Organisation of Provision to Support Inclusive Education
European Agency

- 1996 - established as an initiative of the Danish Ministry of education following the end of the EU HELIOS programme
- 1999 - the original member countries (15 EU member states, Iceland and Norway) ‘took ownership’ of the Agency
- 2003 - the Agency obtained a legal basis at the European level that was approved by the European Parliament
- Main secretariat in Odense, Denmark and European Liaison office in Brussels, Belgium
Mission

- The Agency is a permanent network of ministerial representatives acting as the member countries’ platform for collaboration regarding the promotion of quality and equity in education as a means to achieving social cohesion
- The Agency activities are aligned with European Council priorities and objectives for education
- All projects and activities are identified via Agency representatives as being priority for their countries
Organisation of Provision to support Inclusive Education

- Looks at how systems of provision are organised to meet the needs of learners identified as having disabilities
  - UNCRPD definition of disability
  - learners in mainstream - compulsory school sector
- Provides information on how countries organise and evaluate provision; explores key issues and challenges and includes information on possible ways forward and change management
Methodology

- RBs/networks gathered country information and examples of practice
- Agency staff, Project Advisory Group, External Consultants undertook analysis and activities
- Agency work and recent literature reviewed
  - Research on UNCRPD implementation and monitoring
  - Analysis of country information
  - Investigation of 5 case study sites –, Essunga, Flensburg, Ljubljana, Valetta, Vienna
- 5 seminars held at these sites to explore key themes
Outputs

- Literature Review
- Country reports and examples of practice – updated national overviews
- Reports from 5 selected case study sites
- Notes from 5 thematic seminars
- Project final overview report
- Practical tool to support decision makers
Summary of issues raised by country information

- **Legislation**
  - part of the general system?
  - should recognise rights of children with disabilities to (early) support, quality education (without discrimination), access to and full participation in all educational activities, inclusion in community

- **Increasing the capacity of all schools:**
  - developing role of specialist settings in providing support
  - supporting initial teacher education and on going professional development though collaboration and networking
  - providing training for LSAs to support all learners
Summary of issues cont’d

- Curriculum
  - increasing flexibility, ‘transferable’ skills

- Assessment of needs
  - reducing ‘labels’ and focusing on support needed to access educational opportunities (participation – autonomy, belonging, competence)
  - co-ordinating inter-agency approaches and a move away from a ‘medical’ model (with learner/family involvement)

- Assessment for/of learning
  - designing national tests etc to allow access to all
  - developing on-going assessment and feedback to support further learning
Summary of issues cont’d

- **Leadership for inclusion**
  - is distributed or shared
  - develops an ethos of inclusion, supports teachers and focuses on learning for all
  - engages in self-review, using data/information for improvement
  - collaborates/networks with range of stakeholders, parents, community

- **Funding**
  - delegated, responsive – rewards early intervention and success, increases capacity (proactive not reactive)
  - supports inclusive accountability
Inclusive accountability

Accountability systems e.g. inspection are a powerful driver.....

- How can ‘softer’ skills be taken into account in a more holistic view of progress?
- How can schools be recognised for building capacity to succeed with learners who may need additional support – as evidenced by a reduction in support (rather than a race for resources)?
Findings from country visits

- Collaboration at all levels – in classroom, school, local community with good co-ordination, communication and correspondence
- Community/area wide school transformation – with support. Change in response to crisis?
- Strong and trusting relationships
- Shared values that put the learner at the centre of services and take longer term view of benefits
- Leadership – strong, visionary, distributed – with regard for democratic principles, creating an open ‘no blame’ culture
Findings cont’d

- High regard/respect for learners (and families) and listening to their views – engagement and motivation
- Positive attitudes and acceptance of responsibility for all learners – support as part of the ‘regular’ system
- Inclusive pedagogy – use of special educators and subject teacher together
- On-going professional development: use of research, co-teaching, regular meetings/support, links to initial teacher education institutions
Findings cont’d

- Flexibility in school/class organisation, timetabling, learner grouping
- Curriculum - cross curricular competences, study skills – coherence and relevance
- Assessment – ‘can do’, assessment for learning with active involvement of learners, recognition of wide range of achievement
- Different use of resources – not more
Common challenges

- The language of inclusion and ‘inclusive thinking’
- Allocating support without ‘labels’ – acceptance of different forms of support as part of the ‘regular’ system
- Including learners with learning disabilities (curriculum issues) – particularly in secondary education
- Professional development of school leaders, teachers, support staff
- Providing services ‘close to home’ for low incidence disabilities
- Cooperation between different administrations (national, local) and different agencies
- Flexible (delegated) funding models – incentives for success
Further Information

The Agency offers information and resources, which can be accessed via the website:

www.european-agency.org

- Project web areas
- Reports, literature reviews, policy flyers
- News section, newsletter and the eBulletin

Agency publications can be downloaded in up to 22 European languages