



Inclusive Education in Practice: Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Policy Makers

Erasmus+ KA210-SCH Project: “Inclusive Education: Nurturing and Accepting Differences”

1. Executive Summary

This policy brief presents key insights and recommendations derived from the implementation of a small-scale Erasmus+ partnership project focused on inclusive education. The project involved transnational collaboration between schools and a teacher training provider, combining needs assessment, teacher training, classroom piloting, and student engagement activities.

The findings highlight a critical gap between policy-level commitments to inclusion and the practical capacity of schools and teachers to implement inclusive methodologies effectively. Based on real-world testing and feedback, this brief outlines actionable recommendations for policy makers to strengthen inclusive education systems across Europe.

2. Context and Rationale

Inclusive education is a central priority of European education policy. However, schools face increasing challenges due to:

- growing diversity in student populations (migration, socio-economic disadvantage, special needs)
- insufficient practical training for teachers
- limited resources for implementation

This project addressed these challenges through:

- structured needs assessment of teachers
- targeted training on inclusive methodologies
- piloting in real classroom settings
- student-led reflection activities
- dissemination to wider educational communities

The results provide evidence-based insights into what works — and what is still missing.

3. Key Findings

3.1 Teachers need practical, not theoretical, training

Teachers benefit most from training that is:

- tailored to their actual classroom challenges
- immediately applicable
- combined with real-life experimentation

3.2 Implementation is the main bottleneck



While awareness of inclusion is relatively high, effective implementation requires:

- time
- structured reflection
- peer exchange

3.3 Inclusion is context-dependent

Different schools face different inclusion challenges:

- migration background
- learning disabilities
- socio-economic barriers

A “one-size-fits-all” approach is ineffective.

3.4 Students play a key role in inclusion

Student engagement activities (e.g. interviews, reflection) significantly increased:

- awareness of diversity
- empathy
- acceptance of differences

3.5 Lack of measurement tools

Schools lack clear indicators to:

- assess inclusion
- monitor progress
- evaluate impact

3.6 Fragmented presence of inclusion in existing EU competence frameworks

Current European competence frameworks (such as DigComp for digital competence, LifeComp for personal, social and learning to learn competence, GreenComp for sustainability, and EntreComp for entrepreneurship) include elements related to inclusion. However, these are often indirect, dispersed or embedded within broader concepts (e.g. social awareness, citizenship, accessibility), rather than addressed as a distinct and operational competence area.

This results in:

- limited visibility of inclusion as a standalone competence area
- lack of operational guidance for educators
- absence of structured progression models for inclusive competences



There is a clear gap in translating inclusion from a policy priority into a competence framework with observable and actionable descriptors.

4. Recommendations for Policy Makers

4.1 Institutionalise continuous teacher training on inclusive education

Recommendation:

Make inclusive education a mandatory component of continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers.

Actions:

- Introduce certified training modules on inclusive methodologies
- Allocate dedicated funding for teacher training in inclusion
- Promote experiential learning formats (not only theoretical courses)

4.2 Develop a European “InclusiComp” framework for inclusive competences

Recommendation:

Develop a dedicated European competence framework for inclusion (“InclusiComp”), aimed at defining and operationalising inclusive competences across education systems.

Actions:

- Define clear competence areas (e.g. awareness, interaction, adaptive practice, participation, reflection)
- Develop observable and actionable descriptors for teachers and learners
- Pilot and refine the framework through Erasmus+ projects
- Ensure alignment with existing EU frameworks and integration into teacher training and school evaluation systems

4.3 Integrate training with real classroom piloting

Recommendation:

Support programmes that combine training with structured classroom experimentation.

Actions:

- Require piloting phases in funded projects
- Encourage use of reflective tools (e.g. teaching diaries, peer review sessions)
- Fund collaborative learning communities among teachers

4.4 Develop flexible, context-sensitive policy frameworks

Recommendation:

Design inclusion policies that allow adaptation to local needs.

Actions:



- Provide modular toolkits instead of rigid guidelines
- Allow schools autonomy in selecting and adapting methodologies
- Encourage bottom-up feedback from schools to policy level

4.5 Strengthen student participation in inclusion processes

Recommendation:

Recognise students as active contributors to inclusive education.

Actions:

- Promote peer learning and intercultural dialogue activities
- Include student feedback mechanisms in school evaluation systems
- Support student-led initiatives on diversity and inclusion

4.6 Introduce measurable indicators for inclusion

Recommendation:

Establish clear and practical indicators to monitor inclusion at school level.

Actions:

- Develop EU-level guidelines for inclusion KPIs
- Encourage schools to track:
 - student participation and engagement
 - perception of inclusion
 - use of inclusive methodologies
- Integrate these indicators into school evaluation frameworks

4.7 Increase structural support and resources

Recommendation:

Provide schools with adequate resources to implement inclusive practices.

Actions:

- Fund teaching materials for diverse learning needs
- Support hiring of specialised staff (e.g. special educators)
- Invest in infrastructure (e.g. adaptive learning environments)

4.8 Promote transnational and cross-sector collaboration

Recommendation:

Encourage cooperation between schools, training providers, and institutions across countries.

Actions:



- Expand funding for small-scale and large-scale partnerships
- Facilitate exchange of best practices across regions
- Support long-term cooperation networks

4.9 Strengthen dissemination and scalability of good practices

Recommendation:

Ensure that successful inclusive practices are systematically shared and replicated.

Actions:

- Enhance visibility and usability of Erasmus+ Results Platform
- Create repositories of validated methodologies
- Incentivise replication of successful pilot projects

5. Conclusion

This project demonstrates that inclusive education is achievable when policy intentions are supported by:

- practical teacher training
- real-world experimentation
- active student involvement
- adequate resources and flexibility

Bridging the gap between policy and practice requires not only investment and training, but also a clearer definition of what inclusive competence means in practice. The development of a dedicated framework such as “InclusiComp” could represent a key step in this direction.

6. Contact and Further Information

For further information about the project and its results, please refer to:

- Project dissemination materials
- Erasmus+ Project Results Platform
- Partner organisations’ communication channels



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