



Development of a set of indicators for the conditions of inclusive education in Europe

in the area of legislation, participation and financing

DRAFT REPORT

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1. Preface
(to be done)



2. Introduction

The intention of this report is to present the main outcomes, but also the framework and rationale, the aims and objectives, as well as the methodology used of a project conducted by the European Agency, at the request of the countries representatives, upon the topic of “*Development of a set of indicators for the conditions of inclusive education in Europe*”.

The aim of the project, as discussed and agreed upon by the countries representatives, was to develop a methodology that would lead to a set of indicators at national level, yet applicable at European level, with a clear focus on policy conditions that may support or hinder the development of inclusive education within schools. Several European and International institutions have undertaken efforts of developing indicators in specific policy areas. The project has built upon these experiences to develop indicators in the field of inclusive education. The project consequently has two major outcomes: first, the development and implementation of a bottom-up approach to identify relevant indicators based on the consensus of experts from European Agency member countries, and second, an initial set of indicators in this field and examples of applying them in practice and making them measurable (i.e. suitable for monitoring).

In total 23 countries have nominated 32 experts to participate in the project development. With their expertise and competence they have contributed with valuable input to the reflections and discussions of the project meetings and working groups as well as to the development of the methodology and the main outcomes. Without their contribution the development of the project would not have been possible.

After the executive summary in section 1 and this introduction (section 2), section 3 gives an overview of the framework and rationale that led to the goal of the project, followed by section 4 that presents the aims and objectives. Section 5 presents the main concepts and definition used throughout the project. Section 6 gives examples of other indicators developed at national/European/international level in the field of Special Needs Education. The framework and methodology used to develop indicators for the conditions of inclusive education in the frame of the project are explained in section 7, including the set of indicators in three key areas (legislation, participation, financing) of inclusive education. Section 8 explains how this approach taken in the project corresponds with previous and future Agency work with regard to thematic projects and their outcomes. The last section deals with the question on which further steps are required to apply the set of indicators in the context of monitoring.

This report has different target groups. It is structured such that a reader interested in the concepts behind, and process of, developing indicators just continue reading the sections in their natural order. Those readers who are mainly interested in the set of indicators should directly skip to section 7. Readers close to the European Agency might also be interested in sections 8 and 9 to see how the work presented fits into current Agency activities and which further steps are required in the process of developing operational indicators.



3. Framework and rationale

Inclusive education is not a static phenomenon. It has been developing in different ways and it continues to develop. Conceptions of, policies for, and practice in inclusive education are constantly undergoing change in all countries. Many countries are in the process of reviewing and changing their policies and legislation for inclusive education, based either upon knowledge and experiences from on-going pilot projects, or by introducing new financing strategies for Special Needs Education (SNE), or by implementing new policies/laws regarding quality systems and monitoring for education. Processes of change, however, require tools for monitoring respective developments.

Monitoring tools are often based on a set of indicators that are periodically measured to check whether intended targets have been met or not. However, currently there are hardly any qualitative or quantitative indicators available in the area of SNE at European level. The need for such a monitoring tool is reflected in the outcomes of a European-wide survey, conducted in 2006 by the European Agency, to collect Agency Member country input regarding current, emerging and future issues and trends that should be investigated in the field of Special Needs Education. The issues and trends identified in the survey were selected in the light of individual national priorities for special needs education as well as the European level priorities for education identified by the European Council [1]. The Ministries of Education from 22 European countries participated in the survey. From the outcomes, there was a clear indication that countries were particularly interested in the development of indicators in the area of inclusive education.

This outcome is in line with the document “Education and training in Europe” that clearly mentions what needs to be done in order to achieve the Second strategic objective raised by the Member states: *Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems. Objective 2.3. Supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion: ‘Education and training systems play an important role in sustaining democratic societies in Europe. A basic principle that needs to be reinforced is that all citizens should have equal access to education and training. This entails that in Member states special attention is paid to supporting vulnerable groups and individuals, particularly those with disabilities or learning difficulties...’* [2].

The project is designed as the first step to give the countries the missing information on indicators in this field as a basis for monitoring developments in their countries. But information linked to indicators is also an area of increasing request from external bodies and organisations - such as the European Commission.

The project does not provide information regarding inclusion as such, but attempts to end up with a procedure of developing indicators bottom-up and an agreed proposal regarding an initial set of indicators. It is up to the Board of the European Agency to decide whether or not data should be gathered after reviewing and evaluating the proposed indicators.



4. Aims and objectives

The aim of the project, as discussed and agreed upon by the European Agency member countries and the project partners, was the development of an set of indicators at national level, yet applicable at European level, with a clear focus on policy conditions that may support or hinder the development of inclusive education within schools.

In particular, the aims have been to develop:

- A framework for developing indicators in this and future Agency thematic projects in the field of inclusive education.
- An initial set of quantitative and qualitative indicators for policy condition of inclusive education to be used at national level;
- A smaller set of key quantitative and qualitative indicators for policy conditions of inclusive education to be used at European level.


The set of indicators developed by the project:

- Is based on the main outcomes of previous European Agency project work in the field of inclusive education;
- Has used the outcomes of a European Hearing of young persons with special educational needs [3] [4];
- Has been developed bottom-up at European level to ensure its applicability to the diverse systems of education across Europe.

The further objectives of the project and its outcomes have been to use these indicators for the conditions of inclusive education to:

- Provide a tool for countries for monitoring their own developments in country based policy and practice;
- Provide an in-depth coverage of the selected three key areas of inclusive education (legislation, financing, participation);
- Identify key areas in the field of inclusive education where further work needs to be done;
- Provide a tool at European level to the Agency for collecting selected data on country developments.

The intention was that the project could establish the basis for the development of an agreed set of qualitative and quantitative indicators, each one accepted by the participating Member Countries. Equipped with suitable indicators, the field of inclusive education - ranked very high for most of the European Member countries regarding its importance in SNE - will be opened for constructive comparison and mutual learning from good (i.e. effective and successful) approaches. It will also provide each individual country with a tool to monitor own developments in policy and practice. While the latter tool, based upon indicators, might exist in a few countries, there is however no set of indicators available that is agreed among countries to facilitate the above-mentioned comparison and learning process. This joint development of



indicators at European level is considered to be the European added value of the project.

