



EMPOWERING INCLUSIVE TEACHERS  
FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

# EiTTT

## Case Studies in Context: Impact of our Project Learning

EiTTT (Empowering Inclusive Teachers for Today and Tomorrow) was a European strategic partnership project funded under the Erasmus+ KA2 Education Programme of the European Union. EiTTT focused on the development of mainstream schools as inclusive learning environments for all learners, including those with special needs and disabilities; those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds; and persons with a migrant background.

The project carried out six transnational learning activities on the following themes:



These resources are designed to outline how the EiTTT partners implemented the learning from the project's activities. They aim to inform teacher educators, practising teachers, student teachers, school administrators and policy makers at national and European levels.

EiTTT was coordinated by Marino Institute of Education, Ireland, with partner organisations in Belgium (University Colleges Leuven-Limburg & Karel de Grote University College), Cyprus (Dimotiko Sxoleio Anthoupolis KA), Latvia (Rigas 45. vidusskola) and Finland (Lukkarin koulu). The project partners, who represent three teacher education institutions and three schools, shared a commitment to inclusive education and an understanding of priorities to be addressed if inclusion is to become intrinsic to school practice. The project ran from October 2016 to March 2019.

With a view to facilitating learning for all in the diverse population of contemporary classrooms, EiTTT identified that schools themselves must also be enabled to provide support structures that can facilitate teachers' inclusive practice. As a cross-sectoral group of educators, the EiTTT partners exchanged learning about what they believe are exemplary inclusive education practices in their respective teacher education institutions and schools.

Funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union





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# Co-Teaching in Teacher Education

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## Case Study: Co-Teaching in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Ireland

- Co-teaching (sometimes termed ‘team teaching’ in Ireland) is a key recommendation in several policy documents on teacher education in Ireland. These policies incorporate initial teacher education, the induction of newly qualified teachers and continuing professional development for teachers.
- In accordance with its inclusive education policy, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) encourages ‘team teaching’. In 2017, with a view to more effective inclusion in mainstream schooling, the DES revised its approach to the allocation of Special Education Teachers to mainstream primary schools (DES Circular 0013/2017). While each school is free to deploy these resources as appropriate to their own circumstances, they are required to employ a range of teaching supports including ‘team-teaching’ to address specific learning needs. This policy has implications for teacher education\*.
- The Teaching Council of Ireland is the statutory body that regulates standards in the profession of teaching and promotes the professional development of teachers. The Council is supportive of co-teaching in Initial Teacher Education (Teaching Council, 2013).
- Co-teaching is being introduced into Initial Teacher Education programmes in several Irish Higher Education Institutions.
- The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) facilitates pilot projects and seminars on team teaching for practising teachers. With a view to practical inclusion in mainstream education, many of these seminars address team teaching for the purposes of supporting pupils with literacy and numeracy difficulties in mainstream schools.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- Following our project learning about the potential of co-teaching in teacher education, Marino Institute of Education is to incorporate this strategy into modules for student teachers at Marino Institute of Education (MIE). From September 2019 all B.Ed. 1 (first year) student teachers (approximately 110 students) at MIE will be introduced to the concepts and practices involved during their teacher education courses. They will then be required to employ co-teaching practices during their school placement experience that year, i.e. all students on placement will be placed with one other student teacher to work in a co-teaching capacity throughout that three-week school placement period. All teacher education staff at MIE will receive input on this development.
- In the academic year 2019 – 2020 a new Bachelor Degree course (Baitsiléir san Oideachas Trí Mheán na Gaeilge (Bunmhúinteoireacht) for prospective primary teachers will commence in MIE. This course will prepare teachers to teach exclusively through the medium of the Irish language in relevant primary schools throughout Ireland. This is the first such course

- in Ireland and student teachers undertaking the course will be taught entirely through the Irish language. Arising from learning during the project week at UCLL, it has been decided that a co-teaching approach will be employed in the development and planning of course modules, whereby MIE lecturers with expertise in the various curriculum areas will co-plan, co-teach and co-assess with lecturers presenting through the medium of the Irish language. At a meeting of all academic staff in MIE in January 2019, staff were provided with an update on this development and on the various co-teaching models that will be employed.
- A member of the academic staff of the Professional Studies / School Placement Department in MIE, who was a participant at the Learning Activity Week in UCLL has, as a direct consequence of her learning during this experience, commenced Ph.D. studies on the subject of Co-Teaching in Teacher Education for Inclusion.

### Recommendations

- \*The requirement by the DES (Circular 0013/2017) that teachers engage in ‘team teaching’, to support the needs of students with special educational needs in mainstream schools, implies that teacher education providers must respond accordingly in their provision for initial and ongoing teacher development.
- Ireland’s Teaching Council (2011) supports a ‘continuum of teacher education’ – incorporating initial, induction and continuing stages of professional development. As Murphy (2011, p.326) suggests, team teaching opens up possibilities [for the development of inclusive practices] across the continuum, and can support in a very practical way (via cultures of collaboration and ‘teacher learning communities’) the concept of lifelong learning among teachers.
- In accordance with recent policy developments, all student teachers in Ireland undertake an extended period of school placement (up to ten weeks) during the final year of their initial teacher education courses. This period could provide opportunity for student teachers to engage in co-teaching with one another and with host teachers with a view to enhancing their preparation for inclusive classroom practice. E.g. co-teaching is likely to provide better opportunity for focused discussion on pupil learning before, during and after lessons.
- Having undertaken continuing professional development activities related to inclusive education, teachers in Ireland might most effectively seek to implement this learning by co-teaching with a colleague, thereby generating new learning for each other that is context-sensitive and context-focused (Murphy, 2011, p. 327).
- In summary, it is recommended that co-teaching be incorporated as a component of all stages of teacher education in Ireland.

## Case Study: Co-Teaching in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Cyprus

- In our effort to gather as much information as we can from the Universities in Cyprus, we managed to get the following facts:
  - **The European University of Cyprus** does not offer any modules on co-teaching between mainstream and special education teachers. Nevertheless, there is a theoretical background to teach the basic principles of co-teaching and its application as follows:
    - The European University presents various teaching practices, one of which is co-teaching, to its students who attend the following programs:
      - (A) MA in Special and Inclusive Education.
      - (B) Differentiation Course in the teaching process.
      - (C) The Courses of Education for Children with Disabilities: Politics & Practice.
    - In the MA Program of Special and Inclusive Education the University offers a school practice course where co-teaching is encouraged. Of course, this can only happen if the teacher of the class gives his/her consent to the student to co-teach with him/her.
    - In the Undergraduate Program, the students who follow the inclusive education program, are being taught about co-teaching but only on a theoretical basis. At the practical level, when students have their practice in schools, the same principal as above, applies. However, the consent for co-teaching is much easier to get in the kindergarten level than in the primary level.

It must be clarified that for the purposes of the students' school practice, the professors encourage their students to apply co-teaching, but this is not obligatory. The fact that it is not obligatory is a consequence of the fact that there are many factors which are not under the university's control.

