

# **Inclusive Education in a European perspective**

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## **European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education**



# Social Cohesion and Inclusive Education

- Key Questions
- Normative position
- Role of research



# The Agency

- 17th year of operations
  - 1996 - established as an initiative of the Danish Ministry of education following the end of the EU HELIOS programme
  - 1999 - the original 15 member countries 'took ownership' of the Agency
- Secretariat based in Odense, Denmark
- Centre of Activity in Brussels, Belgium



# Funding

The Agency is financed by:

- The member countries' Ministries of Education
- The European Commission as one of the six organisations supported by the Jean Monnet, Lifelong Learning Programme



# Agency member countries

- National networks in 28 European countries:  
Austria, Belgium (Flemish and French speaking communities), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)



# Strategic Objectives

- The promotion of quality in the field of special needs and inclusive education through the maintenance of a long-term framework for extended European collaboration
- Our work is in line with the Council priorities as identified in the ET 2020 strategy and in accordance with international agreements, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989)



# Working parameters

- Countries are at different starting points and have different ‘histories’ in terms of education generally and inclusive education specifically
- No-one country has all the answers – many countries have clear examples of innovative practice, but all countries are still ‘moving ahead’



# Activities

- Collection, analysis and dissemination of information on priority themes
- Participation in and organisation of conferences, seminars and political events
- Liaison with European institutions and international organisations – UNESCO and its institutes (IBE, ITE), OECD Eurostat, Eurydice, Cedefop, World Bank



# Information Provision

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

[www.european-agency.org](http://www.european-agency.org)

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

Agency publications can be freely downloaded in up to 22 European languages



# Agency Publications



# Special Events

- European Parliament Hearing in Brussels 2003
- Portuguese Parliament Hearing in Lisbon 2007
- European Parliament Hearing in Brussels 2011



# European Hearing in Portugal



- European Hearing of Young People with Special Educational Needs organised by the Agency, in co-operation with the Portuguese Ministry of Education.
- The event took place in Lisbon within the framework of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union and the European Year of Equal Opportunities.



# ‘Inclusive education is mutually beneficial to us and to the others’



We see a lot of benefits in inclusive education: we acquire more social skills; we live more experiences; we learn about how to manage in the real world; we need to have and interact with friends with and without special needs



# Parliament Hearing in Brussels November 2011





- The young delegates discussed the right to quality of education, to choice and to equality and respect
- Inclusion is beneficial for all; it creates the opportunity to learn and share experiences
- The importance of the role of teachers and their peers
- Inclusion is the first step to being full members of society



<http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/european-hearing-2011>



# Some Recent and Current projects

- Teacher Education for Inclusion
- Vocational Education and Training
- Organisation of Provision to Support Inclusive Education
- ICT for Information Accessibility in Learning
- Raising Achievement for All Learners in Inclusive Education



# TE4I project aims and outputs

- Aim to address the essential project question:  
*how all teachers are prepared via their initial education to be 'inclusive'*



# The Profile Model

- Four core values relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for the work of all teachers in inclusive education: Valuing Learner Diversity; Supporting All Learners; Working with Others; Personal Professional Development
- These core values are then further elaborated in terms of attitudes, skills and knowledge



# European developments

- Progress and Challenges



# Movements towards inclusion

## *Developments*

- A wider range of more flexible provision
- Flexible funding models
- The development of resource centres as a support for mainstream education

## *Challenges*

- Academic achievements (output) versus meeting individual needs
- Provision in the secondary education
- Preparing all teachers for inclusive education
- 2% of pupils in separate settings across Europe



# UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities (2006) – Article 24 - Education

☐ States parties are requested to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels

- 156 signatories to the Convention
- 91 signatories to the Optional Protocol
- 134 ratifications of the Convention
- 77 ratifications of the Optional Protocol



