Teacher Education for Inclusion
PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

TE4I

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION

Profile of Inclusive Teachers

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

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FOREWORD

The Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project has explored how all teachers are prepared via their initial teacher education to be 'inclusive'. The three year project set out to identify the essential skills, knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values needed by everyone entering the teaching profession, regardless of the subject, specialism or age range they will teach or the type of school they will work in.

Fifty-five country experts have been involved, from 25 countries: Austria, Belgium (both the Flemish and French speaking communities), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales). The expert group has included policy makers – responsible for teacher education and inclusive education – and both general and specialist teacher educators.

The project has been supported by a Project Advisory Group of Agency Representative Board members and National Co-ordinators, Agency staff and an external consultant, Kari Nes from Norway. An extended Project Advisory Group also met throughout the project with representatives from the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG-EAC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (OECD-CERI) and UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) to ensure consistency with other European and international initiatives in this area of work.

The TE4I project has led to a number of outputs all of which are available from the project website: http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion

- Policy and research literature reviews covering international policy documents and research literature since the year 2000, including research material from 18 European countries.
- Reports on teacher education for inclusion from the participating countries. The country reports are presented in a consistent format to allow searching across countries by specific themes.
- A synthesis report, which draws upon all sources of project information in order to present key findings and recommendations relating to teacher education across Europe.
- A 'matrix' document linking evidence from the project activities directly to the project recommendations made in the project synthesis report.

A further output is this *Profile of Inclusive Teachers,* developed during the project as a result of research, country information and in particular, discussions with project experts and representatives of stakeholder groups for teacher education during 14 country study visits held in 2010 and 2011.

In addition to the nominated country project experts, over 400 other stakeholders – including student teachers, teachers and school leaders, local area administrators, representatives from voluntary organisations, policy makers, learners, their parents and families – have been involved in project activities. The Agency wishes to acknowledge their invaluable contributions to the development of the project outcomes, but in particular to the preparation of the Profile presented in this document.

Cor Meijer, Director, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project has explored how all teachers are prepared via their initial education to be 'inclusive'. The three year project set out to identify the essential skills, knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values needed by everyone entering the teaching profession, regardless of the subject, specialism or age range they will teach or the type of school they will work in.

This Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed as one of the main outputs of the Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project conducted by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. A specific request coming from Agency country representatives was for concrete information on the necessary competences, attitudes, knowledge and skills required of all teachers working in inclusive settings. This document is a direct response to that request.

The main target audiences for the Profile are teacher educators and decision makers – managers and policy makers for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) – who are in a position to influence policy for teacher education for inclusion and then initiate and implement changes in practice. These stakeholders for ITE are considered critical as a target audience, as the assertion of the TE4I project is that teacher education is a key leverage point for the wider systemic changes needed for inclusive education generally.

The Profile does not replicate work already being done in countries. Rather it is an attempt to realistically address a shared concern expressed by country representatives and to develop a tool at European level that is based on national level information and contributions.

Primarily, the Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed as a guide for the design and implementation of ITE programmes for all teachers. The intention is that the Profile should be considered as stimulus material for identifying relevant content, planning methods and specifying desired learning outcomes for ITE and not a script for ITE programme content.

Specifically, the objectives for this Profile document are to:

1 - Identify a framework of core values and areas of competence that are applicable to any initial teacher education programme;

2 - Highlight the essential core values and areas of competence necessary for preparing all teachers to work in inclusive education considering all forms of diversity;

3 - Highlight key factors supporting the implementation of the proposed core values and areas of competence for inclusive education within all ITE programmes;

4 - Reinforce the argument made within the TE4I project that inclusive education is the responsibility of all teachers and that preparing all teachers for work in inclusive settings is the responsibility of all teacher educators working across ITE programmes.

The Profile document draws upon various activities and discussions involving project experts and over 400 other stakeholders in education over a period of three years – policy makers and practitioners from a range of school and teacher education sectors; ITE and in-service student teachers; parents and families; and learners – who have collectively debated the competences that all teachers need to support their work in inclusive settings.

Three parameters were used to guide the development of the profile:

1 - Inclusion is essentially a principled, rights-based approach to education underpinned by a number of central values;

2 - There are practical and conceptual difficulties in focussing upon isolated competences for teaching in inclusive education and for the Profile to be relevant for different countries and stakeholders, a broad approach to the idea of using competences was needed;

3 - The political priorities and effects of social policies within individual countries cannot be ignored, but there is a framework of international and EU level policy that all countries subscribe to that impacts upon inclusive education and teacher education.

Four core values relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for the work of all teachers in inclusive education. These core values are associated with areas of teacher competence. The areas of competence are made up of three elements: attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain *attitude* or belief demands certain *knowledge* or level of understanding and then *skills* in order to implement this knowledge in a practical situation. For each area of competence identified, the essential attitudes, knowledge and skills that underpin them are presented.

The Profile has been developed around this framework of core values and areas of competence:

Valuing Learner Diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Conceptions of inclusive education;

- The teacher's view of learner difference.

Supporting All Learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners' achievements.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all learners;

- Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes.

Working With Others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Working with parents and families;

- Working with a range of other educational professionals.

Personal Professional Development – teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Teachers as reflective practitioners;

- Initial teacher education as a foundation for ongoing professional learning and development.

Underpinning the core values and areas of competence are a number of agreed general principles relating to the implementation of the Profile. In addition a number of factors supporting the implementation of the Profile can be identified. These factors do not only cover the possible use of the Profile within initial teacher education programmes, but also wider issues relating to policy and practice in school and teacher education.

INTRODUCTION

This Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed as one of the main outputs of the Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project conducted by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion). Within this 3-year project – which involved over 55 national experts from 25 European countries – the following issues were considered:

- What kind of teachers are needed for an inclusive society in a 21st century school?

- What are the essential teacher competences for inclusive education?

The project focussed upon the education of mainstream, general teachers and how they are prepared via their initial teacher education (ITE) to work in inclusive settings. The main question for consideration in the project was: *how all teachers are prepared via their initial education to be 'inclusive'.*

A specific request coming from Agency country representatives was for concrete information on the necessary competences, attitudes, knowledge and skills required of all teachers working in inclusive settings. This document is a direct response to that request. It draws upon the range of information collected during the TE4I project including the international policy and research literature reviews, the country reports (http://www. european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion/country-info) and most importantly the findings and recommendations of the project synthesis report *Teacher Education for Inclusion across Europe – Challenges and Opportunities* (2011).

The Profile does not replicate work already being done in countries. Rather it is an attempt to realistically address a shared concern expressed by country representatives and to develop a tool at European level that is based on national level information and contributions. The Profile has been developed as a guide for the design and implementation of initial teacher education programmes. It is not a script for ITE content, but contains stimulus material for identifying relevant content, planning methods and specifying desired learning outcomes for the many forms of ITE that prepare mainstream class teachers.

Mainly, the Profile document draws upon various activities and discussions involving project experts and over 400 other stakeholders in education – professionals from a range of school and teacher education sectors; ITE and in-service student teachers; parents and families; and learners – who have collectively debated the competences that all teachers need to support their work in inclusive settings. (Please refer to the Methodology section for more details).

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers is ambitious. It draws upon all of the information generated during the TE4I project and presents a framework of ideas that has been debated and agreed upon at the European level to promote an ideal approach within ITE. The Profile has been developed as a practical document to support teacher education for inclusion initiatives in countries. The experts participating in the Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project all agree that a Profile of Inclusive Teachers is helpful and should be considered within initial teacher education programmes if greater inclusion is to be achieved across Europe.

The Profile presents information on *what* essential values and areas of competence should be developed within all ITE programmes. However, it does not attempt to describe *how* these areas of competence should be used within different country programmes for initial teacher education. Although some key issues relating to implementation are considered within a later section of this document, the Profile has been drafted as a tool to

be examined and developed in ways that specifically fit within the different context of each individual country's ITE system.

Specifically, the objectives for this Profile document are to:

1 - Identify a framework of core values and areas of competence that are applicable to any initial teacher education programme. These core values and areas of competence are not subject, age, education phase, or sector specific and they are not related to any education delivery route or method.

2 - Highlight the essential core values and areas of competence necessary for preparing all teachers to work in inclusive education considering all forms of diversity. These core values and areas of competence are to be developed during ITE, but then used as a foundation for further development within induction and later continuous professional development opportunities;

3 - Highlight key factors supporting the implementation of the proposed core values and areas of competence for inclusive education within all ITE programmes;

4 - Reinforce the argument made within the TE4I project that inclusive education is the responsibility of all teachers and that preparing all teachers for work in inclusive settings is the responsibility of all teacher educators working across ITE programmes.

