



## TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION

### COUNTRY REPORT

#### Introduction

One of the main contributions experts from the participating countries will make to the Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project is providing country level information on key issues for teacher education for inclusion. Specifically, the Country Reports will provide information relating to the agreed project question: *how mainstream teachers are prepared via their initial teacher education to be inclusive*.

This document presents a framework of questions we would ask each country team – nominated Project Experts, Representative Board members and National Co-ordinators – to use as guidance for writing their Country Report.

The questions used for the reports are based on information gathered in the two preparatory activities - the initial country survey and the international literature review. In addition, key points raised by the project experts in response to these preparatory activities and discussed at the kick-off meeting in Dublin have also been included.

It is hoped that by gathering information in a common format, the reports will not only provide relevant information in stand-alone reports for each country, but will also make it easier to compare issues and responses from different countries.

Examples of country reports for past Agency projects can be seen on the Agency website <http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects>

In preparing your Country Report, we would ask you to please keep the following points in mind:

1. The Agency project team are aware that a lot of descriptive information relating to teacher education in countries is already available. The most comprehensive source of such information at the European level is EURYDICE Eurybase reports, which provide general information on initial teacher education in each country.

The EURYDICE Eurybase reports can be found at:

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php)

Rather than asking you to collect information that is already available in these reports, we would ask you to look at them and then provide us with additional information which specifically focuses on teacher education for inclusion and which further develops the Eurybase information.

The Eurybase reports can be accessed by selecting a country under the Eurybase heading (Education Systems in Europe), then selecting 'Full country description' on the right hand side. Section 8.1 of the report contains information on 'Initial training of teachers'.

Please refer to this section for your country and provide any additional information and information relating specifically to teacher education for inclusion in your answers to the questions below.

Where relevant, the questions below specifically mention sections of the Eurybase reports we would ask you to refer to in preparing your answers.

2. The agreed project focus is on initial teacher education. However, you may provide additional information about further training/ professional development where this is



relevant. Please make clear in your answers where information applies to further training/in-service professional development.

3. In preparing your Country Report, please bear in mind that, for this project, we use the UNESCO (1994) Salamanca Statement regarding inclusive education as a guiding principle: *Regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system* (p8).

We recognise that the term 'inclusion' is now understood to concern a far wider range of pupils vulnerable to exclusion than those identified as having SEN. The 48<sup>th</sup> session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) (2008) recommendations include the following: policy makers should acknowledge that: *inclusive education is an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination.* (UNESCO, 2008);

Past Agency work has highlighted the difficulties in comparing countries who are at different points of their journey. We recognise that, as inclusion is a process, educators will always be looking to move forward in their thinking as well as their practice regarding inclusive education.

Within your Country Report, you may wish to comment on how this thinking aligns with the situation of inclusion generally, or teacher education for inclusion specifically in your country.

4. In addition to collecting your country information in relation to the framework of questions, we wish to gather examples of best practice in teacher education for inclusion. Please follow the guidelines given in Section 7 and provide us with an innovative example of teacher education for inclusion in your country. We are particularly interested to know *why* you consider the practice described to be innovative and so we ask you to explain the reasons for your choice in as much detail as possible.

5. The following pages should be used as the template for drafting your country report. Please follow the section headings and questions as closely as possible. Please use this file as a template and write or paste your information directly into this file.

**If you have any questions regarding the completion of your Country Report, please contact Verity Donnelly: [verity@european-agency.org](mailto:verity@european-agency.org)**



Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Report completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Role/job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1: Definition of ‘inclusion’**

1a. What are the issues in your country with regard to the understanding of inclusion outlined in the introduction that impact on teacher education?

**Section 2: Entry to initial teacher education**

2a. Information on institutions, levels and models of initial teacher education and admission requirements is included in the Eurybase reports. Please provide any additional information about entry requirements that may impact on teacher education for inclusion, for example requirements relating to preparation for teaching learners with special educational needs and/or learners from other minority groups.

**Section 3: Content of initial teacher education courses**

For all of the questions in this section, please state where there are differences for different phases of education (e.g. primary/secondary) and where content is mandatory or optional.

