



THE EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR SPECIAL NEEDS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

FIVE FACTS ABOUT THE AGENCY

1. The only European body focusing upon inclusive provision for all learners in alignment with EU and international policy directives

The Agency is the only European body maintained by its member countries with the specific mission of helping them improve the quality and effectiveness of their inclusive provision for all learners. All Agency work is in line with and directly supports all international and EU policy initiatives on education, equity, equal opportunities and rights for all learners. The Agency work provides clear and coherent recommendations for developing key policies in these areas.

2. Providing evidence-based information and guidance on how inclusive education systems can be implemented and how this affects the general quality of education

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and various EU communications make it clear that countries should no longer debate what inclusive education is or why they should provide it. Countries must now focus upon the implementation of inclusive education as a rights and quality imperative. There is a need for guidance on how to implement inclusive education systems at the teacher, classroom, school, region, municipality and national policy levels. The Agency provides countries with evidence-based information and guidance on the 'how' questions relating to inclusive education systems.

3. A multi-stakeholder approach to addressing key issues

Through its country network and expert participation in projects, the Agency combines the perspectives of policy, practice and research. This unique combination makes it possible to assess, monitor and identify links between these three perspectives and then develop comprehensive recommendations that consider all perspectives and are relevant for policy and practice.

4. A collective voice on key issues

By working co-operatively with its member countries, the Agency ensures that the knowledge and resources across individual countries are focused into coherent, agreed arguments. These carry enough weight to be heard as a collective voice on key issues at the European and international levels. This is particularly important because the Agency's work can be applied to improve the quality of education and training for all learners.



5. Platform for peer learning and experience exchange

The Agency presents a platform for peer learning for member countries at the levels of policy, practice and research. The involvement of country representatives, policy-makers and experts in Agency activities fosters peer-to-peer learning and self-review opportunities. This supports longer-term policy development and implementation within Agency member countries.

The Agency also forms a network for information sharing and exchange on a more informal and personal contact basis. This enables policy-makers, experts and researchers to collect European inputs on priority issues that are on their countries' national agendas.