5. Concepts and definitions

5.1 Inclusion

The interpretation of terms such as special needs education, inclusive education or inclusive schools vary greatly across Europe, so it was considered important and useful, at the beginning of the project to discuss, clarify and agree upon some concepts and definitions developed and employed in other aspects of Agency work that could support the project development.

In the Agency Strategy paper 2007-2013, the focus of the Agency work is clearly stated upon developments in special needs education. Whilst recognising that special needs education and special educational needs are two sides of the same coin, the Agency's work is *focussed upon systems and provision* and not upon specific types or categories of needs.

Definitions and understandings of what is meant by special needs education vary greatly within countries. There is no agreed interpretation of terms such as *handicap, special need or disability* across the countries. These differences are linked to administrative, financial and procedural regulations rather than reflecting variations in the incidence and the types of special educational needs in countries [5].

From the literature review and the work of the European Agency so far, it is evident that the current tendency in Europe is to develop a policy towards inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream schools, providing teachers with varying degrees of support in terms of supplementary staff, materials, in-service training and equipment.

Experience in many countries demonstrates that the inclusion of children and young people with special educational needs is best achieved within inclusive schools that serve almost all children within a community. It is within this context that those with special educational needs can achieve the fullest educational progress and social inclusion.

Agreements on what settings are considered 'inclusive' are not so clear. In other aspects of Agency work (for example [5]) an operational definition of inclusive settings has been employed: *... those educational settings where pupils with special needs follow the largest part of the curriculum in the mainstream class alongside peers without special educational needs ...* (p9).

However, the range of settings and types of provision evident in countries emphasises the enormous difficulties in comparing situations across Europe. All countries are at: *... different points of the journey to inclusion signposted by the Salamanca statement ...* [6]. The term 'inclusion' has itself been on a journey since it was initially introduced within an educational context. In other aspects of agency work (for example [7]) an argumentation on the development has been provided. *Firstly, it is now understood to concern a far wider range of pupils vulnerable to exclusion than those identified as having SEN.*

Secondly, for many people the introduction of the term was an explicit attempt to move ideas of education for all beyond 'mainstreaming'. In its most basic form, mainstreaming can be seen as the physical co-existing of pupils with and without SEN in the same place.

Thirdly, most typically the early use of the term in European countries was characterised by the belief that pupils with SEN should have 'access to the curriculum'. This implied that 'the curriculum' was a fixed and static entity and that pupils with SEN require different types of support to access the mainstream curriculum. The current use of the term 'inclusion' usually starts from the proposition that pupils with SEN have a right to a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs and that education systems have a duty to provide this.

In this and other Agency projects, the UNESCO (1994) Salamanca Statement [8] regarding inclusive education has been the guiding principle: *Regular schools with this 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)

5.2 Policy indicators

In the following section we will make use of the input-process-outcome model, adapted to the field of education. The system, described in Figure 1, consists of three elements. Input and resources denote all aspects given into the system to achieve a certain outcome. In the field of education, inputs and resources could be e.g. financial resources, legislation related to education, but also the qualification level of teachers or any infrastructural issues. Education processes transform these inputs and resources into outputs and outcomes. While outputs rather describe efficiency measures such as participation rates or curricular achievements, this report highlights the relevance of outcome aspects that emphasise the effects, impact or consequences, e.g. academic and functional literacy, independence, or citizenship. Processes finally refers to all educational activities including procedures, state / school / district practices, or classroom instructional practices.



Figure 1: Input-process-outcome model for education

Monitoring denotes a systematic process of periodic or continuous surveillance or testing to determine the level or value of indicators with quality goals or target values. Monitoring is an essential activity in any process of continuous improvements, as it provides a link back from (intermediate) outcomes to the dimensioning of input / resources and to process (re-)design

(see Figure 2). Monitoring can be applied at different levels; e.g., in a decentralised educational system monitoring can take place on a regional or even on a school level. Furthermore, monitoring outcomes may be accessible to all audiences or restricted to those users who are directly involved in the management of educational processes.

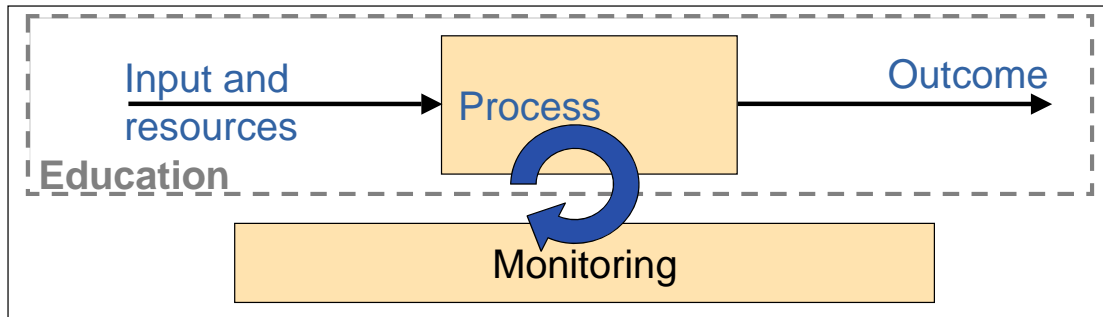


Figure 2: Monitoring in input-process-outcome models

Indicators in the context of this project can be considered as “sensors” that are designed and placed in such a way that they can detect any relevant changes. In the context of a monitoring system indicators are helping the users to focus on areas that need attention. Consequently, indicators need to cover all relevant areas (i.e. should not have “blind spots” where changes remain undetected), need to be sensitive enough to detect changes when they occur, and need to be informative, i.e. providing evidence about the reason for a change. While it is often the case to make use of primarily outcome oriented indicators (e.g. indicators and benchmarks on the monitoring of progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education), there is a possibility to lack indicators on the input / resources and the process side to understand *why* outcomes do or do not change.

The reasons for this are to be found in the fact that in most cases outcome indicators cannot be directly influenced when monitoring detects discrepancies between outcome indicator values and scheduled values. Rather, changes in the resource provision or input dimensioning as well as changes in processes are used to modify the outcome side. Therefore it is important to monitor indicators in those two other areas as well (see Figure 3).