3a. Who determines the content of initial teacher education programmes?

3b. General information on the content of teacher education courses is provided in the ‘Curriculum, special skills & specialisation’ section of the Eurybase report. Please comment specifically on what is included in the programmes in your country that may impact on teacher education for inclusion (e.g. specialist content on the needs of learners with SEN/other minority groups, inclusive practice, pedagogy, curriculum & assessment issues, etc)

3c. Information about fundamental principles of the education system is provided in the Eurybase reports, section 2.3. Please provide information about principles and national priorities that may impact on teacher education for inclusion.



3d. Please provide information about any course content that develops teachers' collaborative practice. This may include working with parents and/or agencies outside school, support services and professionals from other disciplines.

3e. Are there any competences for teachers in your country? Do any of these competences specifically relate to inclusive practice? (Please give details and references to documents/websites etc that can provide more information).

#### **Section 4: Teaching/training methods**

Please refer to the information provided in the Eurybase report on 'Training routes/methods' (included in section 8) and provide additional information (with examples if possible).

4a. Please provide information about different training routes/teaching methods that may impact on teacher education for inclusion.

4b. In initial teacher education programmes do staff responsible for teaching subject based modules/courses collaborate with staff concerned with specialist content relating to inclusive and/or special needs education, equality and diversity? If yes, please describe how this practice supports teacher education for inclusion.

4c. Is any reference made to the development of teachers' attitudes and values to support inclusive practice within national/local/institutional level guidelines for teacher education? How far are these attitudes and values modelled by teacher educators within initial teacher education programmes?

4d. Please describe opportunities for students on initial teacher education programmes to engage in collaboration, reflection and discussion that relate to teacher education for inclusion.

4e. What qualifications/experience do teacher educators have in:

- SEN and disability
- Challenging behaviour
- Diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious groups



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- More able learners
  - Other minority groups/learners vulnerable to underachievement (e.g. gay, lesbian, transgender learners, children in care)

Please provide information on any further training/career development opportunities available for trainers in this area of work.

## **Section 5: Assessment and accreditation**

5a. Information on 'Evaluation and certificates' is included in section 8 of the Eurybase report. Please provide any additional information on assessment methods/requirements relevant to preparation for teachers' inclusive practice.

5b. How is teaching practice/practical experience organised, supervised and followed up? How are schools selected for teaching practice to ensure students gain experience of meeting the needs of all learners?

5c. Describe how content and processes to develop inclusive practice within initial teacher education are quality assured.

5d. How do initial teacher education programmes follow up new teachers regarding the effectiveness of their preparation for meeting the needs of all learners in the classroom?

5e. If you outlined specific competences for inclusion in question 3e, please indicate here how these competences are assessed.

## **Section 6: Other issues**

6a. To what extent are minority groups (i.e. people with disabilities, from different ethnic, cultural, linguistic and/or religious backgrounds, who are gay/lesbian/transgender) represented in your country among:

- (i) Teachers
- (ii) Teacher trainers
- (iii) Student teachers



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6b. Please give information about any recent or proposed changes in initial teacher training that will impact on teacher education for inclusion.

### **Section 7: Best practice**

Please provide at least one example of best practice as to how **mainstream teachers are prepared via their initial training to be inclusive** in your country.

Please use the headings below to describe the example.

*Background/why this example shows innovative practice:*

*Setting/situation of the example:*

*Partners involved:*

*Description of activity/approach being taken:*

*Competences that are being developed:*

*Impact/benefits for student teachers/learners/others:*

*Identification of what can be learned from the study about teacher education for inclusion:*

*Plans for further development/extension of this practice:*

*Contact details for further information:*

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Thank you for your help in preparing this information. Please return your Country Report by the **end of March 2010** to Verity Donnelly: [verity@european-agency.org](mailto:verity@european-agency.org)

Can we remind you that the Country Report sent to us should be a version that is agreed by all members of your Country team (nominated Project Experts, Representative Board members and National Co-ordinators).