- **The University of Cyprus**  
The University of Cyprus does not offer any exclusive modules on co-teaching. Nevertheless, a theoretical background of the basic principles of co-teaching and its application are being taught as follows:

- In the Undergraduate Program within the module of "Introduction to Inclusive Education", a lesson about co-teaching is included.
- In the MA program within the module of "Differentiation in the inclusive class", a lesson about co-teaching is been taught.
- During the second year of the student's school practice, the University encourages its students to co-teach. The co-teaching though takes place only between two mainstream student teachers.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- The University of Cyprus and the European University of Cyprus report that due to limited University staff and budgeted, the University does not have the opportunity to offer more modules on co-teaching either on a theoretical or on a practical basis.
- The European University of Cyprus states that some of their students in their Long Distance MA Program have their practical training in other countries. In the countries they do their practice, the regulations differ on the subject of co-teaching and it is sometimes impossible to enforce co-teaching on the school programs of other countries.

### Recommendations

- More time should be given to professors of Universities in order to be able to support co-teaching on a theoretical and practical basis.
- Inclusion and co-teaching (between mainstream and special education student teachers) should be included in the students' in-school practice during their Undergraduate Program. However, the above depends on the students being given the opportunity to follow and study the direction of inclusion and co-teaching.
- Each and every professor should be adequately informed and trained on co-teaching so that they are able to advise and give the option to their students to apply co-teaching during their practical training.



## Case Study: Co-Teaching in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Finland

- The teacher educators, teachers, universities, schools and regions have developed collaboration practices to increase inclusive teaching in Finland. Co-teaching is one of these practices used in inclusive teaching. It's an increasingly popular practice in mainstream setting in Finland. For this reason student teachers have the opportunity to co-teach during their placements in many universities in Finland. Students can co-teach with other students or with teacher educators. Co-teaching during placements gives future teachers experiences to build on as they finish their studies and enter working life.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- It was interesting to see that many elements of co-teaching are identical to our practise of co-teaching. It was very important and interesting to hear about the classification and theory behind co-teaching. Since we are a primary school, there isn't a possibility to implement co-teaching in teacher education.

### Recommendations

- Co-teaching can be seen as a solution to develop a powerful learning environment for every pupil. It is a highly recommended practice for inclusive teaching in classrooms.
- It is important for teacher trainees to have the opportunity to practise co-teaching during their studies. Co-teaching in teacher education enables shared assessment and planning – potential for effective teaching, learning, differentiation, inclusive education.
- Teachers can learn in practise from one another- sharing curriculum knowledge, methodologies and interests. It provides for flexibility of practise. Co-teaching approaches may be designed in accordance with varied teaching and learning styles.



## Case Study: Co-Teaching in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Latvia

- In Teacher Education Institutions in Latvia modules of co-teaching are taught for student teachers.
- Co-teaching is recommended by the Ministry of Education in Latvia and is suggested as a part of the Support Teams' work in schools in Latvia, mainly in primary and in elementary level classes, in order to help teachers.
- According to the new curriculum set to be introduced from 2020-2030, co-teaching is going to be a compulsory part of the teaching process in all mainstream schools.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- In our school a variety of co-teaching models are implemented. We have a Support Team (comprising teacher assistants, social teachers, speech therapist, psychologist) helping mainstream teachers in their lessons. Very often we use the co-teaching model **One Teach** (mainstream class teacher) – **One Observe** (psychologist observing whole class or some children who have learning difficulties or challenging behaviour). The co-teaching model **One Teach-One Assist** is widely used in our school when Support teams members and mainstream class teacher are leading lessons together in order to help teachers.
- Since our involvement in the project we have introduced co-teaching between two mainstream teachers in some classes
- We gain a lot of new methods from each other by practising co-teaching with our colleagues.
- We practise co-teaching between special teachers and mainstream teachers.

### Recommendations

- Co-teaching (between mainstream and special education student teachers) should be included in the students' in-school practice. Co-teaching is a good way how to build cooperation between special student teachers and mainstream student teachers.
- Co-teaching is collaboration between colleagues. Teachers in our school strongly believe that it is a tool for getting excellent experience and knowledge from each other and we believe it should be taught to all student teacher.

## Case Study: Co-Teaching in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- The approach to co-teaching in teacher education at Karel de Grote University College (KdG) in Antwerp is very similar to that in Leuven.
- We organise practical training in co-teaching at all levels of the teacher education programme. In the first year, two students practise together in a classroom, supervised by their host teacher. At first they both observe the host teacher. Later on they participate and work as two assistants. At the end of the year the students take over the class in a co-teaching model. Usually this will be via the 'one teach-one assist' model.
- In their second year we advise the students to carry on doing their practice in co-teaching with their mentor.
- Final year primary school education student teachers (1th -6th grade) co-teach with student teachers from the pre-primary education sector (2.5 – 5 year old toddlers). Each pair of students co-teaches in each of these contexts.
- Lecturers who teach third year student teachers also model co-teaching. As with the students, one lecturer from the primary education sector teaches with a colleague from the pre-primary education sector.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- Following our project learning about the potential of co-teaching in mainstream schools, KdG has been working together with our partner schools to inform the schools about co-teaching and the advantages of this during student teachers' placement. A seminar for placement schools was organised.
- KdG is liaising with schools so that more of our students can go into co-teaching placements in schools.

### Recommendations

- We feel that it is necessary for all student teachers to be introduced to the theory of co-teaching and to engage in co-teaching during their practice placement in schools. It is only by practising co-teaching that students can experience the advantages of this strategy for their own teaching and pupils' learning. At present there is no requirement on our universities / teacher education colleges to offer this strategy to student teachers.



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# Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice

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## Case Study: \*Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice

### Policy and Practice in Ireland

- The Department of Education and Skills (DES) recommends a collaborative approach between mainstream teacher and teachers supporting student with special educational needs.
- While the withdrawal of pupils with special needs from class for periods of additional support during the day has been a common approach, the DES and the body responsible for drawing up school curriculum (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) recommend in-class support for all pupils over withdrawal, where possible.
- In 2009, the Inspectorate in Ireland, reporting on effective literacy and numeracy practices in schools in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, identified co-teaching as one of the effective models of practice.
- In 2010 the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the statutory body which oversees the delivery of education services to persons with special educational needs, reported that 'cooperative teaching' in the classroom is one of the strategies that can be helpful to students with special educational needs.
- In 2011 the Chief Inspector in the Department of Education and Skills launched a set of Guidelines for 'Team Teaching' and an accompanying DVD to assist primary and post-primary schools with its introduction. He acknowledged the benefits that can accrue from team teaching in the classroom.
- In 2017, with a view to more effective inclusion in mainstream schooling, the DES revised its approach to the allocation of Special Education Teachers to mainstream primary schools (DES Circular 0013/2017). While each school is free to deploy these resources as appropriate to their own circumstances, they are required to employ a range of teaching supports including 'team teaching' to address specific learning needs.
- Mulholland and O'Connor (2016) point out that team teaching is becoming more popular in schools in Ireland, but indicate a tension between willingness and capacity to cooperate: 'Institutional and systemic shortcomings' (e.g. time constraints in relation to curriculum planning, access to professional development) impede opportunities for professional co-operation.
- In summary, there is awareness of the benefits of collaborative practice in classrooms, and much official encouragement of the practice which is now becoming more prevalent in schools. Teachers report that systemic challenges (overall staff numbers in schools, the relatively limited number of staff qualified in special education in mainstream schools and planning time) have militated against the introduction of such innovative practices (O'Murchú, 2011, O'Gorman and Drudy, 2010).