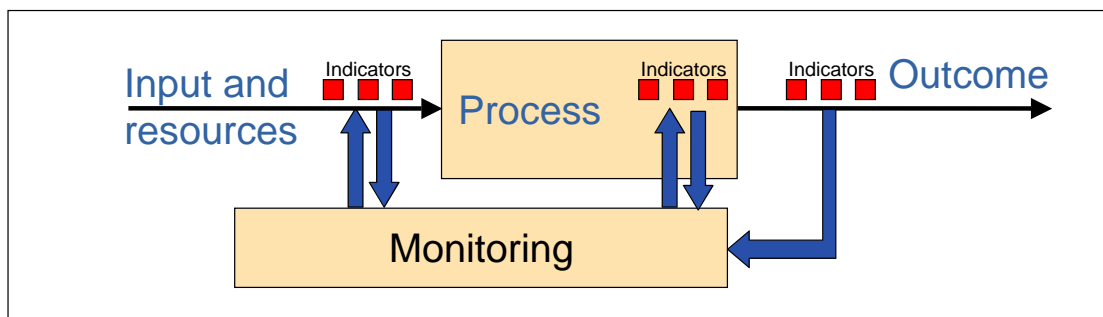


Figure 3: Indicator distribution in monitoring

Public policies can be defined as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action and funding priorities. With this understanding *legislation* is



part of a policy. "The law in a particular area" includes specific legislation embedded in constitutional and international law. The following Figure 4 explains how this definition fits into the input-process-outcome model. It should be emphasised that the existence of a monitoring system on local / regional / national level is seen as a part of the policy framework as well.

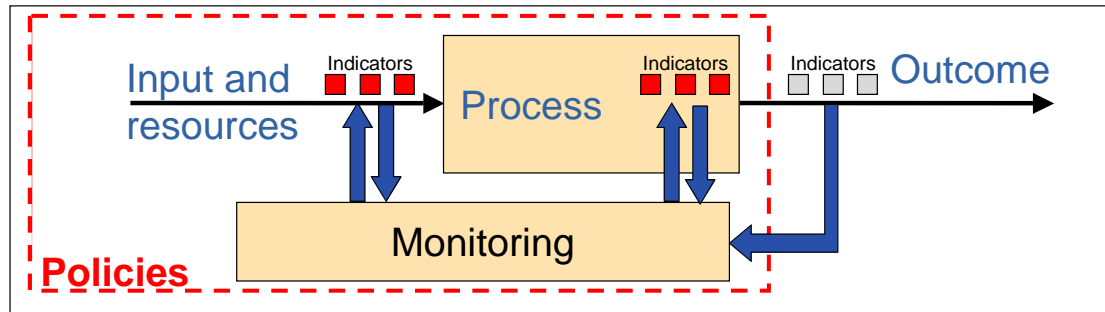


Figure 4: Monitoring system with focus on policies

Legislation can also be understood as the system that “binds together” more specific policies in a coherent way to insure that the individual policy goals can actually be reached once the policy plays out in practice. The focus is thus more on the interrelatedness of policies, the consistency of different policy initiatives and the sustainability of policy initiatives. As indicated before, in the above-mentioned model legislation is considered an input / resources aspect in education

Due to the focus of the project on policy conditions, outcome indicators are not dealt with in this report. However, as Figure 3 and Figure 4 point out, outcome indicators are an essential source of information in monitoring systems. In consequence, the project aimed at developing a set of indicators from the areas of input / resources and from processes to be compatible with other national, European or international outcome indicators. In fact, each country that makes use of the indicators described later in this project can add own outcome related indicators to complete the set of monitoring indicators.

The above-mentioned main concepts and underlying principles, employed by the different aspects of Agency work, have also supported as guiding principles for the project work.



6. Indicators for SNE

From the European and International literature review, it appears that some research work and studies have been conducted in the area of indicators for SNE, aiming at supporting and improving the quality of education in inclusive settings. The different sets of indicators developed for SNE cover the aspects of *input*, *process* and *output* as well as the *macro* (legislation, political and administrative framework), *meso* (school, community services), *micro* (classroom) and *person* (teachers, students) level. A few indicative examples are mentioned in the following.

OECD work on indicators

OECD has developed a tri-partite system in which students' needs are divided into three cross-national categories, A, B and C [9]. Broadly, they cover:

- a. Students with disabilities or impairments viewed in medical terms as organic disorders attributable to organic pathologies (e.g. in relation to sensory, motor or neurological defects). The educational need is considered to arise primarily from problems attributable to these disabilities (cross-national category "*A/Disabilities*").
- b. Students with behavioural or emotional disorders, or specific difficulties in learning. The educational need is considered to arise primarily from problems in the interaction between the student and the educational context (cross-national category "*B/Difficulties*").
- c. Students with disadvantages arising primarily from socio-economic, cultural, and/or linguistic factors. The educational need is to compensate for the disadvantages attributable to these factors (cross-national category "*C/Disadvantages*").

The study provides qualitative data to contextualise the quantitative information. It provides breakdowns by national category systems as well as comparisons using the cross-national framework described.

Index for Inclusion

Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow (in [10]) have developed a number of indicators to support the inclusive development of schools. The index offers schools a supportive process of self-review and development, which draws on the views of staff, governors, students and parents, as well as other members of the surrounding communities. It involves a detailed examination of how barriers to learning and participation can be reduced for any student. The indicators cover 3 dimensions:

- a. *Creating inclusive cultures* (building community, establishing inclusive values);
- b. *Producing inclusive policies* (developing the school for all, organising support for diversity);
- c. *Evolving inclusive practices* (orchestrating learning, mobilising resources).



Quality Indicators in SNE

Judith Hollenweger (in [11]) has developed a number of quality indicators covering the aspects of educational inputs and resources, processes and results

- a. *Educational Inputs and Resources*: policies, community characteristics, resources, personnel, students characteristics, family characteristics
- b. *Educational Processes*: state/school district practices, school building – level practices, classroom instructional practices, student oriented domains
- c. *Educational Results for Systems and Individuals*: academic and functional literacy, physical health, responsibility and independence, citizenship, personal and social well-being, satisfaction

Disability Rights in Education Model

Peters, Johnstone and Ferguson (in [12]) applied the Disability Rights in Education Model (DREM), based on the main principles of inclusive education, to provide a multilevel framework for evaluating educational inclusion of students with SEN at local/school, national and international levels. The DREM is a tool for use by educational policy makers, educators, community members and disabled people's organisations. The DREM demonstrates the dynamic interrelationship of outcomes, resources, contexts and inputs.