TE4I as a goal for all ITE students was a key recommendation outlined in the project synthesis report; the Profile builds on this and the other findings presented in the synthesis report and links them to a framework of values and the areas of competence necessary for all teachers if they are to be effective in inclusive classrooms.

The main target audiences for this document are teacher educators and decision makers – managers and policy makers for ITE – who are in a position to influence policy for teacher education for inclusion and then initiate and implement changes in practice. These stakeholders for ITE are considered to be a critical target audience, as a further assertion of the TE4I project is that teacher education is a key leverage point for the wider systemic changes needed for inclusive education generally.

The OECD (2005) suggests that raising teacher quality is the policy initiative most likely to result in improved school performance. The TE4I project synthesis report (2011) suggests that this argument can be developed further – preparing teachers to respond to the diversity of needs they will face in today's classrooms is potentially the policy initiative most likely to impact on the development of more inclusive communities.

This document presents a starting point for stakeholders in ITE to use in different contexts in their countries. With this intention in mind, the Profile and supporting information outlined in this document are not presented in a usual research, or report format. The agreed Profile is presented in the next section, followed by sections outlining: discussions on factors supporting the implementation of the Profile; the conceptual framework for the Profile, including links with current European policy priorities; a section describing the methodology used for developing the Profile and finally some concluding remarks.

The intention is not for the Profile to be a final output from the TE4I project, but rather to be a document that will be a stimulus for discussion and a means to promote TE4I developments in countries.

To further support country discussions and development work:

1. The text on pages 10 to 17 of this document is non-copyright material and is intended for policy makers and practitioners to develop and modify as needed in order to meet a range of possible purposes. In the front cover of this document there is a separate

'removable' copy of the Profile that can be copied and modified as required, providing that a reference to the original source is given.

2. On the Agency website, full copies of this report in all Agency member countries' languages are available to download, as well as editable electronic versions of the Profile text: http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/teacher-education-for-inclusion/profile

PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

Four core values relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for the work of all teachers in inclusive education. These four core values are:

1. Valuing learner diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education;

2. Supporting all learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners' achievements;

3. Working with others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers;

4. Continuing personal professional development – teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their own lifelong learning.

In the following sections, these core values are presented along with the associated areas of teacher competence.

The areas of competence are made up of three elements: attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain *attitude* or belief demands certain *knowledge* or level of understanding and then *skills* in order to implement this knowledge in a practical situation. For each area of competence identified, the essential attitudes, knowledge and skills that underpin them are presented.

It is important to note that in order to ensure that all the important factors are accounted for, the areas of competence are presented here in a list. However, the factors are not in any hierarchical order and should not be viewed in isolation as they are all closely inter-connected and highly inter-dependent.

The areas of competence presented here are the most critical ones identified via the TE4I project discussions; they are not exhaustive. They should be seen as the foundation for specialist professional development routes and the starting point for discussions at different levels on the context specific areas of competence needed by all teachers working in different country situations.

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1. Valuing Learner Diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Conceptions of inclusive education;

- The teacher's view of learner difference.

1.1 Conceptions of inclusive education

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence are that…

… education is based upon a belief in equality, human rights and democracy for all learners;

… inclusive education is about societal reform and is non-negotiable;

… inclusive education and quality in education cannot be viewed as separate issues;

… access to mainstream education alone is not enough; participation means that all learners are engaged in learning activities that are meaningful for them.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… the theoretical and practical concepts and principles underpinning inclusive education within global and local contexts;

… the wider system of cultures and policies of educational institutions at all levels that impacts on inclusive education. The possible strengths and weaknesses of the educational system that they work in have to be acknowledged and understood by teachers;

… inclusive education is an approach for all learners, not just those who are perceived to have different needs and may be at risk of exclusion from educational opportunities;

… the language of inclusion and diversity and the implications of using different terminology to describe, label and categorise learners;

… inclusive education as the presence (access to education) participation (quality of the learning experience) and achievement (learning processes and outcomes) of all learners.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… critically examining one's own beliefs and attitudes and the impact these have on actions;

… engaging in ethical practice at all times and respecting confidentiality;

… the ability to deconstruct educational history to understand current situations and contexts;

…coping strategies that prepare teachers to challenge non-inclusive attitudes and to work in segregated situations;

… being empathetic to the diverse needs of learners;

… modelling respect in social relationships and using appropriate language with all learners and stakeholders in education.

1.2 The teacher's view of learner difference

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… it is 'normal to be different';

… learner diversity is to be respected, valued and understood as a resource that enhances learning opportunities and adds value to schools, local communities and society;

… all learner's voices should be heard and valued;

… the teacher is a key influence on a learners' self-esteem and, as a consequence, their learning potential;

… categorisation and labelling of learners can have a negative impact upon learning opportunities.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… learners can be used as a resource to facilitate learning about diversity for themselves and their peers;

... learners learn in different ways and these can be used to support their own learning and that of their peers;

… essential information about learner diversity (arising from support needs, culture, language, socio-economic background etc.);

… the school is a community and social environment that affects learners' self-esteem and learning potential;

… the school and classroom population is constantly changing; diversity cannot be seen as a static concept.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… learning how to learn from differences;

… identifying the most appropriate ways of responding to diversity in all situations;

… addressing diversity in curriculum implementation;

… using diversity in learning approaches and styles as a resource for teaching;

… contributing to building schools as learning communities that respect, encourage and celebrate all learners' achievements.

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2. Supporting All Learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners' achievements.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all learners;

- Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes.

2.1 Promoting the academic, social and emotional learning of all learners

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… learning is primarily a social activity;

… academic, practical, social and emotional learning are equally important for all learners;

… teachers' expectations are a key determinant of learner success and therefore high expectations for all learners are critical;

… all learners should be active decision-makers in their learning and any assessment processes they are involved in;

… parents and families are an essential resource for a learner's learning;

… developing autonomy and self determination in all learners is essential;

… the learning capacity and potential of each learner has to be discovered and stimulated.

The essential knowledge underpinning this area of competence includes …

… understanding the value of collaborative working with parents and families;

… typical and atypical child development patterns and pathways, particularly in relation to social and communication skill development;

... different models of learning and approaches to learning learners may take.

The crucial skills to be developed within this area of competence include …

… being an effective verbal and non-verbal communicator who can respond to the varied communication needs of learners, parents and other professionals;

… supporting the development of learners' communication skills and possibilities;

… assessing and then developing 'learning to learn skills' in learners;

… developing independent and autonomous learners;

… facilitating co-operative learning approaches;

… implementing positive behaviour management approaches that support learner's social development and interactions;

… facilitating learning situations where learners can 'take risks' and even fail in a safe environment;

… using assessment for learning approaches that take account of social and emotional as well as academic learning.

2.2 Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… effective teachers are teachers of all learners;

… teachers take responsibility for facilitating the learning of all learners in a class;

… learners' abilities are not fixed; all learners have the capacity to learn and develop;

… learning is a process and the goal for all learners is the development of 'learning to learn' skills, not just content/subject knowledge;

… the learning process is essentially the same for all learners – there are very few 'special techniques';

… on some occasions, particular learning difficulties require responses based upon adaptations to the curriculum and teaching approaches.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… theoretical knowledge on the way learners learn and models of teaching that support the learning process;

… positive behaviour and classroom management approaches;

… managing the physical and social environment of the classroom to support learning;

… ways of identifying and then addressing different barriers to learning and the implications of these for teaching approaches;

… the development of basic skills – in particular key competences – along with associated teaching and assessment approaches;

… assessment for learning methods focussed upon identifying the strengths of a learner;

… differentiation of curriculum content, learning process and learning materials to include learners and meet diverse needs;

… personalised learning approaches for all learners that support learners to develop autonomy in their learning;

… the development, implementation and effective review of Individual Education Plans (IEP) or similar individualised learning programmes when appropriate.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… employing classroom leadership skills that involve systematic approaches to positive classroom management;

… working with individual learners as well as heterogeneous groups;

… using the curriculum as a tool for inclusion that supports access to learning;

… addressing diversity issues in curriculum development processes;

… differentiating methods, content and outcomes for learning;

… working with learners and their families to personalise learning and target setting;

… facilitating co-operative learning where learners help each other in different ways – including peer tutoring – within flexible learner groupings;

… using a range of teaching methods and approaches in systematic ways;

… employing ICT and adaptive technology to support flexible approaches to learning;

… using approaches to teaching that are evidence based to achieve learning goals, alternative routes for learning, flexible instruction and the use of clear feedback to learners;

… using formative and summative assessment that supports learning and does not label or lead to negative consequences for learners;

… engaging in collaborative problem solving with learners;

… drawing on a range of verbal and non-verbal communication skills to facilitate learning.