### Recommendations

- That co-teaching be increasingly employed to support the diversity and complexity of student need in contemporary Irish classrooms.
- That the preferred model of co-teaching would align with that observed by the EiTTT project team during our visit to a mainstream school in Finland. That approach saw a mainstream and special education teacher together with a classroom assistant, working on a full-time basis in mainstream classrooms to support the needs of all children within the class. Such an approach would support, amongst other education policies and priorities, the Irish government's recently revised strategy for allocating special education supports to schools and in particular the stipulation that 'team-teaching' be employed in mainstream classes to enable mainstream and special education teachers to work collaboratively to provide support within the class to meet the needs of children with special needs (DES Circular 0013 / 2017).
- That teachers be adequately supported in their efforts to employ co-teaching for effective inclusion in schools. This entails initial and ongoing professional development for teachers, sufficient curriculum planning time, and satisfactory staffing levels / pupil-teacher ratios.
- Following from the above, that consideration be given to instituting a government-funded 'Co-teaching for Inclusion' course for practising primary teachers in Ireland. The course would see selected mainstream and special education teachers from a number of mainstream primary schools train as co-teachers in accordance with the model recommended above and hence in accordance with recent government policy. The teachers involved would also be trained to host student teachers in a co-teaching capacity during the students' periods of school placement. (MIE student teachers will be engaging with co-teaching theory and practice during their teacher education programmes from September 2018). The initiative would eventually become self-sustaining as the original participants establish a national network of tutors hosting ongoing courses for teachers in education centres around the country. Marino Institute of Education is in a position to develop such an initiative.

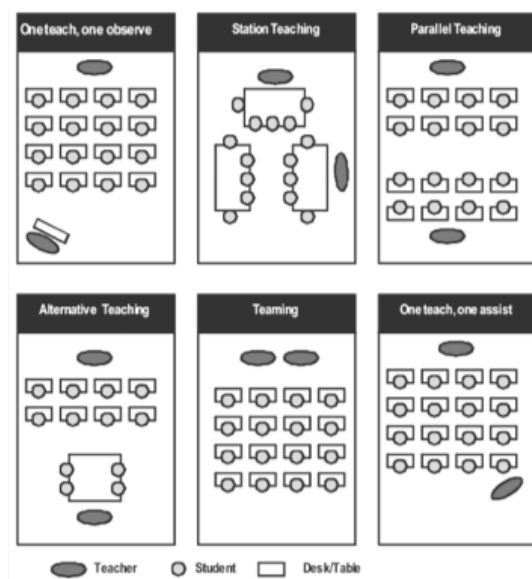
**\*O'Murchú explains that 'team teaching' is about 'team', i.e. the whole class, and not just about two teachers. For the purposes of this report the terms co-teaching and team teaching are interchangeable.**

## Case Study: Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice

### Policy and Practice in Cyprus

- In Cyprus, co-teaching among mainstream teachers has been on going for a long period of time. It is applied for purposes of teacher's education and it provides better opportunity for focused discussion on pupil learning.
- Within its inclusive education program, the Ministry of Education encourages co-teaching among mainstream and special education teachers. Co-teaching is a key recommendation given by school inspectors to teachers. However, the Ministry of Education never circulated a formal introduction circular for the afore mentioned program. An effective training session for the teachers, was never organized either by the Ministry of Education or by the Pedagogical Institute. Sporadic seminars are organized only because of the good will and initiative of the special education and mainstream inspectors.
- Within the framework of inclusion in education, teachers in Cyprus started co-teaching about 7 years ago. Although co-teaching initially started among mainstream teachers, later on this was extended between mainstream and special education teachers. To date though, co-teaching is not officially formalized by the Ministry. However, general-level inspectors and special education inspectors have been always suggesting to school head teachers to promote co-teaching as a teaching method in their individual schools.
- As stated by one of the pioneer co-teaching teachers, Mrs Christiana Ktisti (special education teacher), in 2013, the mainstream inspector of Solea (a district outside of Nicosia) at that time, Mr. Andreas Theodorou, organized an introductory training seminar for its network head teachers. The seminar was about how co-teaching should be applied and conducted between special education and general course teachers. The seminar included:
  - What is co-teaching
  - Why co-teach
  - Benefits of co-teaching for the pupils
  - Benefits of co-teaching for the mainstream teachers
  - Benefits of co-teaching for the special education teachers
  - Conditions for the success of co-teaching
  - Difficulties in the application of co-teaching

### • Models of co-teaching



( Friend, Reising& Cook 1993)

### • Conclusions

- At the same time, a training seminar in the Solea Special Education Teachers Network took place. This time the seminar concerned and included only special education teachers.
- In 2015, Special Education Inspector Pavlos Paschalis conducted a two day similar training seminar for special education teachers and speech therapists.
- Two more seminars took place in two different cities of Cyprus. The first one took place in Nicosia on the 9th of April in 2016 was conducted by Rodoula Mavrikiou – Theodorou (mainstream inspector in Nicosia). The second one took place in Limassol on the 16th of April in 2016 was conducted by Dr. Yiannis Savvides (mainstream inspector in Limassol). Both seminars included mainstream and special education teachers.

## Case Study: Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice Contd.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- Our school is implementing co-teaching under the supervision of the school general inspector and the special education inspector, for the last four years.
- Since we entered the EiTTT program, co-teaching got more organized in our school. This was achieved by setting a fixed timetable on the pupil's co-teaching weekly program.
- Our school's criteria concerning co-teaching are:
  - We choose classes that have more than one pupil in the special education program.
  - The teachers' approval is needed in order to be included in the program.
  - We try to find common free time for programming and setting the goals for each co-teaching lesson (mission almost impossible with the overloaded schedule of the Cypriot teacher).
- In this endeavor, we involved the Anthoupolis Primary School KB, and the teachers there have established some co-teaching lessons in their school program.

### Recommendations

- Our aim is to continue co-teaching as a practice in our school.
- We aim on involving many more teachers in the program.
- In order to improve our teaching methods and practices, we try to get feedback from the teachers who apply co-teaching.
- The Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Institute should adequately support and reinforce the effort of the teachers to apply co-teaching.

