



MANIFESTO ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NOW?

Principles and values

The:

- Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education (1994)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 24, Education)
- Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights), Article 2 Right to Education.
- European Social Charter (revised), Articles 15 and 17
- Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 (Action Line 4, Education, and cross-cutting aspects)

all clearly state that all children and adults with a disability (and their families):

- have the same right to high quality and appropriate education as everyone else, in order to maximize their potential and to make their contribution to an inclusive society,
- have the right to choose and receive education in an inclusive environment.
- have the right to specific resources and expertise to meet their educational, therapeutic and citizenship needs.
- have the right to services which at all times act in their best interest.

Inclusive education:

- is a lifelong process where mainstream schools and early years settings are transformed so that all children/students are supported to reach their academic and social potential, and which may involve removing barriers in environment, communication, curriculum, teaching, socialisation and assessment at all levels.
- means the development of a holistic dynamic system with a continuum of options, where special schools will increasingly become a source of expertise which will be available to the wider education and community services.

- is not only an issue for children with disabilities. It should be part of an 'inclusion for all' approach where every pupil is valued. In this respect, particular attention needs to be given to ethnic, cultural and religious minorities.
- is a responsibility of all and must be seen as part of the development of an inclusive society for all. It will be achieved by partnerships, networking and joint learning by all stakeholders.
- requires a shared vision and strong leadership at all levels.

Commitment of EASPD

The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) will:

- contribute to a European policy position on inclusive education.
- provide information, models of good practices and support to member organisations.
- promote positive attitudes towards inclusion, partnership and network opportunities.
- organise and promote professional networking and exchange events at a European level, particularly via the Pathways to Inclusion project.

Recommendations for politicians and policy makers

Authorities at regional, national and international level should:

- reaffirm their commitment to the Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education.
- make full use of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and its Article 24 in particular.
- promote positive attitudes towards inclusion.
- develop a policy and legal framework to promote the development of inclusive education, emphasising the importance of a strong cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary cooperation. They should do this in co-operation with all key stakeholders.
- develop, at European level, a positive approach towards inclusive education as a part of the EU and Council of Europe strategies, used in policies with reference to Lifelong Learning, Social Inclusion, Anti-Discrimination, Citizenship.





- develop an action plan aiming to reform the existing educational system, including funding for transition costs.
- keep and compare reliable data on the incidence effectiveness and comparative costs.
- provide the needed resources enabling the development of high quality individualised (tailor made) inclusive education.
- reform the teacher training system in order to enable future teachers and school staff to meet the requirements of an inclusive school system.
- help existing special schools to make the transition towards resource centres and to enable their staff achieve the new task of supporting mainstream schools in realising special needs education programmes.
- provide specialised resources and 'special needs education'-centres for children with highly complex educational needs within the inclusive school system.
- offer the possibility of an education system from the age of 3 years. All children, regardless of their special requirements should be included in this pre-school system, which has to be offered free of charge. Support will also be needed from the point of diagnosis.
- organise and promote sufficient support for all stakeholders:
 - joint training opportunities and seminars on inclusive education.
 - assistive ICT and communication methods.
 - pedagogical/psychological support.

Recommendations for individual organisations

Each individual organisation (specialised and mainstream) should:

- set up a dialogue with persons with disabilities, their parents and families, and/or their representatives and representative organisations, trade unions and the authorities in order to build a common vision of and a strategy towards an inclusive education system.
- use a person- and family- centred approach for each child/student and make sure that a support network is set up and further developed.
- promote positive attitudes towards inclusion at all levels of education.
- develop feasible action plans and strategies in cooperation with families and authorities in order to make the transition from special schools towards inclusive education settings possible and to facilitate a shift of thinking in the minds of management, staff and other stakeholders.



- provide a team-based approach, a joint school learning approach, and a multi-disciplinary learning approach.
- provide courses, seminars and in-service training facilitating the process of transition for staff, in order to ensure that their expertise can be used in the new environment.
- provide support for staff, management, parents and students on specific programmes.
- prepare future teachers to work in an inclusive environment.
- facilitate smooth transitions from pre-school to primary school, from primary school to secondary school and from secondary school to higher education or vocational training and employment.

Educational policies and strategies should clearly state that inclusion is a goal. Educational policies and systems should take into account the needs of all people in the planning, financing, monitoring and evaluation of all education strategies. The main goal of inclusive education should be a school with good learning results where all stakeholders are participating and all learners are treated equally.

Salamanca, 15 years on – Inclusion, a School for All
Dublin, 12th-13th November 2009