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3. Working With Others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Working with parents and families;

- Working with a range of other educational professionals.

3.1 Working with parents and families

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… awareness of the added value of working collaboratively with parents and families;

… respect for the cultural and social backgrounds and perspectives of parents and families;

… viewing effective communication and collaboration with parents and families as a teacher's responsibility.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… inclusive teaching as based on a collaborative working approach;

… the importance of positive inter-personal skills;

… the impact of inter-personal relationships on the achievement of learning goals.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… effectively engaging parents and families in supporting their child's learning;

… communicating effectively with parents and family members of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and social backgrounds.

3.2 Working with a range of other educational professionals

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… inclusive education requires all teachers to work in teams;

… collaboration, partnerships and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers and should be welcomed;

… collaborative teamwork supports professional learning with and from other professionals.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… the value and benefits of collaborative work with other teachers and educational professionals;

… support systems and structures available for further help, input and advice;

… multi-agency working models where teachers in inclusive classrooms co-operate with other experts and staff from a range of different disciplines;

… collaborative teaching approaches where teachers take a team approach involving learners themselves, parents, peers, other school teachers and support staff, as well as multi-disciplinary team members as appropriate;

… the language/terminology and basic working concepts and perspectives of other professionals involved in education;

… the power relationships that exist between different stakeholders that have to be acknowledged and effectively dealt with.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… implementing classroom leadership and management skills that facilitate effective multi-agency working;

… co-teaching and working in flexible teaching teams;

… working as part of a school community and drawing on the support of school internal and external resources;

… building a class community that is part of a wider school community;

… contributing to whole school evaluation, review and development processes;

… collaboratively problem solving with other professionals;

… contributing to wider school partnerships with other schools, community organisations and other educational organisations;

… drawing on a range of verbal and non-verbal communication skills to facilitate working co-operatively with other professionals.

4. Personal Professional Development – teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Teachers as reflective practitioners;

development.

4.1 Teachers as reflective practitioners

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… teaching is a problem solving activity that requires on-going and systematic planning, evaluation, reflection and then modified action;

… reflective practice facilitates teachers to work effectively with parents as well as in teams with other teachers and professionals working within and outside of the school;

… the importance of evidence-based practice to guide a teacher's work;

… valuing the importance of developing a personal pedagogy to guide a teacher's work.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… personal meta-cognitive, learning to learn skills;

… what makes a reflective practitioner and how personal reflection on and in action can be developed;

… methods and strategies for evaluating one's own work and performance;

… action research methods and the relevance for teachers' work;

… the development of personal strategies for problem solving.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… systematically evaluating one's own performance;

… effectively involving others in reflecting upon teaching and learning;

… contributing to the development of the school as a learning community.

4.2 Initial teacher education as a foundation for ongoing professional learning and development

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include …

… teachers have a responsibility for their own continuous professional development;

… initial teacher education is the first step in teachers' professional lifelong learning;

… teaching is a learning activity; being open to learning new skills and actively asking for information and advice is a good thing, not a weakness;

… a teacher cannot be an expert in all questions related to inclusive education. Basic knowledge for those beginning in inclusive education is crucial, but continuous learning is essential;

... change and development is constant in inclusive education and teachers need the skills to manage and respond to changing needs and demands throughout their careers.

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes …

… the educational law and the legal context they work within and their responsibilities and duties towards learners, their families, colleagues and the teaching profession within that legal context;

… possibilities, opportunities and routes for further, in-service teacher education, in order to develop knowledge and skills to enhance their inclusive practice.

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include …

… flexibility in teaching strategies that promote innovation and personal learning;

… employing time management strategies that will accommodate possibilities for pursuing in-service development opportunities;

… being open to and proactive in using colleagues and other professionals as sources of learning and inspiration;

… contributing to the whole school community learning and development processes.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROFILE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

General Principles

The following statements outline the agreed general principles underpinning the core values and areas of competence proposed within the Profile of Inclusive Teachers.

1 - The values and areas of competence for working in inclusive education are necessary for all teachers, just as inclusive education is the responsibility of all teachers.

2 - The values and areas of competence for inclusive education provide teachers with the foundations they need to work with learners with a diverse range of needs within a mainstream classroom. This is an important distinction that shifts the focus of inclusion beyond meeting the needs of specific groups of learners (e.g. those with special educational needs). The values and areas of competence reinforce the critical message that inclusive education is an approach for all learners, not just an approach for particular groups with particular needs.

3 - The values and areas of competence identified for ITE in this document are the foundation of key attitudes, knowledge and skills that need to be built upon during induction and further teacher education opportunities. Areas of competence are an integral part of a continuum of professional development opportunities, offered through clear progression routes including specialist special needs education (SNE) courses. These areas of competence should be continuously developed during every teacher's professional career.

4 - The values and areas of competence that all teachers need to work in inclusive settings are not in contradiction to the specialist education and training for SNE teachers who may support mainstream teachers in their work. These values and areas of competence are the foundations for all teachers' work – generalists and specialists.

5 - The values and areas of competence described in this Profile are deliberately broad to support the development of teachers as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners through experiential learning and action-based research.

6 - The values and areas of competence can support the professional development of student teachers and be a source of guidance for teacher educators' work.

7 - The values and areas of competence for inclusive education should be seen as one starting point for ITE course design/planning. The principle of inclusive education as a systemic approach should apply to ITE as well as school based curricula.

8 - The integration of the values and areas of competence for inclusive education within ITE needs to be debated with a wide range of stakeholders within different national situations and contexts. Through such dialogue, the areas of competence can potentially be a mechanism for reducing the disconnection that is seen to exist between classroom teachers and other stakeholders in education.

Use of the Profile

A clear agreement within the TE4I project work has been that the goal of ITE should be seen as:

- Developing the ability of new teachers to be more inclusive in their practice;
- Developing new teachers who are effective in their teaching, as well as experts in subject content.

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed to support this aim for all ITE programmes. The core values and areas of competence are all transversal – they do not have a sector or subject focus. Similarly, the core values and areas of competence do not lend themselves to one programme delivery method over another.

Primarily, the Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed as a guide for the design and implementation of initial teacher education programmes for all teachers. It is not a script for ITE content, but rather should be considered as stimulus material for identifying relevant content, planning methods and specifying desired learning outcomes for ITE.

This intended use has been discussed and agreed upon by the experts involved in the TE4I project. However, discussions between the various stakeholders involved in the project activities have indicated that the Profile could also potentially be of use in other scenarios. Suggestions for other uses of the Profile highlighted in project discussions include:

- For student teachers, the Profile could be a tool for self-reflection. In particular, the Profile may serve as a starting point for overcoming personal experiences of exclusion in schools, highlighting important attitudes, knowledge areas and skills that student teachers need to critically reflect upon in order to challenge the stereotypes they may hold;

- For teacher educators, the Profile could be a discussion tool to be used in the de-construction and re-construction of mindsets about learners and inclusive education as an approach for all learners. The Profile can also act as a guide for teacher educators' own work with students with a diverse range of needs;

- For practising teachers, the Profile could be used as a guide for identifying personal priorities for continuous professional development activities;

- For school leaders, the Profile could be viewed as a guide for teacher induction and longer term continuing professional development linked to whole school development processes;

- For educational employers, the Profile could provide guidance for recruitment, identifying those professionals who are suitably prepared to work in schools. The Profile could also potentially illuminate priorities for initial and longer-term professional development of other professionals working in schools (for example educational psychologists and counsellors).

This final suggestion reflects a recurring issue raised by many stakeholders in the project work – the core values proposed in the Profile in particular are not only critical for all teachers, they are also essential for the work of school leaders, teacher educators, other educational professionals and decision makers.

Factors supporting the implementation of the Profile

During the three years of project activities, many barriers to implementing teacher education for inclusion have been identified and discussed. However, it is clear from work already ongoing in countries that innovative approaches that provide solutions to potential barriers do exist. As a result of considering such innovative practice and also drawing on the specific discussions with stakeholders about the Profile of Inclusive Teachers, a number of key factors that support its implementation have been identified. These factors do not only cover the possible use of the Profile within initial teacher education programmes, but also wider issues relating to policy and practice in schools and teacher education.

In the following sections, these key supporting factors are directly linked to the framework of eight areas of recommendations for ITE presented in the TE4I project synthesis report

(please see http://www.european-agency.org/publications/ereports/te4i-challenges-and-opportunities/te4i-challenges-and-opportunities for more details).

The project recommendations clearly indicate the priority areas for future developments in ITE across Europe. The factors identified by project stakeholders as being crucial for supporting the implementation of the Profile, can also be considered as factors that go some way to addressing the key recommendations made in the synthesis report.