## Case Study: Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice

### Policy and Practice in Latvia

- In 1994 the 'integration' of children with special needs into regular schools became a reality in Latvia and more and more children with special needs have been enrolled into regular schools since then.
- In 1998 the concept and terminology of 'Inclusive Education' was introduced in Latvia.
- Co-teaching in schools (in Latvia it is mainly known as Support Teaming) was introduced in recent years. Teachers work together in one class or they lead lessons together with support team teachers. Co-teaching in Latvia is part of the Support Team's daily work in mainstream schools.
- According to the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministry, a second teacher should be provided in the classroom when pupils with intellectual disabilities and severe and multiple disabilities are included in mainstream settings.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- Some mainstream teachers in Riga 45th secondary school co-teach mainly in the teaching of English for elementary - and primary-level graders.
- When student teachers practise in our school they sometimes co-teach with the host teacher. The co-teaching model used is 'one person teaches and one observes'.
- Since our involvement in the EiTTT project many more teachers in our school have now started co-teaching and try to include it in their daily work.

### Recommendations

- Co-teaching in mainstream classes can also be used very effectively as a way of giving more attention to students who are more advanced.



## Case Study: Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- There is no general policy in Belgium on how schools should organise teaching structures in individual schools. Schools can make their own internal arrangements. Each school gets a certain number of government-funded teaching hours in accordance with the number of students they had enrolled the year before.
- Many schools are searching for ways to work best within the M-Decree. One potentially successful approach is via co-teaching which is becoming a very popular means of supporting students in inclusive classrooms. However, the theory behind this strategy is not yet generally well known.
- Classroom infrastructure and too few teaching hours are the main reasons as to why co-teaching is not implemented in every school. There is a need also for teachers to become familiar with the general principles underlying co-teaching approaches.
- Furthermore, negotiations are underway between Tongelsbos and two mainstream schools to introduce Special Educational Units in these mainstream schools. This inclusive way of organising education is also made possible thanks to the use of co-teaching strategies.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- Following the project activity in Finland, BuSO Tongelsbos started informing our staff about co-teaching and its advantages. Soon after that information meeting we introduced co-teaching in one pedagogical unit of the school by way of a pilot project. After our evaluation of that, we hope to eventually embed the co-teaching strategy systematically in the whole school.
- We were able to employ two co-teachers in BuSO Tongelsbos Special School during the past 18 months. By putting two small classes together we introduced a full-time co-teaching class. The evaluations of those teachers who have started co-teaching in our school will be shared with the rest of the staff. Based on our learning from this project we hope to set an example for future co-teachers in the school.
- At present in Tongelsbos there is an established liaison and cooperation arrangement in place with two mainstream schools. Teachers from our school for special needs are co-teaching in mainstream classes to bring in extra support and teaching skills there.

### Recommendations

- We recommend that policy makers and the government grant more funds and resources to schools and teachers so that they can respond to the M-Decree by establishing co-teaching.
- The implementation of co-teaching requires good preparation. All involved have to see the advantages and have to know about the opportunities and the challenges. So we recommend that schools integrate co-teaching systems in small steps into their school.
- It's very important that both teachers who are co-teaching are well matched (a 'professional marriage')
- There are at least six possible strategies that could be employed in co-teaching. The chosen strategy has to be

## Case Study: Co-Teaching for Inclusive Classroom Practice

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- The aim of recently introduced legislation ('M Decree') in Belgium is to make education more inclusive. This decree outlines measures that enable more students with special educational needs to register and remain in regular (mainstream) education.
- In Flanders, the government draws up the framework for implementing these measures, but schools have the freedom and responsibility to organise their curriculum and put in place tools to address this framework in the best way possible. A promising response of the government to aid schools in adapting to this new framework is a pilot redeployment programme in which 180 teachers from special schools have been assigned to mainstream schools to work alongside and support (**co-teach with**) teachers in that system.
- As well as primary and secondary schools, providers of teacher education programmes are also obliged to adapt their teaching to the new framework.
- Teacher educators were more stimulated to work together. This became a common practice in the postgraduate programmes. In the teacher training primary teacher education programme a new curriculum was implemented from September 2017. Within this curriculum two teachers working together are responsible for the planning, organisation, teaching and evaluation of a heterogeneous group of student teachers (first, second and third year student teachers) regarding their student placements and the learning happening in the field.

In September 2018, a decision was made to co-teach within the course units of Arts Education. Two teacher educators in this area (Visual Arts and Drama) co-teach two course units (one for first year students, one for second year students) with the explicit requirement to use the various forms of co-teaching seen in Finland. Although this choice has put strains on our budget situation, learning outcomes for our student teachers appear to be raised. A thorough evaluation of this development will happen in June 2019.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- At UCLL we are aware that co-teaching is a strategy with a lot of merits to enhance the skills of our student teachers as they learn to teach effectively in the diversity of today's classrooms. We have been introducing student teachers to this strategy for some time, and in specific circumstances we use it in student placement: E.g. Our first year primary education students co-teach during their very first practice lessons on placement in schools. Last year our primary education student teachers were also offered the opportunity to co-teach with the class teacher during their final placement.
- However, after our project learning activity in Finland our existing co-teaching practices were upgraded in various ways:
- Teacher educators who participated in the learning week enriched their input to student teachers about co-teaching with a lot of examples seen in Nurmijärvi.

- Co-teaching as a strategy to prepare future teachers for diverse classrooms became the subject of two different research proposals. One of these was approved and now research is underway to examine the value of co-teaching in secondary education.

### Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Ministry of Education provides more means both to schools and teacher education institutions to implement the M-Decree and to prepare future teachers for the changing reality of diversity in schools. Co-teaching is a powerful tool in reaching the goals of the M-Decree, but more funding is necessary to implement this optimally.



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# Video Interaction Guidance in Teacher Education

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## Case Study: Video Interaction Guidance in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Ireland

- Teacher education institutions in Ireland are encouraged to employ a wide range of suitable methodologies to facilitate student teacher development. Proposals on chosen methodologies are submitted to, and accredited by, the relevant university councils and by Ireland's Teaching Council.
- In recent years a number of teacher education institutions have undertaken pilot projects and studies that have explored video-type recording as a tool in various aspects of teacher education. The findings of these studies are very promising.
- In these undertakings video has been largely employed to support the observation and assessment of students' general and specific skill development during teaching practice, to encourage peer dialogue and learning, and to promote student reflection on, and engagement with, the theories (explicit and implicit) underlying their practices

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- MIE is planning to explore possibilities for incorporating video as a tool to enhance student teacher reflection and learning during our teacher education programmes.
- As the EiTTT project has highlighted, there is an urgent need to facilitate student teachers' development of skills appropriate to supporting pupils experiencing difficulties arising from social / emotional factors. Hence in MIE we will focus on 'pedagogical sensitivity', i.e. providing for and enhancing through video technology, the development of sensitive, caring, empathetic teachers, in accordance with the Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) technique observed during the project.