For each of the three levels (local, national, international) there are a number of interrelated outcomes and a number of enabling outcomes, used as catalysts for ensuring that the educational process of teaching and learning results in the expected individual and social benefits that are represented as main outcomes of the model. Resources, contexts and other inputs provide the material and social conditions for the system of enabling outcomes, main outcomes and educational processes to be enacted.

This does not present an exhaustive review, but a few indicative examples of the work done on developing indicators in the area of Special Needs Education, at European/international level, collected by the project partners.

Beside the European/international level, the project partners were requested to review what is already available at national level regarding qualitative and quantitative indicators for the policy conditions of inclusive education. Participants have admitted that in many countries the issue of "indicators" is high on the political agenda and they have developed or are in the process of developing indicators in the area of inclusive education at different levels (e.g. school, classroom, etc).

In many countries and at European/international level, there are a number of indicators developed to monitor SNE/inclusive education at different levels, mainly at school and classroom level. However, the project partners have admitted that, it seems that none of the existing sets of indicators are suited to be transferred and used by other national education contexts or at European level. This has different reasons, such as their focus (e.g. school, classroom



level), the coverage of the area of inclusive education (the key aspects constituting the field of inclusive education), etc. In addition none of the sets of indicators reviewed by the project partners are used to monitor policy conditions of inclusive education at national level.

7. Developing indicators in the frame of the project

This project aimed at a mixture of indicators from all quality dimensions, i.e. mainly from input / resources and process, and where appropriate also from output / outcome. For this reason the project implemented a bottom-up approach, aiming at covering the field of inclusive education in its breadth. Within the 12 month timescale of the project a working group of 32 experts from 23 countries (nominated by the European Agency's Representative Board Members) supported by a Project Advisory Group (PAG) that acted as an advisory capacity regarding project process and content, developed the indicators.

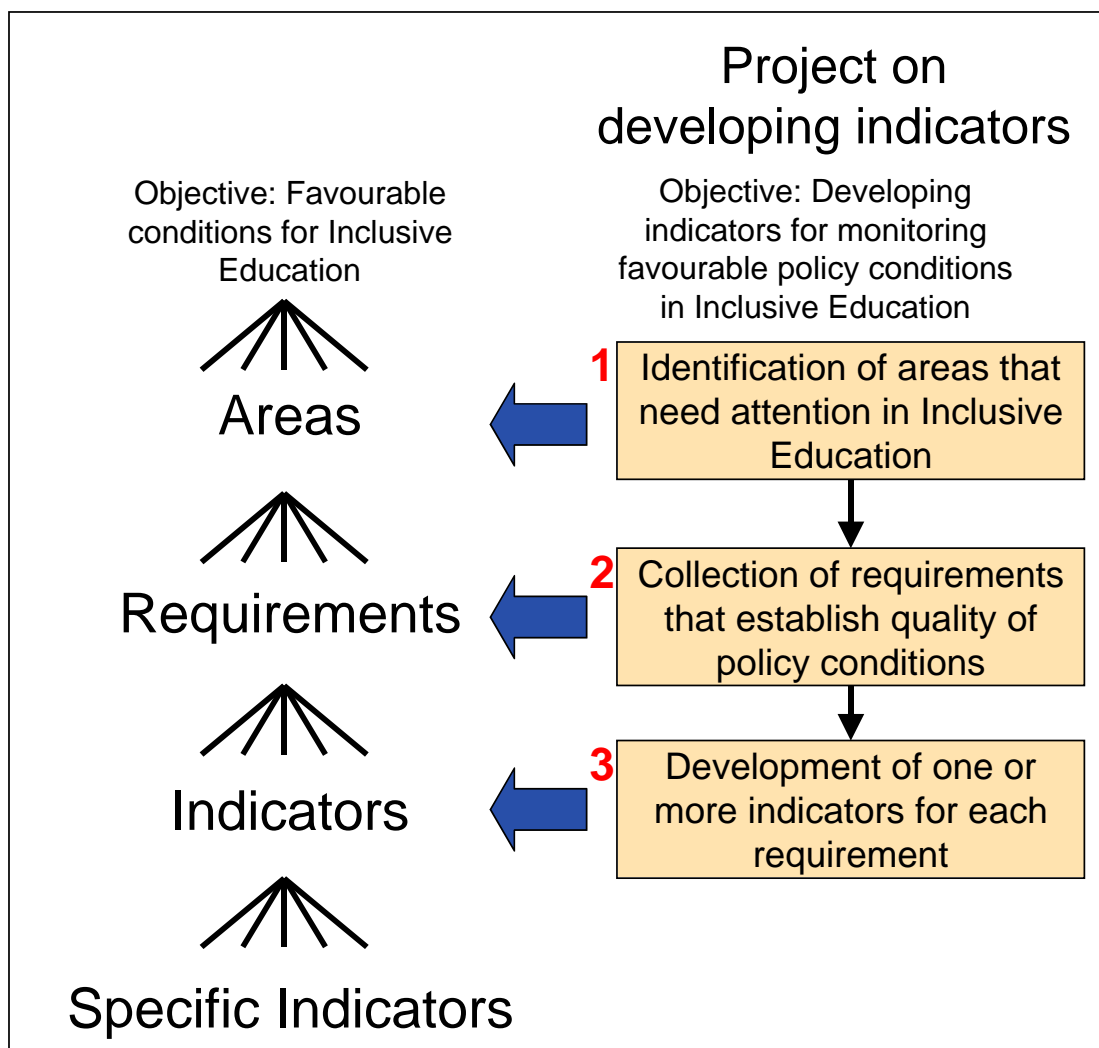



Figure 5: Development of indicators

Based upon the objective to provide a set of indicators for monitoring policy conditions in European Agency member countries, the project partners identified in a first step all areas that need further attention during the indicator development process. Each area was then divided into relevant requirements that essentially represent quality of policy in the respective area. Finally, indicators have been developed that help to identify favourable policy conditions for inclusive education. A final step, which was not supposed to take place within the context of the project, is to identify one or more specific



indicators per indicator, facilitating measurements and comparison either with earlier measurements or measures of other countries. The hierarchical decomposition of the field of education into areas, requirement, indicators and specific indicators as well as the development approach within this project are visualised in Figure 5. In the following these hierarchical levels are further explained.

