher agency emerge within a facilitating context. It is important to embrace and accomplish a collaborative, stepwise process towards inclusion. In this process, collaborative work and team reflection help to achieve a shared professional vision and to build team agency and capacity for inclusion.

The *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* primarily lends itself to use within a context of collaboration, shared responsibilities and openness for a shared professional vision. In-school teams and extended school teams can use the *Profile*:

- to reflect upon personal and team connectedness to the development of an inclusive education system;
- to reflect upon team agency for change based on the core values and associated competence areas for inclusion;
- for peer-learning opportunities among all education professionals, to enhance personal competence development focusing on the core values and associated competence areas;
- for monitoring and supervision regarding personal reflection on self-efficacy and team agency for inclusion;
- for team reflection on the crucial role of teachers and teaching in the process towards inclusion, as expressed in teaching skills, knowledge of learning processes and positive attitudes towards learners' needs and every learner's potential;
- for collaborative professional learning among all professionals working on the continuum of support for all learners, towards confident team agency for inclusion;
- for competence development for inclusive school leaders and other facilitators focusing on the core values and associated competence areas;
- for competence development for teacher educators and other adult education teachers for professional learning in education;
- for professional learning communities for inclusion, e.g. in school working groups, beyond school staff, including university/college teacher education and postgraduate programmes, parent/family associations and other/local community service providers.



## Policy level

*How can policy-makers use the Profile to encourage all education professionals to develop agency for inclusion?*

Policy can expand competence development for inclusion by facilitating TPL opportunities that are underpinned by the values and competence areas for inclusion. A shared competence framework for inclusion may help to bridge the gaps between TPL phases and across professions, as it offers a tool for monitoring professional learning needs, connecting stakeholder groups and aligning competence frameworks or other professional benchmarks for education professionals. As such, the policy level complements all of the abovementioned TPL system levels.

At the policy level, the *Profile* can be used as a tool to:

- develop a shared understanding and promote the core values underpinning competence development for inclusion among policy-makers and a wider group of stakeholders;
- develop conditions for competence development for inclusion to be clarified and taken forward at all system levels and across different stakeholder groups;
- explore the complex and dynamic field of inclusive education and its local strengths and needs;
- support the alignment of competence frameworks for education professionals;
- monitor competence development for inclusion among teachers and among different professionals who work with teachers.

## Suggested use of the *Profile* along the professional continuum

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Without compromising the importance of shared use of the *Profile* among all education professionals, it was found that across a professional's career three perspectives require some specific consideration:

- beginning professionals (pre-service and newly-qualified teachers and other education professionals),
- experienced professionals with a teaching qualification (all teachers, including mentoring and support teachers, school leaders and teacher educators),
- experienced professionals who do not have a teaching qualification (e.g. specialists, education psychologists, teaching assistants and others who may be involved in classroom and school development work).



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[Table 1](#) sets out competence development for inclusion at different stages of the professional continuum and according to whether a professional holds a teaching qualification. This overview offers suggestions for using the *Profile* based on the needs of different professionals at different stages in their careers, as highlighted through the project survey findings.