### Recommendations

- The degree of challenge invariably experienced by student and practising teachers in their endeavours to support the development and learning of pupils experiencing social / emotional difficulties has been well established. So too has the need for teacher educators to enable student teachers to validate and respect the theoretical knowledge they are obliged to engage with during their teacher education courses. Variations on the theme of 'student teacher reflection', 'critical reflection' and 'reflective practice' have been consistently lauded as the most effective 'response' to these and other challenges of teacher education, while student teachers concomitantly struggle with the very requirement to 'reflect' and 'document' these reflections!
- The use of video technology offers a potentially valuable means of responding to each of these challenges. Relevant studies conducted to date in teacher education in Ireland, point to the value of video for considerably enhancing student teacher reflection.
- It is recommended that the strategy be widely trialled in teacher education in Ireland with a particular focus on facilitating the development in student teachers of appropriate dispositions with reference to 'pedagogical sensitivity'.





## Case Study: Video Interaction Guidance in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Cyprus

- Since 2013, three professors of the Department of Education working at the University of Cyprus, use the approach of “video clubs” in teacher education. Originally advanced by van Es and Sherin (2002), the idea of video clubs refers to forming small groups of participants who meet regularly to watch, discuss, and reflect upon selected video excerpts from their teaching.
- Each academic semester, the professors Charalambos Y. Charalambous, Stavroula Philippou and George Olympiou, form a group of 5 – 6 volunteer student teachers who are interested in learning through video guidance. These students are 3rd year students, since during that period of study they do their in-school practice. It is important to mention that these professors do not evaluate the students in any way. Their role is just to educate and support the students.
- On the first group meeting, the professors and the students end up on the parameters they want to improve. This agreement is essential, since it is constituted by certain strategies and practices that the students want to focus and improve. The second thing that it is been discussed is the rules/norms of discussion: A) They all refer anonymously to the student teacher (they do not use the names of the students) and B) they do not judge anyone. Instead they focus on the practices and the strategies and not on the person who applies them.
- The group meets every 2-3 weeks. The meetings follow a spiral application. This means that the students apply certain practices in the classroom, then they discuss their videos on those practices with the group and after that, with new ideas, they go back to the class to apply those practices or other practices each time with a different scope. Before each meeting the professors study the students’ lesson plans and they watch the clips of the students in order to organize the upcoming discussion. The duration of the clip is 2-3 minutes. The focus is not on lesson planning, but on certain practices and strategies. For this reason, the clips do not need to last very long. During the meetings the professors and the students watch, discuss, and reflect on the clips. The above mentioned procedure constitutes community of learning.
- The video clips are saved on a server at the University of Cyprus. When the students graduate their videos can be used from the University for educational purposes. Thus, other professors or students can access them.

- Video clubs for in-service teachers:

The University of Cyprus had undertaken a pilot project for in-service teachers. The videos are been tested during the academic year of 2018 – 2019. From the following academic year everyone can have an access on these videos for educational purposes.

### Impact of Project Learning in our school

- Last year one of our teachers, Mrs Evidiki Papageorgiou, under the guidance of Dr Charalambos Y. Charalambous, took part in an Erasmus+ Programme coordinated by the University of Cyprus under the title “Studying the difficulties inherent in the use of demanding activities in teaching Mathematics.” Two lessons of Mathematics were videotaped. The purpose of the videos was to reveal the problems that teachers come across when teaching demanding activities to their classes. After the discussions on the videos, suggestions and ideas were given from the University in order to simplify those demanding activities.
- During the school year 2017 – 2018, some of our teachers at our school videoed parts of their lessons in order to discuss their practices with at least one of their colleagues. At first it was very strange to watch themselves teaching. When the teachers got used to it, it was easier to discuss on the actual practice and not on the feeling of watching themselves teaching.

### Recommendations

- **TARGET:** The teachers to be adequately supported in their efforts to video parts of their lessons, in order to evolve themselves on teaching strategies and teaching practices.

## Case Study: Video Interaction Guidance in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Finland

- Teachers in Finland are highly educated. In general education all teachers are required a Master's degree. In vocational education teachers should have a Master's degree or Bachelor's degree. The high level of training is seen necessary as teachers in Finland are very autonomous professionally. Teaching and guidance staff within day-care centres generally have Bachelor's degrees. Pre-primary teachers in schools hold a Master's degree. Special needs teachers hold a Master's degree with special pedagogy as the main subject or a teaching qualification including special needs teacher studies. Basic skills are reinforced in professional studies. Sensitive teacherhood is known and often brought up. The importance of non-verbal communication is acknowledged.
- The teacher education strategy of VIG (video interaction guidance) and the manner in which it is employed at Karel de Grote University College is to provide for and enhance the development of sensitive, caring and empathetic teachers. In Finland VIG is used in some universities with teacher trainees. However the use of VIG varies and depends on the staff of the teacher trainee institute.
- The amount of SES students is much smaller in Finland than in Belgium. Flexible "fly teams" do not exist commonly. The personalizing of curriculums for the students seem to benefit SES students in Belgium. Special needs are taken into account during school days for instance by the use of different playgrounds during recess time.
- The objective in Finland has for the last few years been to integrate as many pupils with special needs as possible. A positive trend can be observed during the last five years. In 2016 the number of pupils in special needs institutions was 15 per cent lower than in 2011. The proportion of pupils in such institutions of all pupils receiving special needs support was circa 10 per cent in 2016. The proportion of pupils who have been partly integrated into mainstream education has grown in Finland. In 2016 circa 62 per cent of pupils with special needs studied at least partly in mainstream groups.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

VIG points out and confirms the important features of good and competent teacherhood. VIG is a method that can be used at any stage of teacherhood to reflect and develop your own teacherhood. The three teachers from our school who attended the learning week in Antwerpen started to use VIG in order to reflect and develop their own teacherhood. The use of VIG was positive and the teachers reflected their experience together with each other. Teachers used VIG in group work with the students during lessons.

Our school started to improve the use of different playgrounds during recess. Different students need and benefit from different types of activities during breaks. Teachers of Lukkari Primary school were asked to innovate a structure for recess. Grouping students in different ways according to their temperaments or personality was also implemented during lessons for example in group work.

### Recommendations

- Schools have the possibility to develop their teaching and methods to answer the needs of the students in their area if they are given the chance to make individual pedagogical choices with the granted resources. In order to grant the resources fairly there could be a system to evaluate/diagnose the SES students. This would ensure that SES students have the same resources/privileges in all areas.
- As a member of the Finnish Trade Union of Education participated on this learning activity in Antwerpen she has good possibilities to disseminate and give recommendations about sensitive teacherhood and the use of VIG widely to policy-makers. The use of VIG can be seen as a method to self-reflect and ensure that pedagogical sensitivity is not forgotten.



## Case Study: Video Interaction Guidance in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Latvia

- In Latvia Teacher education institutions are involved in different projects which develop and support new student teachers to start their work in schools. Mentoring and videoing of student teachers are included in these activities and projects for new student teachers.
- The first videoing of student teachers was started in the University of Latvia. It is a new teacher education tool and a way of enabling student teachers to evaluate themselves.
- Videos are taken to observe students teachers in their practice in schools and for the assesment students' skills.
- Videoing promotes great feedback opportunities for student teachers and encourages their work with different pupils in schools. Videos also show student teachers various possibilities for professional self-improvement.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- Since our involvement in the EITTT project, Support Team members have suggested filming lessons or some parts of them for analyzing their practices and for discussion. It is felt that filming makes it easier to observe each child's progress in the learning process.
- Teachers in our school are pleased to film a lesson or a part of the lesson from which other teachers (including the new teachers) can learn methodologies.