Areas

During the working group meetings, participants identified a number of areas - based upon the discussion among experts - that were considered important in the field of inclusive education and should be taken into account. The key areas cover the main aspects of inclusive education and provide the content framework to identify and define policy requirements that may support or hinder the development of inclusive education within schools. The identified areas are listed under section 7.1.

Taking into account the time limits of the project as well as the fact that based on the European Agency's multi annual work programme other thematic projects and project updates already scheduled will deal with some of these topics, the project decided to give priority and focus on a subset of these areas. The decision was based upon perceived relevance by the participating experts and was influenced by the European Agency plans on future project activities. Participants agreed to focus within the project on *legislation, participation, and financing*.

Requirements

Requirements describe conditions essential to inclusive education. The way requirements are phrased expresses the level of quality required (e.g. “*Full consistency of national legislation on education with international agreements*”). The project partners met twice during the project's lifetime and identified sets of requirements for the three selected areas. The resulting sets were finally reviewed by the Project Advisory Group and restructured to avoid overlaps or contradictions. All requirements identified are listed in section 7.2.

Obviously, there are many ways of fulfilling the collected requirements. The project aimed also at – where possible and time permitted – collecting alternative implementations for most of these requirements. *Examples of Implementation* of selected requirements are listed in an appendix, available online at <http://...>.

Indicators

Indicators point out aspects that represent one or more constituents of the requirement (e.g. “*Consistency with international agreements*”). Neither does it contain a quality statement nor does it predetermine whether the specific indicators for measurement are of a qualitative or quantitative nature. Yet, indicators identify / name the particular aspect that needs to be assessed and monitored (e.g. the consistency). Several indicators can be associated to each requirement. The list of indicators is provided in section 7.3.



Specific indicators

Specific indicators make the respective indicator operational. Each indicator may have one or more specific indicators, each being either a qualitative or a quantitative measure.

Specific indicators that are of a qualitative nature (e.g. "Level of consistency") require an operationalisation based on a total preorder of scale values (i.e. ordinal scale). The scale values to be defined have a total order, e.g. by using names like "poor", "medium" or "good" to express the order as well as the level of quality. Minimal qualitative scales contain just two values, e.g. "exists" and "does not exist", or "yes" and "no". Lists of specific indicators that just make use of minimal qualitative scales can also be seen as checklists.


Quantitative specific indicators are always designed as a proportion between two quantifiable aspects, making the specific indicator independent of the size of the population's magnitude. The outcome in itself does not immediately provide information whether the achieved and observed value is to be considered good or not. Rather, the comparison with other values facilitates the assessment of the quantitative specific indicator. Comparison can be done either with values of the same country measured at different times (e.g. in the context of a trend analysis) to determine whether a certain situation develops in the intended direction, or with values of other countries to facilitate benchmarking and mutual learning.

Due to the immense efforts required to develop specific indicators of a sufficient level of quality, coverage of that issue was not scheduled for this one-year project.

7.1 Areas

The list below identifies a selection of areas considered relevant for inclusive education on policy level. It neither aimed at representing a complete list nor necessarily containing aspects of the same kind, relevance or level of hierarchy. Nevertheless, all key aspects discussed among the 32 experts in the course of the project fit under these headings:

1. Legislation and balance / consistency between inclusive education and other policy initiatives
2. Clear national policy on inclusive education
 - Acceptable national position about the educational concept of tracking
 - Connection between general and special provision; prevent the emergence of special needs
3. Value statements underlying the curriculum as a point of reference
 - Curriculum
 - Certification
4. Inclusive assessment systems

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- Identification of SEN by using e.g formative, assessment for learning approaches with all learners
5. Participation of students and parents in decision-making
 6. Connection between inclusive education and lifelong learning / Early childhood intervention
 7. Incentives in resources and support allocation; pre-resourcing of schools vs. resourcing based upon diagnoses
 8. Financing and processes linked to funding mechanisms
 9. Inter-sectoral co-operation
 10. Inter-disciplinary support systems
 11. Teacher training / training of professionals (including use of information and communication technology - ICT)
 12. Systems / cultures that encourage teachers for collaboration and teamwork
 13. Differentiation, diversity and multi-cultural education in the classroom
 14. Systems for accountability

Within the frame of this project, 3 areas (legislation, participation, financing) have been selected for further reflection, out of the 14 areas mentioned above.

7.2 Requirements

Presented below are the sets of requirements, structured along the lines of the three key areas of policy conditions (legislation, participation, financing) favourable for inclusive education at national level, developed by the project partners.

Requirements in the area of legislation

Within this area the balance and consistency between inclusive education and other policy initiatives is to be assessed.

1. Full consistency of national legislation on education with international agreements
2. Full consistency across different national laws
3. Legislation on education covers all educational levels
4. Legislation on education addresses the quality of training and professionalisation of teachers, psychologists, non-educational personnel, etc with special regard dealing with diversity
5. Legislation on education fully addresses issues of flexibility, diversity and equity for all educational institutions and pupils/students
6. Legislation on education fully addresses the issues of monitoring and accountability for all educational institutions and pupils/students





Requirements in the area of participation

Within this area school admission and choice policies as well as the issues of curriculum, identification of educational needs and assessment are to be assessed.

1. Admission policies promote the greatest possible access into mainstream school for all pupils/students
2. Full facilitation to inclusion of national curriculum guidelines, if present
3. National testing systems, where present, fully follow the principles of inclusive assessment and do not act as a barrier to participation and learning
4. The identification of educational needs and assessment systems fully promote and support inclusion

Requirements in the area of financing

Within this area financing and processes linked to funding mechanisms as well as incentives in resources and support allocation issues are to be assessed

1. Policy on financing fully supports inclusive education
2. Policy on financing is fully informed by / responsive to / based on educational needs
3. Policy on financing fully facilitates flexible, effective and efficient responses to needs
4. Policy on financing fully promotes support/related services and inter-sectoral collaboration

7.3 Indicators

Indicators in the area of legislation

Indicator(s) to requirement 1:

Full consistency of national legislation on education with international agreements

- 1.1 Consistency of national legislation on education with international agreements (e.g. Salamanca statement, UN Conventions, etc)

Indicator(s) to requirement 2:

Full consistency across different national laws

- 2.1 Consistency across different national laws (e.g. anti-discrimination law, education law, disability laws, children rights laws, etc).