**Table 1. Suggested use and focus along the professional continuum**

System level	For pre-service and beginning education professionals	For experienced professionals with a teaching qualification	For experienced professionals without a teaching qualification
<b>Individual professional's level</b>	<p>Personal competence development through school practice in ITE or postgraduate teacher education, teacher support and inclusion programmes.</p> <p>Focusing on inclusive values, dispositions, social justice and inclusive teaching.</p> <p>With a particular focus on collaboration opportunities for all beginning professionals, e.g. subject teachers, teaching assistants, etc.</p>	<p>Personal competence development through peer support in school practice and CPD, responding to the needs of the individual in a particular context.</p> <p>Focusing on inclusive values, competence areas for inclusion, intercultural dialogue and interdisciplinary work.</p> <p>With a particular focus on the participation of all (subject) teachers in large school communities, inclusive school leadership, mentoring and support teachers.</p>	<p>Personal competence development through peer support in school practice and CPD, to enhance interdisciplinary understanding.</p> <p>Focusing on a shared language of values and competence areas for inclusion, and knowledge of a shared structure for collaborative work, e.g. the core curriculum, interdisciplinary work and working with parents.</p> <p>With a particular focus on opportunities for working with parents.</p>
<b>School and community levels</b>	<p>Peer learning competence development, through participation in induction courses, teacher teams and through mentoring.</p>	<p>Building teacher teams and inclusive professional learning communities.</p> <p>Focusing on team agency for inclusive teaching and inclusive school development.</p> <p>Beyond training, developing a shared professional vision, aware of the grammar of schooling and open to imagining a new approach.</p> <p>Creating opportunities for competence development for inclusive school leadership.</p>	<p>Participating in inclusive professional learning communities.</p> <p>Focusing on team agency, inclusive teaching and inclusive school development.</p> <p>Beyond professional disciplines, towards a shared professional vision for inclusion, connected with school practice, aware of the grammar of schooling and open to imagining a new approach.</p> <p>Creating opportunities for competence development for inclusive leadership roles.</p>
<b>Policy level</b>	<p>Ensuring ITE and induction competence frameworks for equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Promoting and facilitating inclusion practice in ITE and postgraduate teacher and other education qualifications.</p>	<p>Sharing the language of the core values and competence areas for inclusion.</p> <p>Aligning professional teacher standards with competence development for inclusion.</p> <p>Supporting the alignment of other existing frameworks with the essential competence development for inclusion features.</p>	<p>Facilitating other professionals' participation in TPL for inclusion.</p> <p>Encouraging cross-sectoral dialogue to share the language, professional vision and frameworks for equity and inclusion in education among all professionals involved.</p>



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## ***A Profile for team reflection***

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To enhance the use of the competence framework among education professionals, at all system levels and along the professional development continuum, this section suggests some basic questions for (team) reflection.

### **For any area of competence and core values:**

- What are the competences suggested in the list that apply to my personal learning goals at this time? What have I already achieved in this field and what are my next learning objectives?
- With whom can I share my professional learning trajectory regarding this area of competences? On what issues do I wish to seek peer feedback?
- Do these personal goals align with the needs of the professional learning community in my educational practice? How can I align personal professional learning needs with what is needed in the professional school community?
- As a school team, what are the competences suggested in the list that we feel confident about? What makes us feel competent in this field?
- As a school team, a professional learning community or a network of education professionals involved in inclusion, what are the competences suggested in the list that we need to focus on for further professional development? What are our learning objectives?

## **TPL for inclusion collaborative practice: examples of competence development**

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The TPL4I Phase 2 project activities collected relevant examples of collaborative practice in competence development for inclusion for teachers and other education professionals working with teachers. The aim was to illustrate ways in which TPL for inclusion activities are built upon or are searching for a competence framework for inclusion to address all professionals involved in inclusive education.

Three programmes in particular illustrate TPL for inclusion national/regional and community programmes and the way they align with the core values and areas of competence for inclusion. These examples are presented below.



## **A nation-wide, community-level anti-racism programme in Cyprus**

Cyprus has been implementing an anti-racism policy since 2014. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth tasked the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) with developing TPL activities to support schools and teachers to:

- recognise direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional behaviours (verbal, non-verbal, social, electronic, written or physical forms of racist violence) that lead to negative discrimination against individuals based on diversity characteristics;
- take action to prevent and deal with racist incidents;
- develop an anti-racism culture.

The CPI developed a [Code of Conduct against Racism and Guide for Managing and Recording Racist Incidents](#) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016). In the 2020/2021 school year, 32 schools were part of the CPI's school network that aims to support and empower teachers to recognise and deal with multiple racisms within their schools. The school network has developed over the years and participants see it as a highly effective support strategy.

It has brought many benefits for school life. First, the implementation of the anti-racism policy through TPL empowered victims to report any racist incidents they experienced. In addition, it clarified the boundaries between racism, bullying and delinquency, so many racist behaviours that teachers had previously ignored can now be identified and managed. Furthermore, it established a zero-tolerance policy on racist incidents and protected the victims and potential victims of racist behaviour. Finally, it created and extended a sense of security for parents and families.

However, there are still challenges. Firstly, the anti-racism policy has still not been implemented across all schools and there is a lack of school accountability for its implementation. Moreover, there is insufficient reporting, a failure to develop contextually appropriate pedagogical interventions, and a need for clarification and additional instructions for dealing with incidents where teachers are the perpetrators. Finally, racism denial is still a challenge, as teachers are sometimes unable or hesitant to classify violent incidents as racist.