### Recommendations

- Video technologies offer possibilities to get clear feedback. It is valuable for student teachers to evaluate themselves. It is recommended as a part of learning process. It also helps a mentor teacher to give some recommendations to their new colleague.
- Videoing also helps to see how a child is progressing. In our school it is useful for our Support Team. We recommend that video be used more often not only with students in Teacher Education institutions but also to improve teacher practice in our schools in Latvia.

## Case Study: Video Interaction Guidance in Teacher Education

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- In Flanders, while the government sets the framework regarding the basic competencies required of a beginning teacher, teacher education institutions have the freedom and responsibility to organise their curriculum and implement tools to address this framework in the best way possible.
- The professional profile (for the experienced teacher) and the basic competencies (for the beginning teacher) which are derived from it are both based on a vision of education which is pupil-oriented and emancipatory. One of our ten basic competencies is described as “The Teacher as Educator”, with an emphasis on creating a positive and responsive environment in classrooms and schools. With regard to this particular competency, the learning activity in KdG Antwerp provided us with further ideas and a tool to enhance our curriculum.
- Input / information on the theory of the ‘Sensitive Teacher’ is provided to teacher educators who are responsible for our course units which have a focus on teacher-child interaction.
- Within the primary teacher education programme, steps have been taken to integrate Video Interaction Guidance more often into our guidance of students in relation to their practice. Collaboration between those teacher educators and our teacher educators in early childhood education who are more familiar with the use of VIG, is one of those steps.
- However, schools in Flanders are required (more than in the past, as a consequence of GDPR legislation in Europe) to protect the personal data of the children in their schools, and we sense a reluctance to allow our student teachers to make videos of themselves in interaction with the children. A meeting to be held in April 2019 with principals of the schools in which our students do their student placements, will hopefully bring clarity on this matter.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- Within the curricula of our teacher education programmes a lot of emphasis is placed on teacher-child interaction. We agree wholeheartedly with Bert Murawski that learning can only occur when a child feels safe, welcome and understood by his / her teacher. In both our course units and reflection groups a substantial amount of time is given to focusing on teacher-child interaction.
- Video Interaction Guidance as a key teacher education strategy is already used within the teacher education programme for Early Childhood Education. In the programme for primary education student teachers, elements of this strategy have also been introduced. Luc Degrande, one of our colleagues at UCLL, contributed to the learning activity at KdG in Antwerp and showed us how he uses video as a valuable means of enabling student teachers to reflect on their classroom practices and on their engagements with their students.

### Recommendations

- It is recommended that our teacher education institution reach a satisfactory compromise with our schools regarding the use of Video solely for didactical goals. It would be even better if the government could provide an exception to the GDPR legislation for didactical uses.
- It is recommended that our teacher education institution invests in the right materials and virtual space to make it possible to use VIG on a larger scale.



EMPOWERING INCLUSIVE TEACHERS  
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# Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context - Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice

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# Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice

## Policy and Practice in Cyprus

### • Teacher Education in Cyprus

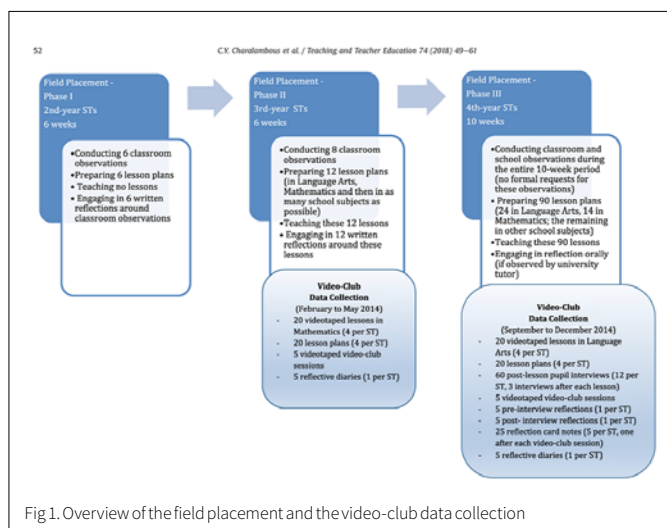


Fig 1. Overview of the field placement and the video-club data collection

In Cyprus, in order to become a teacher, you need to enter a university and complete a full four-year course of studies. The students, besides theoretical studies, need to complete a series of in-school practices called “field placements”. Field placements are divided in three phases as shown in the figure 1 above <sup>1</sup>.

### • Special Education

In the case of the students who follow special education studies, field placements do not take place. If a student wants to experience the work in special schools or the work in school units he/she has to arrange it by him/herself.

### • The University of Cyprus offers a wide range of programmes for the students who would like to learn more about special education.

#### › Undergraduate Programs of “Primary Education” and “Early Childhood Education”

The undergraduate program “Primary Education” offers a compulsory introductory course and three specialization courses. The undergraduate program “Early Childhood Education” offers two compulsory courses.

### › Postgraduate Program in Special and Inclusive Education

The program aims to inform, raise awareness and educate graduates of primary and secondary education and active teachers or prospective teachers on issues of diversity in education, disability and inclusive education. The graduates of the program will be able to: (a) conduct research in the field of special education and training, (b) act as reference points in primary and secondary mainstream schools for the effective operation of integration of children with special needs in general, (c) to contribute through their teaching and general attendance at schools to the functional participation of children with disabilities in the mainstream classes and the mainstream schools, (d) to work for the production of educational material, (e) to act as a catalyst for inclusion in the wider education system of Cyprus and (f) to undertake PhD studies and research in the field of training.

### › Doctoral Program in Special and Holistic Education

The PhD program in Special and Inclusive Education aims to deepen and critically analyze issues related to disability in education while encouraging links with the evolution of thinking in other contexts (e.g. society, history, politics). The doctoral program is based on both Greek and international bibliography of Inclusive Education and Disability Studies and aims mainly at creating a strong theoretical background, developing critical thinking, reflection on research and disability and moral commitment of those involved ensure the rights of people with disabilities. The program is addressed to teachers of all levels, but also to people coming from Special or Inclusive Education, Disability, Psychology and Sociology of Education.

### • Educators have the chance to participate in seminars the University of Cyprus offers.

#### › Seminars of Inclusive Education

These Seminars are one of the oldest academic institutions of the University of Cyprus, with the first seminar dating back to the 1995 Winter Semester. Since then, the seminars have been conducted continuously in co-operation with the Cyprus Inclusive Education Group (koe@ucy.ac.cy) headquartered at the University of Cyprus. From this series of seminars until now, almost all executives of the public Cypriot educational system have been involved in the education of children with disabilities, as well as parents, teachers, people with disabilities, therapists and professionals from Cyprus and abroad. The seminars have also attracted a number of well-known academic names in the international Disability and Uniform Education field.