1. Factors relating to teacher education

1.1 Recruitment of ITE teacher candidates

- Valuing student teacher diversity should be a core value reflected in the policy and work of teacher education institutions;

- The apparent homogeneity of the backgrounds of students in ITE should be considered. ITE entry requirements and recruitment strategies require careful review if student diversity issues are to be addressed. Flexible routes into teaching, aimed at attracting teacher candidates from diverse backgrounds with a range of cultural and social experiences should be developed. In particular, routes into teaching that support the recruitment of students with disabilities (as described in the UNCRPD 2006) should be considered.

1.2 ITE programmes

- A key goal for ITE should be to help student teachers develop their own personal pedagogical theory based on critical thinking and analytical skills that are consistent with the knowledge, skills and values reflected in the competences. They should also develop an appreciation of the teacher's wider role in relation to the school as a learning community.

- The cultural norms and values that student teachers bring to their ITE should be viewed as the necessary starting point for knowledge and skill acquisition. Initial teacher education should build upon students' previous experiences of inclusion and where necessary, break the cycle of personal experience of segregated education. There is a need for activities that challenge stereotypes of all kinds and develop sensitivity based on a deep understanding of issues surrounding diversity and the ability to apply this understanding in action.

- Student teachers require first hand experience of working with learners with different needs and teachers who are skilled at working in inclusive settings. Student teachers need to see theory in practice during school based professional development opportunities and have opportunities for placements in inclusive settings.

- The move away from a view of the school curriculum as being subject based, towards cross-curricular teaching and learning approaches needs to be mirrored in ITE. The curriculum for ITE should be based upon a model of the infusion of inclusive practice into all content areas and subjects. Such a curriculum needs to:

- Be balanced with specialist inputs considering the particular learning needs of individuals and groups likely to be excluded from mainstream education;

- Challenge student teachers by allowing them to experience barriers to learning, as well as opportunities for success during real life problem solving situations.

- There is a need to aim for 'values in action' in ITE where the core values and areas of competence are demonstrated by student teachers in different aspects of their studies and teaching practice. The assessment of core values and areas of competence essentially requires an assessment for learning approach in ITE. In particular the attitudes, knowledge

and skills within the areas of competence should be evidenced in different ways and through different assessment methods, such as self-assessment, joint assessment between the student, their peers, mentors and tutors, as well as portfolios of evidence.

1.3 The work of teacher educators

- The core values and areas of competence described in the Profile of Inclusive Teachers are applicable to the work of all ITE teacher educators. Teacher educators need to model the core values and areas of competence in their work with students. In particular they need to demonstrate how to value diversity and effectively support students' learning using a range of teaching and assessment approaches. They also need to implement co-operative work with school-based staff as well as with teacher educators from other disciplines and/or subjects.

- Teacher educators need to view themselves as lifelong learners. They need to be active and supported to pursue continuous professional development opportunities in their career that enhance their work as inclusive teacher educators.

- In order to effectively support students to become inclusive teachers, all teacher educators also must engage with the knowledge, skills and values reflected in the competences, particularly in cases where they do not have direct experience of working with learners with different needs. Ideally, professional development opportunities for teacher educators should include awareness-raising activities focussing upon diversity issues. However, direct inputs and experience of work in inclusive education may also be necessary if all teacher educators are to effectively model the core vales and areas of competence outlined in the Profile and be able to effectively communicate to students the what, how and why of teaching learners with diverse needs.

1.4 Collaboration between schools and teacher education institutions

- In order for student teachers to access the necessary range of practical experiences in schools, structures and resources in teacher education institutions need to facilitate teamwork between teacher educators and professionals from a range of different schools, as well as the wider community.

- The different roles of Higher Education Institution (HEI) and school-based mentors/teachers who model inclusive practice with students on placement also require consideration. To support student teachers appropriately in a range of settings and help them to contribute to a variety of school community activities (not just classroom teaching), school based staff should use the approach advocated within the Profile of Inclusive Teachers. This will require that they themselves have professional development opportunities.

2. Factors relating to policy for teacher and inclusive education

2.1 A systemic approach

- The role of teachers in making inclusive education happen in the classroom is crucial. However, the inclusive teacher is not the only component in developing inclusive schools and their role is part of a wider systemic approach. Such an approach focuses upon ensuring learners' rights, as well as establishing the support structures and resources that facilitate the implementation of those rights at all educational levels.

- Regional and national level policy makers have a crucial role in outlining a vision for inclusive education that is then transferred into co-ordinated policy frameworks for schools and for teacher education. All teacher education and school policies should be developed using evidence-based research. These policies should be aligned and cross-referenced in order to be mutually supportive and work to the same goals.

- Institutional policy for ITE should be guided by a clear vision of HEIs as inclusive learning organisations. The role of senior managers in formulating, communicating and then implementing such a vision is crucial. Institutional policy needs to promote an embedded approach to inclusive education within all programmes. Inclusive education needs to be transversal across subjects and sectors and, as a result, policy for ITE needs to take into account the implications upon other transversal issues, such as the recruitment and professional development of teacher educators.

- Homogeneity within the teacher education workforce requires a similar level of consideration as that of homogeneity in the student population. ITE students require role models – teacher educators and decision makers – who reflect the diversity of society. Recruitment strategies in HEIs should consider the need to reflect the diversity of local community membership.

- Teacher educators need opportunities for professional development – including induction, mentoring and ongoing CPD – that support their work as inclusive teacher educators who model the core vales and areas of competence outlined in the Profile.

2.2 Clarification of language and terminology

- Shared definitions and understandings regarding key concepts for inclusive education are needed to support its implementation. Collaboration between different stakeholders in inclusive education can be facilitated by using the shared concepts that underpin the core values and areas of competence in the Profile of Inclusive Teachers.

- Inclusive education should be seen as an approach for all learners. The focus of teachers' work should be upon overcoming barriers to learning for all learners. This involves a move away from seeing inclusion as an approach for a minority of learners, based on identification of their differences, or a consideration of labels that may have negative consequences for learning.

2.3 A continuum of support for teachers

- The implementation of inclusive education should be seen as a collective task, with different stakeholders each having roles and responsibilities to fulfil. The support that classroom teachers need to fulfil their roles includes access to structures that facilitate communication and team working with a range of different professionals (including those working in HEIs), as well as ongoing professional development opportunities.

- The core values and areas of competence should be viewed as a guide for ongoing teacher education and professional development opportunities. Induction and school based mentoring, continuing professional development (CPD) and specialised education progression routes should be aligned with the core values promoted during initial teacher education. The areas of competence outlined in the Profile should be considered within a spiral learning approach, to be revisited during further professional development activities and reconsidered at increasingly deeper levels of learning and understanding.

- Professional development opportunities for practising teachers who have not worked in inclusive education should also be guided by the core values and areas of competence outlined in the Profile.

- Professional development opportunities for school leaders should be guided by principles for inclusive education linked to the core values presented in the Profile. School leaders' attitudes and beliefs about inclusion are critical in determining how far the organisational culture within schools is aligned with the core values outlined in the Profile.

2.4 Accountability measures aligned with inclusive principles

- Teachers and teacher educators need to work within organisations – schools and teacher education institutions – that are learning communities. Such learning communities will value them as professionals and support their work via a clear vision and shared culture that promotes inclusive education at all levels.

- All school and teacher education institution development processes should examine organisational policy and practice in relation to inclusion. Through transparent quality management procedures, teachers and teacher educators should be supported to make contributions to the evaluation and development of organisational working practices that support shared values of learning in inclusive environments.

- Accountability measures and processes should recognise the work of teachers and teacher educators with all learners. Such measures should take into account the diverse range of possible learning achievements and not focus on limited interpretations of academic success.

Final comments

The factors supporting the implementation of the Profile presented here are not exhaustive. They are relevant to all contexts and situations and there is a need to explore the implications of implementing the Profile in more detail within country contexts. However, a summary of the proposals agreed upon by the project experts and stakeholders as a result of project discussions will be made here.

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers describes the core values and areas of competence that teachers working in schools, as well as those who prepare them, should demonstrate in their work with learners. An inclusive teacher's work also needs to be supported by other educational professionals, school culture and organisation and a policy framework for education that together, all facilitate inclusion. Such a model must be clearly reflected in ITE, and ideally form part of a clear progression route through CPD opportunities that are considered to be central aspects of lifelong learning.

CONCEPTUAL BASIS FOR THE PROFILE

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers developed within the Teacher Education for Inclusion project presents the core values and agreed areas of competence needed for all teachers to enable them to work in inclusive education. Three parameters were used to guide the development of the profile:

1 - Inclusion is essentially a principled, rights-based approach to education underpinned by a number of central values;

2 - There are practical and conceptual difficulties in focussing upon isolated competences for teaching in inclusive education and for the Profile to be relevant for different countries and stakeholders, a broad approach to the idea of using competences was needed;

3 - The political priorities and effects of social policies within individual countries cannot be ignored, but there is a framework of international and EU level policy that all countries subscribe to that impacts upon inclusive education and teacher education.