Based on the programme's objectives and outcomes, its competences can be primarily linked to the following competence areas of the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*:

- Conceptions of inclusion, equity and quality education
- Education professionals' views of learner difference
- Supporting all learners' well-being.



## **A university-supported school-level programme on special educational needs and diversity in Sweden**

In Sweden, the National Agency for Education and the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools carry out Ministry of Education initiatives. In 2016, they developed an online education programme for teachers. Specialist teams from the two national agencies manage the initiative in collaboration with universities.

The education programme is intended as a professional development opportunity. It provides collaborative learning about inclusive education and special educational needs. It is based on the idea of inclusion and presents the four core values of the 2012 *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* as the core values for TPL for inclusion. It addresses all teachers to increase knowledge of interventions and working methods to better design and customise teaching to accommodate all learners' needs.

It was designed for teachers in pre-school, comprehensive school, upper-secondary school and adult education professional development. So far, 40,000 teachers in Sweden have taken part in the programme. Together with seven other professional development programmes, the programme is shared with all municipalities and independent schools, school leaders and teachers.

The training modules cover 15 different topics:

- Participation for all in the learning environment
- Systematic work with support in learning
- Social interplay for inclusion
- Inclusion and practice
- Inclusive education and participation
- Interventions in pre-school
- Special education knowledge in pre-school
- Attention, social interplay and communication
- Promoting learning and well-being for all learners
- Teaching and learning strategies in upper-secondary school
- Multilingualism
- Scaffolding in teaching adults
- Didactics of mathematics
- Accessible learning with assistive technology
- Heterogeneity.



The [National Agency for Education](#) regularly evaluates and reports on the programme. The programme evaluation shows that it gives teachers and school staff a better knowledge and overview of the inclusive education approach and stronger self-belief in inclusion. However, the professional switch to implement theory into practice remains a challenge.

Competences can be linked to the following competence areas of the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*:

- Promoting all learners' academic, practical, social and emotional learning
- Effective teaching approaches and flexible organisation of support
- Supporting all learners' well-being
- Working with a range of education professionals
- Professional learning for inclusion that builds on initial teacher education and the competences of other education professionals.

### **A community-level programme for teacher competence development in Belgium (Flemish Community)**

Growing diversity among learners is a fact, but many Flemish educators are at a loss as to how to put this diversity to work and move towards quality education for all. The '[Potential: Power to teach all](#)' project was a collaboration between four universities and two university colleges. It aimed to strengthen teachers and other education professionals in this field, not by giving a step-by-step plan for working in diversity, but by supporting them to find answers to their own professional learning questions.

The process was built on two pillars: professional collaboration and appreciating diversity and putting it to use. The project aimed to:

- strengthen teacher competences regarding diversity and collaboration;
- develop an evidence-based professionalisation pathway that can be implemented in schools, creating learning communities of teachers;
- develop a knowledge centre on diversity and co-operation;
- develop a coaching centre to support school leaders and inclusive leadership in facilitating the professionalisation pathway in the school;
- consider the often-missing voices of learners and parents in TPL opportunities.



The project was implemented in three distinct phases:

- Initial development and school recruitment phase, selecting primary and secondary schools, developing a professional learning trajectory based on literature and teacher needs, as expressed in intake interviews, and developing a knowledge centre based on a needs analysis of teachers. Half of the 56 schools that participated were involved in the experimental research group and provided with all of the professionalisation programme's guidance and tools. In total, over 1,500 teachers were involved.
- The roll-out of the professionalisation trajectory in experimental schools, training coaches and recruiting learners and families to the documentary film [Inclusief](#) (2018, directed by Ellen Vermeulen). The film portrays classroom practices from the perspective of four learners with special educational needs.
- The evaluation and adjustment phase, the second roll-out of the professionalisation programme and further development of the knowledge centre. In addition to the documentary film, a didactic package for the film was developed and linked to the knowledge centre.

Building a knowledge centre and gathering what is considered as important information for working in inclusion, the project avoided a focus on special educational needs or disabilities. Instead, it provided useful information to be implemented in current and future classrooms. The project team developed as many hands-on tools as possible. Theory was linked to practice, videos and podcasts, looking for ways to make information, knowledge and experiences of inclusion accessible.