Indicator(s) to requirement 3:

Legislation on education covers all educational levels

- 3.1 Established procedures for early identification of SEN in relation to students, teachers and other professionals and different levels of education (e.g. preschool, compulsory education, higher education, continuing education, lifelong learning)
- 3.2 Established procedures for as early as possible identification and assessment of SEN
- 3.3 Sufficient resources for the early identification and assessment of SEN
- 3.4 Support to students with SEN starts from the moment the needs are identified and is governed by the principles of inclusion
- 3.5 Anti-discrimination legislation facilitates entrance to training, further and higher Education
- 3.6 Longitudinal data on transitions and destinations (work, further and higher education, training) for different groups of students are collected by government or other agencies
- 3.7 Established procedures for access, continuing attendance and progress of all students (including students with SEN) in all stages of education (pre-school, compulsory education, higher and continuing education)
- 3.8 The institutions providing vocational training develop flexible curricula that may be adapted to suit the needs and expectations of all students , including students with SEN
- 3.9 Established procedures for the necessary support, reinforcement measures and instruments to facilitate information and guidance for students with SEN

Indicator(s) to requirement 4:

Legislation on education addresses the quality of training of teachers, psychologists, non-educational personnel, etc with special regard dealing with diversity

- 4.1 Initial teacher training and in-service teacher training programmes include special education related issues
- 4.2 Teachers and other staff are supported to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes about inclusion.
- 4.3 Courses and professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills
- 4.4 Teachers plan, teach and review in partnership
- 4.5 Dedicated resources are set aside for appropriate professional development related to special needs education



Indicator(s) to requirement 5:

Legislation on education fully addresses issues of flexibility, diversity and equity for all educational institutions and pupils/students

- 5.1 Rules/processes are set out for inter-sector cooperation between the education, health, social sectors, etc
- 5.2 Rules/processes are set out for cooperation between the formal education system and non-statutory providers of education
- 5.3 Rules/processes are set out to respect equal opportunities, equal treatment and non-discrimination against all students including students with SEN
- 5.4 Rules/processes are set out for human and material resources to match the students' needs
- 5.5 Rules/processes are set out for flexible adaptations of curricula and Individual Educational Plans
- 5.6 Rules/processes are set out for every student to receive a certificate when schooling is finished
- 5.7 Established rights for consultation of non-statutory organisations and formal education systems
- 5.8 Rules/processes are set out for students/parents/professionals with regard to participation in decision-making
- 5.9 Established procedures to settle disputes
- 5.10 Legal provision procedures for consensus-based adaptation in practice and local level decisions
- 5.11 Rules/processes are set out for flexibility, providing opportunities for amendments to suit the needs and expectations of all pupils/students, teachers, parents, in the different stages of the education system

Indicator(s) to requirement 6:

Legislation on education fully addresses the issues of monitoring and accountability for all educational institutions and pupils/students

- 6.1 Established rules for systems to monitor the effectiveness of provision (such as self-evaluation, inspection, provision mapping)
- 6.2 Established rules for systems to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning support
- 6.3 Established rules for systems to monitor levels of participation (enrolment, completion rates, drop out and exclusion rates) for different groups of students



Indicators in the area of participation

Indicator(s) to requirement 1:

Admission policies promote the greatest possible access into mainstream school for all pupils/students.

- 1.1 Established rules for schools to provide learning opportunities, to the maximum possible extent, for all pupils regardless of background or learning abilities.
- 1.2 Established rules for adapted transport facilities
- 1.3 Established rules for accessibility issues in construction of buildings, equipment, infrastructure
- 1.4 Established rules for technical tools to be in place for all pupils / students according to their individual needs
- 1.5 Pupils' views on their learning environment are taken into account
- 1.6 Numbers and percentages of students with SEN in mainstream classes, units in mainstream schools, segregated learning institutions, excluded from the education system, are collected and monitored at different levels of the system
- 1.7 Numbers and percentages of students with SEN educated under the responsibility of health, social welfare (children in care) or youth justice, children at home, are collected and monitored at different levels of the system

Indicator(s) to requirement 2:

Full facilitation to inclusion of national curriculum guidelines, if present

- 2.1 Established rules for flexibility in the curriculum to meet individual educational needs
- 2.2 Established rules for curricula to be related to the real life needs and not only to academic learning

Indicator(s) to requirement 3:

National testing systems, where present, fully follow the principles of inclusive assessment and do not act as a barrier to participation and learning

- 3.1 Established rules for a wide range of learning outcomes to be valued
- 3.2 Established rules for assessment to include and encourage the achievements of all students
- 3.3 Established rules for the range of assessments used to allow all students to display their skills
- 3.4 Established rules for assessment to be personally referenced
- 3.5 Established rules for accommodation and modification of testing methods and tools to be available when necessary



Indicator(s) to requirement 4:

The identification of educational needs and assessment systems fully promote and support inclusion

- 4.1 Procedures are non-discriminatory and based on best practice approaches
- 4.2 Initial identification of a child's needs is conducted from a holistic and primarily needs based view that links into not only teaching and learning, but also IEP development and review procedures
- 4.3 Established rules for the system of identification of needs to be geared towards informing a pupil's educational experience

Indicators in the area of financing

Indicator(s) to requirement 1:


Policy on financing fully supports inclusive education

- 1.1 Established rules for inclusion to be a central objective of education
- 1.2 Basic funding allocated to schools to allow them to respond to the needs of all children with minimal resources to seeking additional funding for specific needs
- 1.3 Essential and adequate funding for full access to appropriate education for pupils / students with SEN is mainly provided by Government and does not depend on voluntary / charitable organisations.
- 1.4 Funding supports the provision of appropriate education to all children based on needs, abilities, strengths and interests
- 1.5 Established rules for eligibility criteria for levels of additional allocation of funding, starting with systems level (local area / schools) and only then at individual student level (to reduce unhelpful labelling)

Indicator(s) to requirement 2:

Policy on financing is fully informed by / responsive to / based on educational needs

- 2.1 Policy is based (primarily) on the identification of needed provision rather than category / labels of child difficulties
- 2.2 The educational system adapts to the needs of the pupil and not vice versa
- 2.3 Clear definition of "educational needs" is adopted in relevant legislation
- 2.4 Requirements for inter-sectoral cooperation are addressed
- 2.5 Procedures (including times, methodologies, responsibilities) and rights in relation to the assessment of educational need are clearly indicated in related legislation

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- 2.6 Funds are available for early identification of SENs and early intervention in response to identified SNEs, (“early” refers to the age of the child and / or to early signs of difficulties in learning at any age)
 - 2.7 The parents and the pupil concerned have a significant influence on the identification / description of the pupil’s needs and provision
 - 2.8 Appropriate funding is allocated to identify and respond to needs across the life stages (from early childhood to primary school to high school and university) and to support transition from one stage to another.
 - 2.9 The availability and effective use of assistive technologies is supported, including new and emerging technologies, to assist in meeting children’s identified needs, and promote independence / autonomy
 - 2.10 Children with SENs are treated equitably, taking into account gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, socio-economic status and area of residence.

Indicator(s) to requirement 3:

Policy on financing fully facilitates flexible, effective and efficient responses to needs

- 3.1 Rules and procedures related to allocation of resources are easily understood by professionals, parents, and the general public / citizens
- 3.2 Resources can be managed flexibly at school and local level (while ensuring sufficient centralised oversight and coordination to avoid unnecessary duplication)
- 3.3 Funds are allocated on a timely basis for early identification and prevention
- 3.4 Established rules taking into account the optimal solution in each field, in terms of: effectiveness, efficiency, aesthetics, competence, quality, etc



8. Procedural link to Thematic Projects

In section 7, the hierarchical decomposition of the field of education into areas, requirement, indicators and specific indicators was introduced. The strength of this approach can be underlined by explaining how it fits into the procedures of content-related projects that usually deliver recommendations for a particular thematic area.

Within Agency thematic projects, a first step is always on the identification of areas within the field of education that need further attention. The Agency has two approaches for this identification. The first approach is to always allow for procedures designed to meet current needs of the Agency member countries that cannot be foreseen and planned. The second approach is a collection of Agency country input regarding those current, emerging and future needs that need be investigated. These needs were selected in the light of National priorities for special needs education as well as of European level priorities for education raised by the Council of Education Ministers. The European Agency therefore has surveyed these needs and consolidated them in its Multiannual Work Programme.

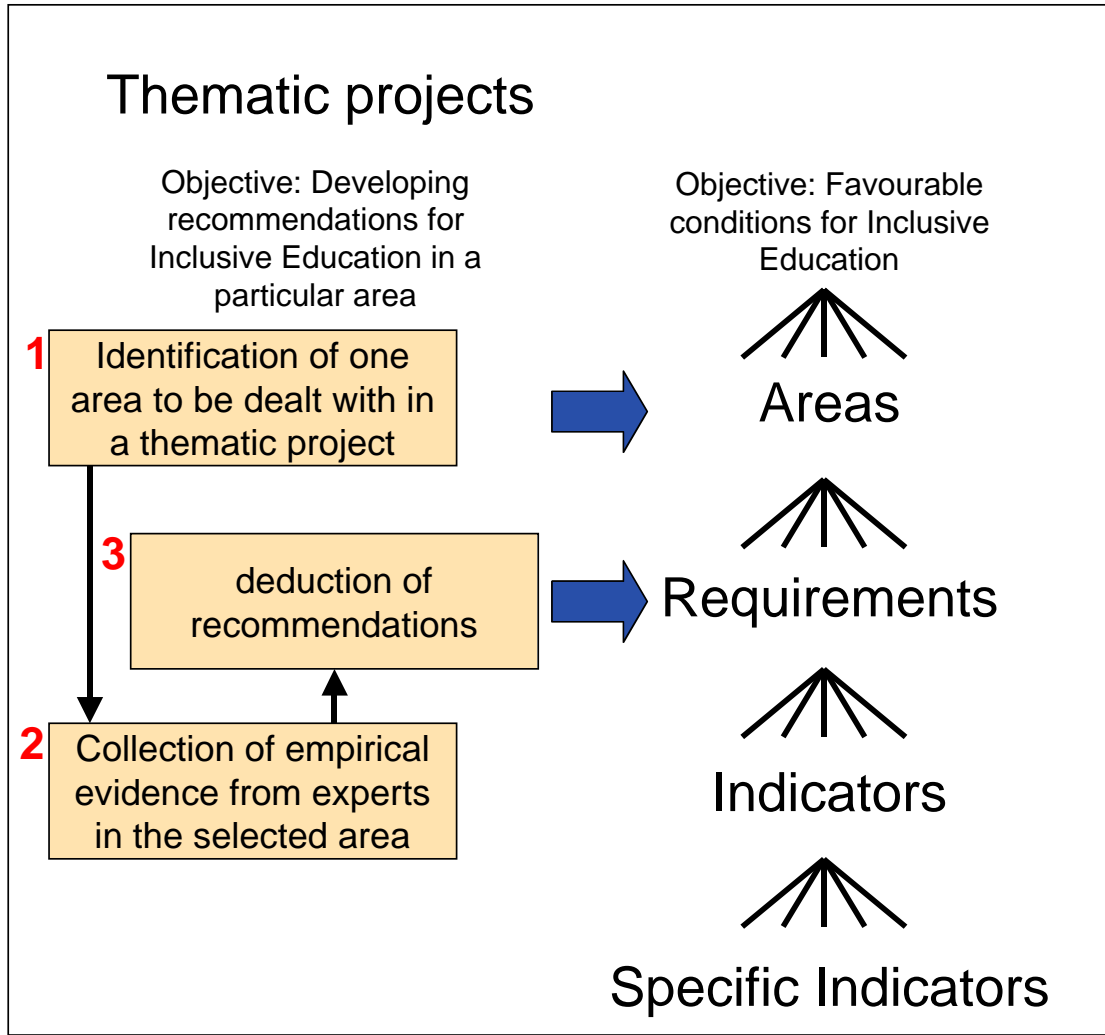


Figure 6: Procedural link to thematic projects



The second step is – beyond reviewing the relevant international scientific literature in the selected area – to collect empirical evidence by experts across Europe. Various methods are applied for this collection (including case studies and field visits).