Each of these parameters is described in the following sections as they provide the essential conceptual basis for the Profile of Inclusive teachers.

A values based approach to inclusive education

Within the Europe 2020 Strategy (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm) one of the five headline targets, relates to education. This target clearly stresses the importance of values in European education systems: 'In the period up to 2020, the primary goal of European cooperation should be to support the further development of education and training systems in the Member States which are aimed at ensuring:

a) the personal, social and professional fulfilment of all citizens;

b) sustainable economic prosperity and employability, whilst promoting democratic values, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue.' (Council Conclusions, 2009, p. 3).

The ET 2020 Strategic Framework sets out four strategic objectives for education and training in the coming decade. Strategic objective 3 focuses upon: Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship – within this objective, the importance of values is highlighted: 'Education should promote intercultural competences, democratic values and respect for fundamental rights and the environment, as well as combat all forms of discrimination, equipping all young people to interact positively with their peers from diverse backgrounds.' (p. 4).

In the report on the 2008 International Conference on Inclusive Education, it is argued that: 'Inclusive education is based on a series of conceptions and values regarding the type of society to be built and the ideal person to be developed. If we want to have more inclusive societies, which are more peaceful and respectful of differences, it is essential that students have the opportunity to develop and experience these values in their education, whether in schools or non-formal settings.' (p. 11).

It can be seen that thinking has moved on beyond the narrow idea of inclusion as a means of understanding and overcoming a deficit and it is now widely accepted that it concerns issues of gender, ethnicity, class, social conditions, health and human rights encompassing universal involvement, access, participation and achievement (Ouane, 2008).

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) emphasises that people with disabilities have a right to education. It goes further outlining: 'States

Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realising this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to: The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;' (p. 17).

However, UNESCO and UNICEF (2007) argue that: 'The right to education requires a commitment to ensuring universal access, including taking all necessary measures to reach the most marginalized children. But getting children into schools is not enough; it is no guarantee of an education that enables individuals to achieve their economic and social objectives and to acquire the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that bring about responsible and active citizenship.' (p. 27)

Rights-based, inclusive education for all learners needs a holistic approach and this requires a view of teachers as more than deliverers of content. UNESCO (2008) states that: 'Applying a rights-based approach to education in order to move towards inclusion will require comprehensive school system reform including modification of constitutional guarantees and policies, curricula, teacher training systems, materials, learning environments, methodologies, resource allocation, etc. Above all, it will require a change in attitudes of all people, throughout the system, to welcome diversity and difference and see these as opportunities rather than problems.' (p. 29).

Inclusive education is an over-arching concept impacting on different policies and implementation approaches in compulsory, higher and teacher education. The goals of inclusive education are achieved within settings and systems that value everyone equally and see schools as community resources. Inclusive education is concerned with all learners and is aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of an individual in learning opportunities and reducing their exclusion from education and wider society.

In summary, inclusive education is essentially a principled, rights-based approach underpinned by a number of central values: equality, participation, developing and sustaining communities and respect for diversity. The values a teacher holds are an essential determinant of their actions. The *World Report on Disability* (2011) suggests that: 'The appropriate training of mainstream teachers is crucial if they are to be confident and competent in teaching children with diverse needs.' (p. 222). The report clearly emphasises the need for this training to be focussed upon attitudes and values, not just knowledge and skills.

The 2011 Peer Learning Activity centred upon Teacher Professional Development (2011) suggests that 'not every aspect of teaching can be fully described or defined; aspects such as the teacher's professional values, dispositions and attitudes can be as important as more measurable and quantifiable aspects.' (p. 7). The report suggests that across Europe: 'Components of teacher competences often include: knowledge, skills and values.' (p. 10).

The necessary starting point for exploring teachers' competences for inclusive education was therefore agreed to be core values. The four core values regarding teaching and learning for all learners identified within the TE4I project – valuing learner diversity, supporting all learners, working with others and personal professional development – are the foundation for all teachers to acquire knowledge, develop understanding and implement the skills necessary for working in inclusive education.

Within the project it is argued that these core values:

- Are principles that can be evidenced in a teacher's actions;

- Become 'theory enriched practical knowledge' as a result of the learning opportunities presented during teacher education courses.

Areas of competence as the approach taken

The core values identified as critical for all teachers working in inclusive education have been used as the basis for identifying the essential competences that all teachers require for working in inclusive education. The project focus upon teacher competences was requested by Agency country representatives and is supported by work at national and international levels.

At the international level, the 2005 OECD report *Teaching Matters* identifies: *a range of personal competencies that make a difference to the quality and effectiveness of teaching* (p. 100). The potential competences identified focus upon subject knowledge and a range of transversal skills (such as communication, self-management, organisational and problem-solving skills).

The majority of the countries participating in the project are considering teacher competences at either HEI or national policy level. A summary of the use of competences on ITE is presented in Annex 1. (This information is summarised from the project country reports and is available from: http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/teacher-education-for-inclusion/country-info)

However, it should be acknowledged that the understanding of competences and/or their application in ITE in general differs greatly across countries. Within the project, it was the case that different countries not only identified different essential competences for teachers, but also interpreted the term competences in different ways.

Within the TE4I project synthesis report it is proposed that: *the terms 'competences' and 'standards' are not inter-changeable* and as a result of project discussions, the following definitions have been agreed with experts for use within the TE4I project:

Standards generally refer to a set of measures against which student teachers/teachers/teacher education courses can be evaluated – the summative outcomes at the end of a programme of study.

Competences are seen as developing over time with ITE students and teachers demonstrating progressive mastery in a range of settings and situations. As such, they form both the foundation for ITE and the basis for continuing professional development. (TE4I project synthesis report, 2011, p46).

During project debates, country experts all agreed that there are practical and conceptual difficulties in focussing upon 'isolated competences for teaching' and stressed the need for caution against:

-   Repeating work already done in participating countries in identifying and cataloguing specific competences for particular contexts;

-   Developing an over simplistic profile of teachers' competences that could be interpreted as mechanistic;

-   Proposing a prescriptive tool that could not be considered within and used as a basis for taking forward national level work in this area.

The model developed and used in the Profile of Inclusive Teachers is therefore based upon the notion of multi-faceted 'areas of competence'.

The areas of competence linked to the core values for inclusive education outlined in this profile are each made up of three elements:

- Attitudes and beliefs;

- Knowledge and understanding;

- Skills and abilities.

A certain *attitude* or belief demands certain *knowledge* or level of understanding and then *skills* in order to implement this knowledge in a practical situation. For each area of competence identified, the essential attitudes, knowledge and skills that underpin them are presented.

This approach builds upon the work of Ryan (2009) who describes attitudes as 'multidimensional traits', but most importantly Shulman (2007) who describes professional learning in terms of the apprenticeships of the head (knowledge), hand (skill, or doing), and heart (attitudes and beliefs).

Very importantly, the approach taken is in line with the views of a number of school-aged learners taking part in the 2011 country study visits. The young people were asked their views on 'what makes a good teacher' and 'what do good teachers do that actually helps you to learn?'

Their responses indicated their perceptions of the importance of global teaching abilities. Their replies included phrases such as good teachers being 'kind' and having 'a sense of humour'; they 'explain things well' and 'organise a lot of activities' including 'letting us work in groups'. They 'give us feedback', but most of all teachers 'make learning fun and interesting!'

On one level these appear to be extremely simple ideas, but they convey a powerful and complex message for everyone involved in teacher education for inclusion – teaching cannot be broken down into a checklist of demonstrable skills, or knowledge that can be easily assessed via summative examinations.

The areas of competence presented in the Profile cover all aspects of a teacher's work that are considered within country work focussing upon competences – teaching, co-operation with others, school level and system level competences. However, the presentation of the areas of competence is based upon the agreed four core values for inclusive education, with each area of competence being seen as inter-connected and highly inter-dependent.

Links to European policy priorities for school and teacher education

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers links directly to three areas of European level policy initiatives: firstly, key competences for lifelong learning; secondly, competency approaches within higher education; finally improving teacher education policy.

The key competences needed by all citizens within a context of lifelong learning are described in the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18th December 2006. Eight key competences are identified:

1. Communication in the mother tongue;

2. Communication in foreign languages;

3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;

4. Digital competence;

5. Learning to learn;

6. Social and civic competences;

7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and

8. Cultural awareness and expression.

The relevance of these eight key competences for all learners is highlighted within Strategic objective 3 of the ET 2020 Strategic Framework, which argues that: 'Education and training policy should enable all citizens, irrespective of their personal, social or economic circumstances, to acquire, update and develop over a lifetime both job-specific skills and the key competences needed for their employability and to foster further learning, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue.' (p4).