The professionalisation trajectory that was developed and evaluated throughout the project is a year-long course on the power to teach all. It starts by analysing the school's current situation, formulating a personal learning question and finding answers to that question. The course consists of 10 sessions with different guiding questions, methods and techniques, never giving a one-size-fits-all solution. Each of these methods can also be used on its own, making the course very flexible. Schools or individual teachers can choose the full course or can use a method to challenge their thinking, see how things are going or sharpen their view on inclusion.

The documentary film *Inclusief* portrays classroom practices from the learners' perspectives. It shows life as it is, with beautiful moments but also with barriers and a sincere search for inclusion. Complementary to the film, a didactic package supports reflection on the film and links it to the knowledge centre.



Even though the main project has finished, 'Potential' is not planning to leave the educational scene any time soon. In Flanders, support for school teams through the 'Potential' course is on-going. The project continues by collaborating in an international project, [ProuD to Teach All!](#), in which the coaching materials are translated, inspiring the international educational context through work with partners in England, the Netherlands, Latvia and Portugal.



## ANNEX 2. ALIGNMENT OF THE 2012 AND 2022 PROFILES

The *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* builds upon the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012) to respond more broadly to the need for TPL for inclusion. The below comparison of the 2012 and the 2022 *Profiles* highlights the alignment of their core values and associated areas of competence.

**Table 2. Alignment of the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (2012) and the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning* (2022) core values and associated areas of competence**

Core values, <i>Profile of Inclusive Teachers</i> (2012)	Core values, <i>Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning</i> (2022)	Areas of competence, <i>Profile of Inclusive Teachers</i> (2012)	Areas of competence, <i>Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning</i> (2022)
1. Valuing learner diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education	1. Valuing learner diversity – learner difference is considered a resource and an asset to education	1.1 Conceptions of inclusive education 1.2 The teacher’s view of learner difference	1.1 Conceptions of inclusion, equity and quality education 1.2 Education professionals’ views of learner difference
2. Supporting all learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners’ achievements	2. Supporting all learners – teachers and other education professionals are deeply committed to all learners’ achievements, well-being and belonging	2.1 Promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all learners 2.2 Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes	2.1 Promoting all learners’ academic, practical, social and emotional learning 2.2 Supporting all learners’ well-being 2.3 Effective teaching approaches and flexible organisation of support
3. Working with others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers	3. Working with others – advocacy, collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers and other education professionals	3.1 Working with parents and families 3.2 Working with a range of other educational professionals	3.1 Giving learners a true voice 3.2 Working with parents and families 3.3 Working with a range of education professionals



<b>Core values, <i>Profile of Inclusive Teachers</i> (2012)</b>	<b>Core values, <i>Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning</i> (2022)</b>	<b>Areas of competence, <i>Profile of Inclusive Teachers</i> (2012)</b>	<b>Areas of competence, <i>Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning</i> (2022)</b>
<p>4. Personal professional development – teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning</p>	<p>4. Personal and collaborative professional development – teaching and supporting learners are lifelong learning activities for which teachers and other education professionals take personal and shared responsibility</p>	<p>4.1 Teachers as reflective practitioners 4.2 Initial teacher education as a foundation for ongoing professional learning and development</p>	<p>4.1 Teachers and other education professionals as members of an inclusive professional learning community 4.2 Professional learning for inclusion that builds on initial teacher education and the competences of other education professionals</p>



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## ANNEX 3. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

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Based on the TPL4I Phase 1 [Literature Review](#) (European Agency, 2019), [An Analysis of Country Policies in Europe](#) (European Agency, 2020a) and the project survey, the definitions below guided the development of the *Profile for Inclusive Teacher Professional Learning*.

**Ableism** refers to stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and social oppression towards people with disabilities (Bogart and Dunn, 2019).

**All learners:** learners who attend mainstream or special schools, as well as those who are out of school. This includes at-risk learners, such as learners of migrant origins, learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, learners with disabilities, non-native language speakers, refugees, etc. (Council of the European Union, 2018).

**All teachers:** early education teachers, primary teachers, secondary teachers, vocational teachers, adult education teachers, teacher educators and teachers who collaborate with classroom or subject teachers.

**Areas of competence:** ‘a range of [...] competences that are considered to make a difference to the quality and effectiveness of teaching’ (OECD, 2005, p. 101). The potential competences identified for inclusion focus upon transversal skills, attitudes and knowledge. Areas of competence are the starting point for reflection and discussions among professionals and can be revisited throughout a professional’s career at ‘increasingly deeper levels of learning and understanding’ (European Agency, 2012, p. 23).