In the third step, an inductive reasoning process is applied and generalizations are made based on individual instances to be found in Member countries. These generalizations are phrased as recommendations. These recommendations express actions to achieve favourable conditions for inclusive education in the selected area.

Recommendations can be easily transcribed into requirements by not focusing on the actions required, but on the outcomes of these actions as favourable conditions for inclusive education.



9. Further steps

The objective of the project has been to arrive at a set of indicators at national level, yet applicable at European level, that allows reviewing conditions in each country that may support or hinder the development of inclusive education within schools. The following thoughts will provide a proposal to make the indicators operational by developing specific indicators and to make them usable for monitoring and cross-country comparison.

Selection of a smaller set of indicators

A subset of the indicators will provide countries with a tool to compare own achievements with those of other countries. This smaller set of indicators should be selected by policy makers (i.e. representative board members of the European Agency) upon perceived relevance for mutual comparison on a European level. Based on this smaller set of indicators, a follow-up project could develop specific indicators to make the indicators measurable.

Definition of specific indicators

The aim of this step would be that each specific indicator provides evidence that a certain condition exists or certain results have or have not been achieved. Only by then, specific indicators would enable decision-makers to assess progress towards the achievement of intended outputs, outcomes, goals, and objectives of policies or programmes (monitoring). Indicators as described in section 7 can both include a specification of quantifiable targets and measures of quality. Both qualitative and quantitative aspects provide useful information and are necessary to presenting a balanced and reasonable picture of movement towards achievement of goals and objectives. However, having the target group in mind, all specific indicators should as well, among other things, produce simple information, which is communicable and easily understood by both the provider and the user of the information. Then, specific indicators may be one factor - among many - that can be used in making decisions about policy directions and priorities.

As described in section 7, specific indicators are making the respective indicator operational. To achieve this aim, specific indicators can, e.g., be developed along one or more of the following lines:

- The specific indicator quantifies a particular aspect of the respective indicator.
- The specific indicator denotes whether a certain aspect of the indicator is existent or not (e.g. as a checkpoint).
- The specific indicator defines the extent to which the indicator's quality attribute can be observed (level of quality).
- The specific indicator details to which extent implemented policies differ or agree with written legislation or agreements (level of coherence).
- The specific indicator assesses the extent to which the system ensures that the quality condition (expressed in the indicator) is given in all cases (level of coverage).



Each specific indicator should be equipped with a short but unambiguously phrased definition and rationale.

Creating suitable scales for the specific indicators

In a subsequent step, scales need to be developed for each specific indicator. With regard to qualitative specific indicators, potential scales might range from a bi-polar type (e.g. “exists / does not exist”) up to ordinal scales with a suitable number of values, each clearly distinguishable and mutually distinct (e.g. “consistent / minor inconsistencies / major inconsistencies / not consistent at all”). Quantitative specific indicators need to be expressed as proportions as to facilitate comparisons independent of the absolute size of the population.

For quantitative specific indicators, the calculation method needs to be elaborated, and sources and quality of data needs to be defined. For qualitative specific indicators, guidelines are required to reduce the subjectivity of scales by detailing in which situations which value should be chosen, and what level should be chosen in case of doubt or ambiguity.

Defining the group of evaluators


Especially in the field of qualitative measures, the subjective view of the evaluator influences the choice of the scale values. For instance, if a specific indicator intends to measure the level of participation of parents in decision-making processes, the parents’ point of view might differ from that of professionals. Consequently, in a further step it should be investigated for each specific indicator, which groups of evaluators should be envisaged so that the outcomes of evaluation provide a realistic view of the particular policy aspect.

Increasing inter-rater agreement

As it is intended in the first instance as a tool for countries, the set of indicators is designed to be used in a self-evaluation procedure. Subjectivity of scales (see previous paragraph) as well as poor inter-rater agreement, however, are potential risks that come with approaches that abstain from neutral assessments, provided by a single assessment authority. To make measurements comparable across countries requires complete independence of the persons taking the measurements (i.e., the rater). Inter-rater agreement, also known as inter-rater reliability or concordance, is the degree of agreement among different raters regarding the same item to be judged. The higher the inter-rater agreement is, the better is the homogeneity, or consensus, in the ratings given by different judges. Clearly, each rating instrument should feature a sufficient degree of this quality characteristic. If different raters do not agree sufficiently, measures are required to improve the degree of agreement, which can be achieved by reworking of the scales or an improved training of raters.

Data aggregation, disaggregation and interpretation

For certain specific indicators it might be necessary to describe how data aggregation from local via regional up to a national level should take place, and how qualitative scale values have to be handled in this aggregation procedure. At the same time it should be discussed and decided for each



specific indicator, along which dimensions a disaggregation on national level is suitable. For instance, some specific indicators might be disaggregated by level of education, by level of administration (e.g., local, regional, national), by gender or age, by geographical location or by type of institution.

Finally, it should be elaborated on how outcomes of each specific indicator can be interpreted. Appending this guidance to interpretation to the definitions of each specific indicator prevents – or at least minimises – the risk of misinterpretations of laypersons that make use of the set of indicators.

Process design

In a final step it is required to reflect on the essential procedures both on a national as well as on European level to manage the process of data collection, interpretation, and feedback. Intervals need to be defined within data collection takes place. Persons responsible for the collection of data need to be appointed and instructed. At European level, procedures for the reporting of outcomes need to be agreed and established.

Future work

For reasons of limited resources, some restrictions had already been made in the context of this project. As described in section 7, from the list of areas for inclusive education, three had been selected for closer review. Yet, other areas need to be covered as well in the future. Whichever set of indicators will be developed in the future needs to reflect all these areas, or the set is not complete (i.e. not covering inclusive education in its breadth). Not surprisingly, the list of areas contains some topics that have been addressed in the past or present by European Agency projects. Outcomes (e.g. recommendations) derived from the project work might be a good basis for developing indicators in that specific area (see section 8 for an explanation how recommendations correspond to the approach taken in this report). The list can also be read as an agenda of upcoming topics to be covered, either by projects, seminars, conferences, or other events, both on a National as well as on European level.



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