The development of key competences during school education is closely linked with the use of competency-based approaches in higher education. Within the Bologna process work, the report from the Joint Quality Initiative informal group, December 2003, supported not only an outcomes based approach to higher education, but recommended a competency based approach where learners: '… can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study' (p. 33).

This is supported by Sjur and Radu (2010) who in a Council of Europe report argue that developing learners' competence should be seen as part of the mission of higher education – with the competences to be developed depending upon what is considered to be the purposes of higher education. They suggest that 'converging competences' highlight the need to educate the whole person; education should be seen as being about acquiring knowledge and skills, but also about acquiring values and attitudes.

A number of implications for teacher education are apparent: student teachers should be educated using a competency based approach, as this is likely to make their ITE more effective, and prepare them to develop competence based learning with all learners in their classrooms. As the TE4I project synthesis report (2011) suggests: 'New teachers must understand the complexities of teaching and learning and the many factors that affect them. They should recognise that all learners should be actively involved in making sense of their learning, rather than passive consumers of tightly prescribed curriculum content.' (p. 68).

Three recent Council Conclusions – from 2007, 2008 and 2009 – have identified priorities for improving teacher education as defined by the Ministers of Education in member states. These have been summarised within the document *Improving Teacher Quality: the European Union Policy Agenda*, prepared by Paul Holdsworth, European Commission, DG-Education and Culture, in 2010 as a contribution to the Teacher Education for Inclusion project debates.

The full document is presented in Annex 2. 10 priority policy areas can be identified in these three sets of Council Conclusions:

1. Promote professional values and attitudes;

2. Improve teacher competences;

3. Effective recruitment and selection to promote educational quality;

4. Improve the quality of Initial Teacher Education;

5. Introduce Induction programmes for all new teachers;

6. Provide mentoring support to all teachers;

7. Improve quality and quantity of Continuing Professional Development;

8. School Leadership;

9. Ensure the quality of Teacher Educators;

10. Improve Teacher Education Systems.

During the country study visits in 2010, this document was discussed in relation to the proposed Profile with all project experts. These discussions concluded that the Profile can be seen to link with EU policy priorities for improving the quality of ITE, promoting professional values and attitudes and improving teacher competences. However, three further points need to be made:

- The core values for inclusive education outlined in the Profile of Inclusive Teachers underpin all of these policy priorities;

- The areas of competence outlined in the Profile of Inclusive Teachers link with all of these policy priorities in one way or another and there are no contradictions.

- The Profile of Inclusive Teachers identifies other priorities that may need to be accounted for in European level policy initiatives for teacher education – most importantly inclusive education as a human rights issue and inclusive education as an approach to support all learners.

The argument that the core values and areas of competences described in the Profile of Inclusive Teachers are beneficial for all learners, not just those at risk of exclusion, is supported by the Council Conclusions on the Social Dimension of Education and Training (2010): 'Creating the conditions required for the successful inclusion of pupils with special needs in mainstream settings benefits all learners. Increasing the use of personalised approaches, including individualised learning plans and harnessing assessment to support the learning process, providing teachers with skills to manage and benefit from diversity, promoting the use of co-operative teaching and learning, and widening access and participation, are ways of increasing quality for all.' (p. 5)

METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING THE PROFILE

Within the project activities over the 3-year period, a number of tasks were completed in relation to the development of the Profile document. These main activities are described in full in this section in order to:

- Accurately document the steps taken in developing the Profile framework and content;

- Acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the nominated project experts, 14 country study visit host teams and over 400 representatives of stakeholder groups to the preparation of the Profile presented in this document.

This section therefore provides descriptive information summarising the process of developing the Profile.

In late 2009, an initial paper was drafted by the Agency staff team as a stimulus for discussions with country project experts. The paper outlined a number of key statements and ideas regarding teacher competences for inclusive initial teacher education and was based on a review of relevant research and policy background information as well as inputs from the Project Advisory Group.

A series of country study visits were scheduled for 2010 and 2011. All participating countries were invited to submit proposals to host visits that would address key themes of the TE4I project. The country submissions were then considered by the Project Advisory Group and project staff team and visits scheduled in accordance with pre-determined criteria. These included the relevance of the theme proposed, possibilities to explore different approaches to initial teacher education and a balanced geographic representation of countries.

During the five country study visits that took place during Spring 2010, the draft Profile document was discussed together with specific issues relating to the use of competency based approaches that had been identified by the country host teams as key themes for the visits. The visits and key themes were:

Belfast, UK (Northern Ireland): examining the Northern Ireland Teacher Competences to develop inclusive practitioners and considering the wider potential implications for the mainstream education system that need to be considered for teachers to use / implement these competences in the best way.

Porto, Portugal: exploring how a profile of competences can help support the development of the attitudes and values as well as knowledge and skills necessary for inclusive education.

Eger, Hungary: considering the content areas needed within a competence profile, then specifically considering what form of initial training is needed to develop the knowledge and skills in such a profile.

Borås, Sweden: examining how teacher educators must all ensure students are prepared to be inclusive teachers; specifically how teacher educators can work in inclusive ways so as to model inclusive practice for their students.

Utrecht, Netherlands: exploring how competence profiles fit in with developing policy initiatives for inclusive education. Specifically, exploring what policy frameworks for teacher education as well as inclusive education are needed for such a profile to be implemented.

Information on all of the 2010 visits is available from: http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/teacher-education-for-inclusion

All five of the meetings included the following activities:

- Presentations from the host country team on the chosen topic/aspect as well as examples of practice from their country;

- Short presentations from each of the project experts on this issue for the study visit from their own country perspective;

- Interactive discussions with project experts and different stakeholders from the country;

- Closed discussion sessions for project experts to consider the essential messages for the development of the Profile document.

In addition to the country project experts, over 100 education professionals – including policy makers, teacher educators, students, school staff, specialist support staff and community group representatives – participated in activities during the five visits.

As well as important reflections on the necessary content for the Profile document, the key messages emerging from the five visits focussed upon:

- The fact that competences cannot be viewed as a checklist to be 'worked' through;

- The crucial role of underlying values and attitudes towards education generally and inclusive education specifically that must be accounted for in ITE.

On the basis of the 2010 country study visits, a revised and extended document was presented for discussion at the full project meeting in Zürich in Autumn 2010. This revised document was significantly different from the previous version in two ways. Firstly, it was proposed that the Profile content should be centred upon *core values* for all teachers' work (three were presented at that time). Secondly, it was suggested that rather than presenting discrete competences, *areas of competence* would be proposed, comprised of three elements – attitudes, knowledge and skills.

These developments were agreed upon by all project experts and using their detailed feedback on the specific content of the document, a re-worked Profile was drafted. This version centred upon a framework of four core values along with a number of specific areas of competence underpinning each value.

This further draft then formed the basis of a series of 'validation' activities in countries during the nine country study visits held in 2011. Within the project activities, validation was understood to refer to stakeholder agreement on the proposed framework of values and areas of competence as well as specific content of the Profile document.

The visits were held in *Nicosia (Cyprus), Valletta (Malta)* and *Stavanger (Norway)* during March; *Riga (Latvia)* and *Rovaniemi (Finland)* during April; and *London (UK, England)*, Pontevedra *(Spain), Esbjerg (Denmark)* and *Linz (Austria)* during May 2011.

Information on all of the 2011 visits is available from: http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion/country-study-visits

In preparation for discussions during the visits, all participants (including country stakeholders) were provided with copies of the draft Profile document – either in full or in summary format – before the meetings. In addition, all project experts were asked to present their own country view of competence approaches; to outline to what extent such approaches are reflected in the initial teacher education curricula and to highlight particular issues that were relevant to the discussions on the Profile document.

As the main goal of the 2011 country visits was to collect feedback from a range of different stakeholders in teacher education on the content and potential usefulness of the Profile of Inclusive teachers, during each of the visits the country host teams organised a

range of activities involving different stakeholder group representatives. These activities included: visits to and observations in schools and classes; visits to teacher education institutions and observations of ITE classes and presentations about country policy and practice for ITE.

Most importantly, in all visits there were a series of different discussion activities between the visiting project experts and country stakeholders in ITE regarding the Profile – its content and potential usefulness. These discussions were highly interactive and took the form of focus groups where stakeholders were encouraged to provide their feedback and the project experts and staff team acted as 'recorders' of their feedback.

These discussion activities ranged from conversations with small groups, to large plenary debates with audiences of over 50 stakeholder group representatives.