**Competence development for inclusion** is underpinned by the core values of equity and inclusion. It reflects the ethical notion of true engagement and responsibility for others, while keeping in mind the holistic view of competences and the many expressions of inclusive practice found in diverse contexts (Allan, 2011; Caena, 2014; European Agency, 2019).

**Competence frameworks** offer ‘clear objectives of student learning and a shared understanding of accomplished learning’ and reflect a ‘holistic, dynamic, process-oriented view of competences underpinned by research, policy highlights and peer learning’ (Caena, 2014, p. 314). They ensure quality in preparation, career-long professional development, selection, and effective dialogue among stakeholders (European Commission, 2013; European Agency, 2019).

**Competences** are understood as complex combinations of knowledge, skills, understanding, values and attitudes, leading to well-considered actions in a specific situation. Competences signify the ‘abilities’, ‘aptitudes’, ‘capabilities’, ‘effectiveness’ and ‘skills’ to meet the context’s demands, acquired by social groups, institutions or individuals (Allan, 2011; European Agency, 2019).

**Diversity:** ‘cultural, linguistic, ethnic, developmental and other aspects of human difference that represent’ elements of identity characterising ‘both individuals and groups’ and accounting for ‘differences between people’ (Florian and Pantić, 2017, p. 1).



**Education professionals:** connecting school-based and non-school-based pedagogical staff, ‘education professionals’ is regarded as a comprehensive term that considers pre-service, beginning and experienced teachers, support teachers and specialists, school leaders, teaching assistants and teacher educators as equal members of an inclusive professional learning community.

**Equity:** understood in terms of inclusiveness and fairness, equity requires education systems to ‘ensure that all young people are able to develop their talents and achieve their full potential regardless of their background’ (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2020, p. 13).

**Grammar of schooling:** the regular, almost invisible, structures and rules that organise schooling and instruction. These structures and rules are considered responsible for replicating traditional models of schooling and inequity in education.

**Induction:** beginning teachers’ professional learning opportunities.

**Learning outcomes** are indicators of the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs that operationalise stages of competence development. Aligned with competences, they guide reflective practice and knowledge construction throughout the professional learning process (European Agency, 2019).

**National/regional professional standards** give an account of what is broadly understood as the profession. ‘Professional standards aim to safeguard high quality and the authority of the [...] profession by identifying and exemplifying a benchmark of [...] competences’ underpinned by the profession’s values (European Agency, 2019, p. 57). As such, these standards state a policy commitment to the profession’s ethical foundation and aim to strengthen their understanding and adoption throughout a career.

**Professional identity formation** is characterised by ‘a common language, a common repertoire, informed problem-solving [...] and positive group autonomy’ among practitioners, fostered by coherent cycles of work-based learning (European Agency, 2019, p. 31; Andresen, 2015).

**Racism** is defined by the [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance](#) (ECRI) as ‘the belief that a ground such as race, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons’ (2018, p. 5). ECRI adds that ‘the term “racism” should be understood in a broad sense, including phenomena such as xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance’ (ibid., p. 12). ‘ECRI rejects theories based on the existence of different “races”, but explains that it uses the term ‘to ensure that those persons who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to “another race” are not excluded from the protection provided for’ by legislation that aims to combat racism and **racist discrimination** (ibid., p. 5).

**Specialists/specialist staff** refers to specially-trained personnel involved in the assessment, education or care of learners with additional support needs. These may include learner support or special education co-ordinators, special educators or special education teachers, teaching or school assistants, educational psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, social workers, etc.



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**TPL continuum:** the whole range of TPL opportunities throughout a teacher's career, including initial teacher education (ITE), induction, continuing professional development (CPD), and professional learning opportunities for teacher educators. The continuum of TPL for inclusion also includes all specialist staff and support staff involved in inclusive classrooms/schools.

**TPL for inclusion:** reflective practice and personal competence development of all teachers, specialists and support staff, in the areas of valuing learners' differences, learner support and working with others. This definition is in line with the *Agency's Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012).

**TPL for inclusion policy:** the development and implementation of legislation, regulations and other policy aspirations and actions to enhance and support TPL for inclusion, in order to prepare all teachers to include all learners.



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