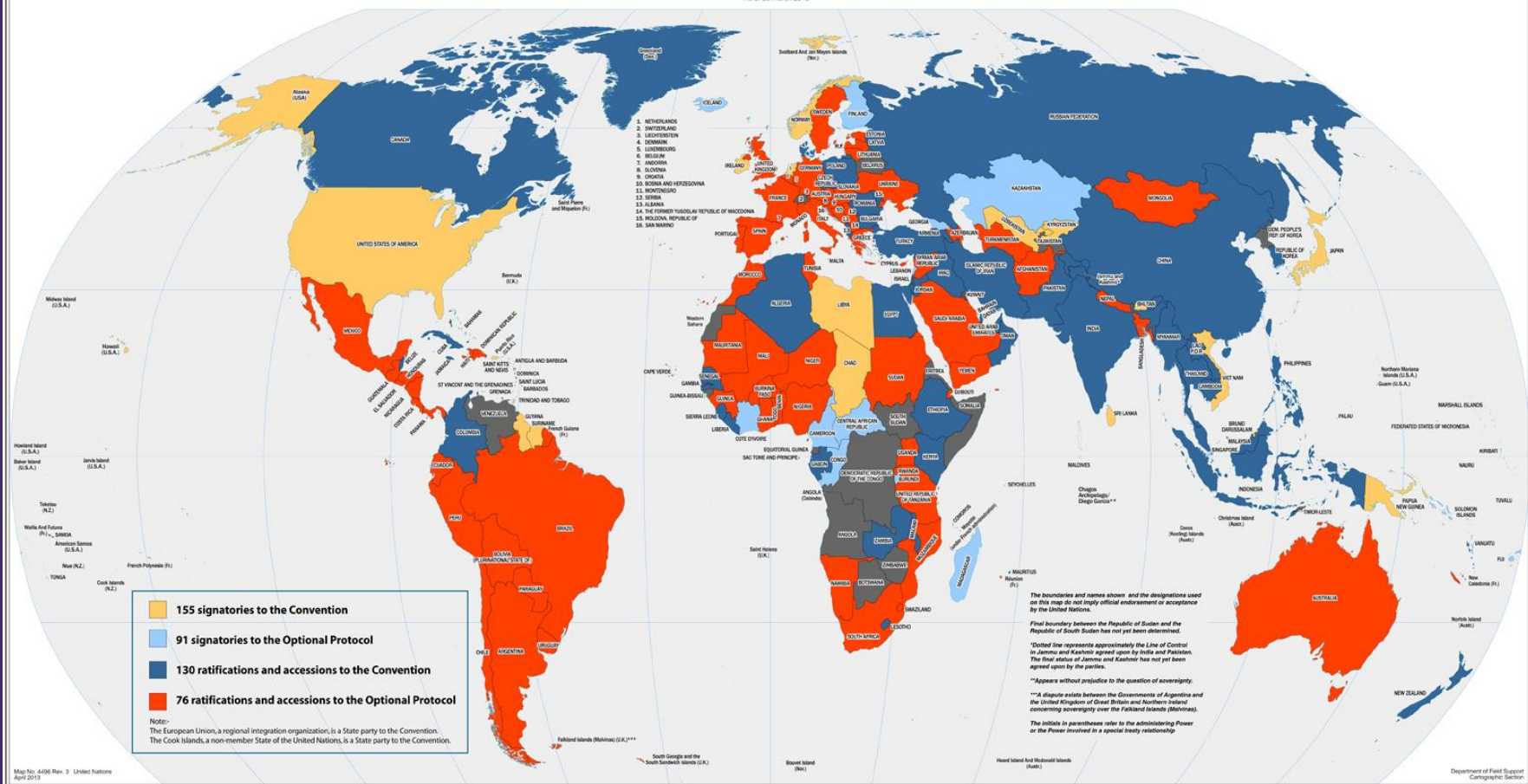
# Map of signatures and ratifications, 17.09.2013



## CRPD and Optional Protocol Signatures and Ratifications

■ Not Signed   ■ Signed Convention   ■ Signed Convention & Protocol   ■ Ratified Convention   ■ Ratified Convention & Protocol

As of 20 March 2013



# Ratification of the optional protocol by European Agency member countries

Austria - 26 September 2008

Belgium – 2 July 2009

Cyprus- 26 June 2011

Estonia – 30 May 2012

France - 18 February 2010

Germany - 24 February 2009

Greece 31 May 2012

Hungary - 20 July 2007

Italy – 15 May 2009

Latvia – 31 August 2010

Lithuania – 18 August 2010

Luxembourg – 26 Sept 2011

Malta 10 October 2012

Portugal – 23 September 2009

Slovakia- 26 May 2010

Slovenia - 24 April 2008

Spain - 3 December 2007

Sweden - 15 December 2008

United Kingdom – 7 August 2009



## Percentage of pupils with SEN in segregated settings

| Up to 1.0% | 1.01 %- 2.0%  | 2.01%- 4.0% | 4.01% and above |
|------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Cyprus     | Austria       | Denmark     | Belgium (Fl)    |
| Greece     | Bulgaria      | Finland     | Belgium (Fr)    |
| Ireland    | France        | Hungary     | Czech Rep.      |
| Italy      | Iceland       | Latvia      | Estonia         |
| Malta      | Lithuania     | Netherlands | Germany         |
| Norway     | Luxembourg    |             | Switzerland     |
| Portugal   | Poland        |             |                 |
| Slovenia   | Sweden        |             |                 |
| Spain      | UK (England)  |             |                 |
|            | UK (Scotland) |             |                 |
|            | UK (Wales)    |             |                 |



# Inclusive Education and Classroom Practice

What works within inclusive settings?

How inclusive education works?

Why it is working?



# Some general conclusions

- What is good for pupils with special educational needs is good for all pupils
- Behaviour, social and/or emotional problems are the most challenging
- Dealing with differences in the classroom forms one of the biggest problems



# Effective practices within the context of inclusive education

## Co-operative teaching

- Teachers need support from colleagues
- Students get their support in the classroom
- Teachers learn from each others' approaches and feedback. Thus, it also meets the needs of teachers



# Effective practices within the context of inclusive education

## Co-operative learning

- Peer tutoring is effective in both cognitive and affective areas
- Moreover, there are no indications that the more able pupil suffers from this situation



# Effective practices within the context of inclusive education

## Heterogeneous grouping

- Students of the same age stay together in mixed ability classrooms, to respect natural variability in characteristics of students.



# More information

[www.european-agency.org](http://www.european-agency.org)

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