In addition to the country project experts, over 300 participants were involved in the nine visits. These included:

- Learners (both with and without special educational needs), their parents and family members;

- Local community representatives;

- Class teachers, school leaders, specialist teachers and support staff;

- Multi disciplinary team members (including school psychologists, social workers and health care professionals);

- School inspectors, local area administrators and policy makers;

- Newly qualified teachers;

- Student teachers – studying both ITE and in-service education programmes;

- Teacher educators working in inclusive, special needs and subject based programmes;

- Teacher education institution senior managers (rectors, deans, heads of departments and faculties);

- National level policy makers for inclusive education and teacher education.

A number of important elements were incorporated into the 2011 country study visits that supported the validation of the profile document and the full range of stakeholders were involved in the meetings and discussions. Also, for all visits a 'template' for collecting feedback on the Profile was completed by all project experts and some key stakeholder participants. This template is presented in Annex 3 on page 41.

In addition, the visits were grouped into two phases of information collection:

Information collection for validation: using the agreed template, feedback on the profile was collected during the visits to Cyprus, Malta, Norway, Latvia and Finland and then analysed by the project staff team in order to identify emerging themes and ideas across the visits.

Information verification: the key trends and messages emerging from the first visits were presented to participants in the visits to Denmark, Spain, UK (England) and Austria. Participants were asked to specifically comment on the trends identified in the first phase of visits in order to see if the findings were verified or contested.

In total 71 written responses, mainly using the template for feedback and comments, were collected and analysed; 37 in the information validation phase and 34 in the information verification phase.

This pattern of two phases of information collection activities, as well as the fixed structure of the visits and the varied participants involved in them meant that different forms of data (information) triangulation could be used. Denzin (1979) originally identified four types of triangulation techniques, which have been latterly discussed by Creswell and Miller (2000) among others. Two of these techniques were used in the visits: *data triangulation* (the same process for collecting information being repeated nine times, resulting in nine datasets) and *different investigator information triangulation* (two project managers and nine teams of experts all using the same information collection tools).

An analysis of information from the nine visits led to the following main conclusions:

- The basic framework for the Profile based upon four core values and areas of competence was agreed upon;

- All areas of competence in the draft document were agreed upon in all visits. However, the main areas of debate focussed upon the addition of more areas of competence;

- A range of issues were highlighted in relation to implications for implementing the Profile. It was proposed that the material already in the draft Profile at that time should be re-worked into a separate section that discussed factors supporting the implementation of the Profile.

The various inputs from the 2011 visits led to a final draft of the Profile being produced. This was sent for comments to all Agency representatives and nominated project experts in early 2012. The final draft was also presented at the TE4I project dissemination conference, held in Brussels in Spring 2012.

During this event, in addition to project experts having a final opportunity to comment on the text, structured reflections on the potential value of the Profile were presented by: representatives of UNESCO and UNICEF CEE/CIS, as well as speakers representing key education employers, newly qualified teachers and student teachers.

(Information on the conference and all speakers' inputs are available from: http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/teacher-education-for-inclusion/dissemination-conference).

All of the feedback, comments and reflections from all conference activities were used as the basis for developing the final Profile and the supporting material that is presented in full in this document.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFILE

During his keynote address at the project meeting in Zürich in Autumn 2010, key note speaker Tony Booth suggested that: 'The power we have as educators is to engage others in dialogue – that is all.'

This insight illustrates the intentions of this profile document – to engage others in debate. It is hoped that the Profile itself as well as the supporting discussion material will be used in different ways to inform national, European and even international level work relating to teacher education for inclusion. Globally there is common concern regarding capacity building for inclusive practice. The project Profile gives a potential way of initiating or furthering discussions not only about teachers but about the wider goal of inclusive education.

However, it should be made clear that this short document is not a final product that can be 'transplanted' into country contexts in some way. It has been developed in order to stimulate further debate in a way that may take policy makers and teacher educators in particular forward in their thinking. The availability of the non-copyright version of the Profile is an attempt to practically support this aim.

Many of the issues relating to what might be meant by effectiveness in initial teacher education highlighted within this document require further examination. The issues considered below appear to be central within debates regarding the possible further development of the Profile of Inclusive Teachers:

(i) There is a developing, but still quite limited research base documenting how teachers working in inclusive settings are being – or should be – prepared for their work. This fact is recognised within the Council Conclusions on the Social Dimension of Education and Training (2010) which refer to the need to: 'widen the knowledge base in cooperation with other international organisations and ensure a broad dissemination of research results.' (p. 9).

The TE4I project synthesis report goes further arguing that: 'Research should be undertaken on the effectiveness of different routes into teaching and the course organisation, content and pedagogy to best develop the competence of teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners.' (p. 72).

Profiles of teacher competences – attitudes, knowledge and skills – appear to be an important area for future research into the effectiveness of initial teacher education policy and its implementation. As the Peer Learning Activity 2011 suggests, '… a framework of teacher competences is not a panacea. It is but one of a number of instruments that can be used to support teachers' professionalisation and to promote quality in education.' (p6). Future research could also focus upon the systematic evaluation of the Profile within specific ITE programme contexts, as well as from wider system perspectives.

(ii) Many countries are reviewing the structure of ITE and considering where and by whom ITE should be delivered (universities and/or schools). Course structures and curriculum content are also being widely debated and many of the proposed revisions are in line with an inclusive approach. The OECD 'Teaching Matters' report (2005) discusses 'changing the emphases in initial teacher education' and suggests that: 'It is unrealistic to expect that any initial teacher education programme, no matter how high quality, will be able to fully develop student teachers … rather than being the main or indeed the only qualification for teachers, initial teacher education is now starting to be viewed as the entry point for the profession and the platform for teachers' ongoing development.' (p. 134).

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed as a result of debates on initial teacher education. However its potential longer-term role in supporting further and continuing professional development opportunities for teachers has been emphasised by participants in the TE4I project activities and further work on the Profile as a tool for different teacher development opportunities is considered relevant.

(iii) The Council Conclusions (2010) argue for the need to: 'Promote the role of education and training as key instruments for the achievement of the objectives of the social inclusion and social protection process'. (p. 10). This is echoed in the TE4I project synthesis report (2011), which states that: 'The benefits of increasing inclusion, linked to other priorities such as social justice and community cohesion, are also long-term and investment in early childhood education and an increasingly inclusive education system is likely to represent a more effective use of resources than short term initiatives designed to 'close gaps' or support certain marginalised groups'. (p. 77).

Throughout the process of developing the Profile of Inclusive Teachers, a recurring message from project experts and country stakeholders has been the potential of teacher education to act as a lever for change in the education system and promote inclusive practice. This is further supported by the project synthesis report (2011): 'the need to replace 'compensatory' support with reform of teaching and learning and attention to the environment in order to increase the capacity of schools to respond to diversity is being recognised more widely.' (p. 14)

The TE4I project synthesis report discusses the main challenges for ITE across European countries. Work within the project suggests that individual teachers cannot be viewed as agents for systemic change in education, but that they can be considered as a crucial factor contributing to necessary systemic change. Teachers prepared to work effectively with a diverse range of learners' needs can act as multipliers for inclusive education - every action that supports inclusive education matters and all actors in education can make a difference in the short and long term.

The OECD (2005) report suggests that: 'Teaching is a complex task, and there is not a single set of teacher attributes and behaviours that is universally effective for all types of students and learning environments.' (p. 134). While the argument regarding the complexity of teaching is accepted, it is the assertion of this Profile document that it is possible to identify those core values and areas of competence (attitudes, knowledge and skills) that are necessary for all teachers to work effectively in inclusive classrooms.

The UNESCO International Commission on Education for the 21st Century (Delors et al, 1999) views learning throughout life and participation in the society of learning as the key to meeting the challenges posed by a rapidly changing world. The Commission emphasised four pillars of learning: 'learning to live together', 'learning to know', 'learning to do', and 'learning to be'. These pillars appear to be relevant for all teachers, as well as learners in European schools and classrooms.

The TE4I project synthesis report concludes that there is a need for: 'rigorous, long-term research to investigate … The areas of competence needed for quality, inclusive practice in order to inform consistent judgements about the effectiveness of teacher education and the practice of new teachers [and] The most effective ways to impact on pre-service teachers competences (values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding) i.e. content, pedagogy and assessment to prepare them for inclusive practice.' (p. 72).

The Profile presented in this document has been developed as a first step in this necessary research. It has been developed at the European level as a concrete tool that

can be built upon and then used in different contexts within countries to support moves towards greater inclusion and quality inclusive teaching practice.

The challenge for teacher education highlighted by the Profile is that inclusive education is for all teachers and learners. It is hoped that this Profile can be used by all stakeholders in teacher education to stimulate further debate and investigations into teacher education for inclusion as a lever for systemic change in policy and practice in countries as well as at the European level.

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ANNEX 1 – USE OF COMPETENCES WITHIN ITE IN COUNTRIES

Country	Competences outlined in national policy/used in ITE	Competences cover inclusive education
Austria	Legislation states all courses must use competences. Set by individual HEIs	Yes
Belgium (Flemish speaking community)	Framework of Teacher Competences (2007) for primary and secondary	Yes, in terms of equal opportunities
Belgium (French speaking community)	None	No
Cyprus	No. HEIs determine content	Some relevant compulsory course content plus optional modules
Czech Republic	General standards and key competences being developed as basis of minimum teacher's professional qualification, outlined in legislation (HEIs differ due to Accreditation Board demands)	Provide basis for inclusive practice
Denmark	Competences for teacher students are outlined in legislation (Order no. 408 of 11 May 2009)	Competences in special education
Estonia	Teachers Professional Standard (2005 and 2006) plus Teacher Education Strategy 2009-2013	Five relevant areas highlighted in country report
Finland	Not defined centrally but national guidelines	Basic special needs studies in all teacher education
France	10 skills outlined centrally for teachers	Includes taking account of student diversity
Germany	Standards set by Standing Conference of Ministers 2004. Strategy Paper 2010	Developing special education as part of ITE
Hungary	Standards and key competences outlined	Includes adaptation to individual requirements.
Iceland	Central requirements but decisions made at local level	Some content integrated, some specialist
Ireland	Teaching Council set required learning outcomes	Yes
Latvia	Standards/competences being revised – colleges decide content	Introduction to SEN, some content regarding attitudes
Lithuania	Profile of the Competence of the Teacher's Profession (2007) plus Teacher Training Standards	Yes – content varies across colleges

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Luxembourg	Content set out by Ministry. Competences approach to general education.	Inclusion covered in primary courses – little in secondary
Malta	Competences are set for primary	Yes
Netherlands	Competences and professional roles outlined. Content decided by individual HEIs	Introduction to SEN included in primary course
Norway	Learning outcomes for teachers stated in National Curriculum regulations	Yes
Poland	General competences set by teams of experts elected by Faculty councils	Not specifically outlined but courses increasingly include relevant content
Portugal	General competences set in legislation but HEIs have autonomy to decide how they are met	Includes key points relevant to inclusive practice
Slovenia	Decisions by individual HEIs	Yes – some in new programmes post Bologna
Spain	Centrally set (2007)	Yes but ad hoc– SEN is a 'subject' in basic training
Sweden	Not centrally set	Yes
Switzerland	Used by individual HEIs	Approx 5% course
UK (England)	Teacher Development Agency standards. HEIs responsible for how met.	Yes – many SEN modules available
UK (Northern Ireland)	Teaching Council set teaching competences (2007)	Yes
UK (Scotland)	General Teaching Council Scotland sets standards (summative outcomes). HEIs decide content	Yes – the national Framework for Inclusion (http://www.frameworkforinclusion.org/) links the standards for teacher education at all levels to a rights based approach to inclusion and a social justice agenda that promotes teaching and learning strategies which encourage the development of learning capacity for all
UK (Wales)	Welsh Assembly Government – standards as for UK (England)	Yes

ANNEX 2 – IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY: THE EUROPEAN UNION POLICY AGENDA

This short document was prepared by Paul Holdsworth, European Commission, DG-Education and Culture in 2010 as a contribution to the Teacher Education for Inclusion project debates. This note summarises the priorities for improving Teacher Education that were defined by Ministers of Education in the three key Council Conclusions documents:

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on improving the quality of teacher education (Official Journal C 300, 12.12.2007). ('07' in the list below)

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools (OJ 2008/C 319/08) ('08' in the list below)

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders (OJ 2009/C 000/09) ('09' in the list below)

1. Promote professional values and attitudes

- Promote a culture of reflective practice (07)

- Teachers to be autonomous learners (07)

- Teachers to engage in research, (07) develop new knowledge (07) innovate (07)

- Teachers to take part in school development (07)

- Teachers to collaborate with colleagues, parents, etc. (07)

- Member States to substantially increase teachers' learning mobility so that it becomes the norm, not the exception (08) (09)

2. Improve teacher competences

- Teachers to have specialist knowledge of subjects (07) plus

- The necessary pedagogical skills (07) e.g.:

- Teach heterogeneous classes (07)

- Use ICT (07)

- Teach transversal competences (07)

- Create safe attractive schools (07)

3. Effective recruitment and selection to promote educational quality

- Member States to attract, retain best candidates (09)

- Member States to review their recruitment, placement, retention, mobility policies (08)

- Member States to promote teaching as an attractive career (07) / profession (08)

4. Improve the quality of Initial Teacher Education

- HE qualification is required for teaching career (07); consider raising level of qualifications required to be teacher (07)

- ITE qualifications should balance research-based studies and teaching practice (07)

- Consider raising degree of practical experience required to qualify as teacher (07)

- Member States to substantially increase teachers' learning mobility so that it becomes the norm, not the exception (08) (09)

5. Introduce Induction programmes for all new teachers

- Provide professional and personal support (induction) for all new teachers (09) (08)

6. Provide mentoring support to all teachers

- Make available mentoring support throughout career (07)

- Provide teachers with enough support to be effective (09)

7. Improve quality and quantity of Continuing Professional Development

- Teachers to undertake regular reviews of individual development needs via self / external evaluation (07) (09)

- Assure quality of CPD

- Improve supply/variety: formal, informal, non-formal; exchanges, placements (07)

- Increase take-up of CPD (07)

- Member States to substantially increase teachers' learning mobility so that it becomes the norm, not the exception (08) (09)

8. School Leadership

- Improve recruitment (08)

- Improve training and development

- Teaching skills, teaching experience (07) (08)

- Management, leadership (07) (08)

- High quality training provision (09)

- Lighten administration load; focus on shaping teaching and learning (09)

9. Ensure the quality of Teacher Educators

- Should have high academic standards (09)

- Should have solid practical teaching experience (09)

- Should have good teaching competences (09)

10. Improve Teacher Education Systems

- Initial Teacher Education, Induction and CPD should be coordinated and coherent (07)

- Systems to be adequately resourced and quality assured (07)

- Teacher Education courses to respond to evolving needs (07) / provide innovative responses to new demands (07)

- Foster partnerships between Teacher Education Institutions /schools (07)

- Develop schools as 'learning communities' (07)

- Undertake regular reviews of individual development needs via self / external evaluation, (07) (09) and provide adequate opportunities to meet those needs (09).

ANNEX 3 – PROFILE DISCUSSIONS: TEMPLATE FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION

The Profile of Inclusive Teachers developed within the Teacher Education for Inclusion project aims to present agreed areas of competence needed for ALL teachers to enable them to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom.

The Profile document provides a rationale for the approach taken to the development of the profile and also highlights key issues with regard to the implementation of a 'competences' approach to initial teacher education.

This template should be used by all participants to note down key points from discussions. Please record the role of stakeholders who have made contributions (e.g. learner/parent/teacher etc) indicating whether they agree/disagree with each proposal.

The notes made using this template will be collected at the end of the Country Study Visit.

1. Is there agreement about the **model** developed and, in particular, the four core values that underpin the Profile: valuing learners diversity, supporting all learners, working with others and personal professional development?

2. Is there agreement about the **general principles** presented in the Profile document?

3. Do stakeholders agree about the **areas of competence** outlined in the Profile document?

4. Please note any comments or suggestions regarding **implications for implementation**, again stating the role of stakeholders.

5. Is there anything stakeholders want to add or delete?

(N.B. Comments and suggested changes can be noted on a copy of the Profile document – please note role of the person making each suggestion).

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This Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed as one of the main outputs of the Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project conducted by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. TE4I as a goal for all Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students was a key recommendation outlined in the project synthesis report; the Profile builds on this and the other findings presented in the synthesis report and links them to a framework of values and the areas of competence necessary for all teachers if they are to be effective in inclusive classrooms.

The Profile presents information on *what* essential values and areas of competence should be developed within all ITE programmes. However, it does not attempt to describe *how* these areas of competence should be used within different country programmes for initial teacher education. Although some key issues relating to implementation are considered within a later section of this document, the Profile has been drafted as a tool to be examined and developed in ways that specifically fit within the different context of each individual country's ITE system.

The main target audiences for this document are teacher educators and decision makers – managers and policy makers for ITE – who are in a position to influence policy for teacher education for inclusion and then initiate and implement changes in practice. These stakeholders for ITE are considered to be a critical target audience, as a further assertion of the TE4I project is that teacher education is a key leverage point for the wider systemic changes needed for inclusive education generally.