<sup>1</sup>Charalambos Y. Charalambous\*, Stavroula Philippou, George Olympiou Department of Education, University of Cyprus, Cyprus. Reconsidering the use of video clubs for student-teachers' learning during field placement: Lessons drawn from a longitudinal multiple case study.

## Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice **Contd**

- **Research Programme “Psifides Gnosis: Mills of knowledge”**

The “Mills of Knowledge” research program aims to collect, digitise and disseminate material related to people with disabilities and chronic diseases, with the ultimate goal of promoting holistic education. Within the framework of the program, rich material has been collected (e.g. primary material developed by people with disabilities and chronic diseases such as autobiography, poems, music and works of art, magazines and newsletters, supportive media and technology, short films, fairytales, educational material for various curricula of the curriculum, etc.). This material is being used in training programs carried out in the Inclusive Education Workshop. Participants in the training programs have the opportunity to develop knowledge, attitudes and skills, which allow them to develop micro-level programs aimed at constructing the concept of disability at school. Part of the material collected under the program has been edited and posted on the project website ([www.ucy.ac.cy/psifides-gnosis](http://www.ucy.ac.cy/psifides-gnosis)). In particular, the site includes Digital Portfolio of Disabled People and Chronic Illnesses that can be exploited by teachers, enriching the curriculum. The site also contains publications on inclusive education in Cyprus. These publications could serve as a reference point for educators, students and parents who wish to be informed about the theory and research in the field of integrated education in Cyprus. Finally, there are links to academic journals, pedagogical organizations, government and other services related to general education and disability issues.

- **Seminars in Inclusive Education Practice**

The Research and Teaching Unit of Inclusive Education was established in 2012 to enhance the research work carried out in the Department of Education Sciences of the University of Cyprus from its foundation until today. It is a place that serves educational and research activities related to inclusive education, such as the education of students, teachers and children, the observation of the learning process, the observation and recording of the interaction during learning, etc. The Seminars are in the form of a pioneering multidisciplinary

space, which includes important material associated with inclusive education, such as primary material developed by people with disabilities (e.g. autobiographies, poems, music and art), archival material (e.g. short films, fairy tales and literary books), educational materials and technology learning support tools for all children.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- It is very important for us to implement as far as we can, since we are a primary school, the need of “student teachers” to be familiar of the work done in mainstream schools, special units and special schools. For this reason, we had a communication with two academics, Dr Simoni Simeonidou from the University of Cyprus and Dr Katerina Mavrou from the European University Cyprus. We informed them about the programmes of Marino Institute of Education.
- Since it is obligatory to follow a hierarchy in order to communicate with the Ministry of Education, initially we communicated with our General School Inspector, Mr Panayiotis Kyrou about the MIE programmes. “Student teachers” should be from the start of their studies be able to practice in the special units within the school or in special schools. Once again, the implementation procedure should come with the approval and recommendation of the Ministry of Education.

### Recommendations

- **TARGET of the Universities:** Universities should include in their postgraduate programmes special education teaching practice for their “student teachers”.
- **TARGET of the Ministry of Education:** Promote the “student teacher” in-school practice in special education (either in mainstream classes, either in special units or in special schools).
- **TARGET:** The teachers be adequately supported in their efforts to host “student teachers” who are interested in teaching children with special needs.

## Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice

### Policy and Practice in Finland

- The basic principle of Finnish education is that all people must have equal access to high-quality education. The same opportunities for education should be available to all citizens, regardless of family background or place of residence. According to the new curriculum, education is developed according to the principles of inclusion, with schools encouraged to include all types of students in mainstream classes. There are cases, however, where special education is delivered in dedicated schools or classes; the decision on how to deliver this is made by the individual city or municipality.
- All trainee teachers are introduced to the concept of inclusive education. Again, however, individual universities will choose how this is delivered, with some embedding specific modules on special needs education into teaching or related programmes. In some cases, trainee teachers can undertake a specialised programme (either a full degree programme or a one-year top-up programme for those already qualified as a mainstream teacher), allowing them to teach in a specialised primary or secondary school for special needs pupils. In all cases, trainee teachers are expected to spend some time in the classroom (mainstream or special needs) either teaching or observing teaching delivery.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- This was an interesting model to observe. However, as a primary school, working in mainstream education, there are no plans for us to introduce teacher placements in special needs schools.

### Recommendations

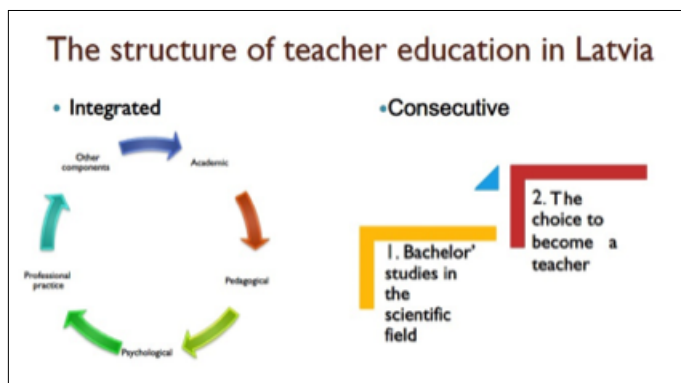
- Whilst not something that is easy to align with the delivery of mainstream or special needs education in Finland, we recognise the benefits that such placements might provide.
- We consider that the option of experiencing student teaching in 'more than one' special needs school might also be beneficial.



## Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice

### Policy and Practice in Latvia

- In Latvia to become a teacher you need to enter a university and complete a full four-year or three-year course of studies. Some of these courses have practice teaching components. As well as their theoretical studies the students who choose four-year study programmes need to complete a practical part by working as a teacher in mainstream schools.



- The practical studies in mainstream school consist of three parts – observing, teaching and state exam. Usually practical studies start from the second year and continue until graduation.
- If the student teacher wishes to study Special Education they have to choose this programme at the beginning of their course. There is no opportunity within the course provision for such student teachers to undertake practical placements in schools. If a student wishes to experience the work of special schools or the work in school units he/she has to arrange this independently.
- The University of Latvia offers only one route for those students who wish to learn more about Special Education – the Bachelor's Programme in Special education and the Master's programme in Special Education. After graduation students who work as a teacher in schools have a possibility to take additional courses in Special Education financed by the Ministry of Education. These courses allow general education teachers to get a qualification as a Special Education teacher and to work in Special Education.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- It is very important for us as a secondary and primary school to support student teachers in becoming familiar with the practical work done in mainstream schools. Every teacher in school must know how to work with general and special needs students at the same time.

### Recommendations

- **TARGET the Universities:** Universities should include in their postgraduate programmes special education teaching practice for their student teachers.
- **TARGET the Ministry of Education:** Promote the student teacher by providing in-school practice in special education and mainstream schools.
- **TARGET the Teacher:** Teachers must be adequately supported in their efforts to host student teachers who are interested in teaching children with special needs.

## Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- Since 1/9/2007 two types of pre-service teacher training systems (Integrated and Specific) have been in place. Both types of programmes lead to a single professional title: The Teacher's Diploma. The practical component has been considerably expanded in both programmes:

#### Integrated Teacher Training

These are professionally oriented Bachelor's programmes (PBAs) offered by university colleges that lead to a Bachelor's Degree in Education, respectively in pre-school, primary and secondary education. These courses integrate subject matter and pedagogical-didactical components throughout the programme. The university colleges award the degree in question to graduates and award the teacher's diploma.

The programme comprises 180 credits (one credit represents 25 to 30 hours of study load, a full academic year comprises 60 credits). The practical educational activities component forms part of this and comprises 45 credits. The university colleges organise this practical component as pre-service training in collaboration with the schools, centres or institutions. For the secondary education programme, the student chooses two subjects.

#### Specific Teacher Training Courses (SLO)

These teacher training courses at a university college, university or adult education centre, are undertaken in addition to, or following subject knowledge initial training and/or vocational experience (former "aggregates" and "GPB" courses). This training can be offered as:

- A built-in programme, i.e. as an option package within a subject-specific programme (a maximum of 30 credits within a Master's programme of 120 credits and 15 within a Bachelor's programme);
- Contiguous programme to a programme with subject matter;
- Separate training for people who want to enter the teaching profession on the basis of professional experience.

Students in a professionally oriented Bachelor's programme (PBA) and in a Master's programme can take the specific programmes either during or after their subject matter training. However, the Teacher's Diploma cannot be awarded until the basic diploma has been obtained. Holders of a secondary education diploma can also be admitted to the specific teacher training programmes. The programme provides a credit load of 60 credits, of which 30 are for the practical component. The theoretical and practical programme components alternate and interact in this programme concept.

#### The practical component can be realized in three ways:

- Via a work placement during the training, the so-called 'pre-service training';
- Through a teacher's job, the so-called 'in-service training', i.e. the LIO job, teacher-in-training-job;
- By a combination of both.

#### Pre-service training:

In pre-service training, the trainee completes the practical component of a teacher training programme in a school, institution or centre without having a statutory relationship with it. The pre-service intern is not considered an employee and therefore does not receive an employment contract. The organisation of this is done in a cooperative arrangement between a member of staff in the work placement school, institution or centre and the work placement supervisor of the teacher training on the basis of an agreement on, among other things:

- The division of responsibilities between school, centre and institution, student and teacher training;
- The role of the school, centre and institution in evaluating the student/course participant;
- The period of the school year in which the pre-service training takes place;
- The intern's tasks.

## Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice Contd.

**In-service training**, the teacher-in-training job (LIO job):

With in-service training, the trainee fulfils the practical component of a teacher training course as a temporary staff member at a secondary school, a part-time arts education institution, an adult education centre or a nursery and primary education centre. In exceptional cases, students who follow the SLO may, after or during a Physical Education Master's programme, be employed as LIO Physical Education teachers in nursery and primary education.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- New student teachers can undertake some of their practical training at Tongelsbos Special School.
- Negotiations are underway between Tongelsbos Special School and two mainstream schools to introduce Special Educational Units in these mainstream schools. This inclusive way of organising education is also made possible thanks to the use of co-teaching strategies.
- As we learnt in Dublin, student teachers' use of video for professional self-reflection / development seems to be a very valuable strategy before and after a student teacher placement experience in schools. We are exploring ways of introducing this during student teacher placement in our school.

### Recommendations

- At the moment there are no rules for university colleges involved in teacher education about placement and pre-service training (i.e. there is no statutory relationship in place between the university and the school chosen for student placement). We recommend that such agreements be put in place.
- Make work placement with special needs children or classes a compulsory element of teacher training. We recognise the benefits that such placements might provide, and we consider that the option of undertaking teaching practice in more than one type of special school might also be very beneficial. When we do not make such an arrangement a requirement, students may not try it.

## Case Study: Student-teacher Placement in a Special Education School Context – Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes for Inclusive Practice

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- During their three years in college, student teachers have a lot of placements in schools. They practice in different schools and experience being a teacher in different contexts. At the end of their programme, they have the chance to choose where they want to have their last experience in practice. The first year their placement is short, with an emphasis on observation and taking over short lessons/times during the day. The farther students are in their training, the more placement time they have in order to gradually take over the task of the teacher within a school.
- **A teacher's degree can be obtained in three years.** After three years students can get started as a graduate teacher. However, a lot of students spend an extra year of study, either immediately following their initial training or when they already are at work. In this extra year students combine two days of internship in schools with two days of lessons in our institution every week. Input from the training constantly varies with practical experience.
- After we saw what impact of a video-reflection on initial teacher education students in Ireland, we started to integrate video-reflections for students in the Advanced B.A., and particularly during but during their internship in special needs schools. In this academic year (2018-2019) we started to use more video-material produced by students to process everything that they have learned.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- We strengthen the link between initial teacher education (primary education) and the Advanced B.A.: we let students of the Advanced B.A. introduce students of initial teacher education to special need schools (2018-2019). All the students of the Advanced B.A. complete their internship in special needs schools and are being supervised by a teacher of the special needs school. We invite the mentors of our students in UCLL to explain everything about the internship. As part of this process, the students of the Advanced B.A. will take over the special needs class, together with a student of initial teacher education. With this experience, they will deepen their understanding of special needs schools.

### Recommendations

- It is recommended that UCLL's Teacher Education Department makes placement with special needs children or classes obligatory. We recognise the benefits that such placements might provide and we consider that the option of experiencing teaching in 'more than one' special needs school might also be beneficial. There is a strong possibility that if we do not make it compulsory, students will not try it.
- It is recommended that the Ministry of Education thinks about a more straightforward way of organising special need classes in regular education. How can we organize our educational provision so that more children can participate in our education system? How might we employ the idea of a class from a special needs school located and organised in regular education? There are already some pilot projects in Belgium exploring this idea.
- It is recommended that the Ministry of Education considers the provision of support for learning in mainstream classes. More supports and resources are needed in classes for all children. With a view to Inclusive Education, it should be easier to source these resources and supports.



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# Inclusion Through Education - Students from Refugee/Migrant/ Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

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## Case Study: Inclusion through Education – Students from Refugee / Migrant / Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

### Policy and Practice in Ireland

- Since the 1980s there has been considerable government support provided to schools in communities in Ireland designated as ‘disadvantaged’. These schools have been accorded lower pupil / teacher ratios than the national norm as well as additional funding to enable their undertaking of a range of projects.
- Nonetheless, learning outcomes of pupils in these schools remain considerably below those in other schools with almost 50% of students in the most ‘disadvantaged’ school settings transitioning to second-level school without basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- The most recently published policy in this regard is the ‘DEIS Plan 2017’. DEIS refers to ‘Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools’ (Department of Education and Skills, 2017). An ambitious range of targets has been outlined in this plan with a view to ‘harnessing education to break down barriers and stem the cycle of inter-generational disadvantage by equipping learners to participate, succeed and contribute effectively to society in a changing world’. These targets address students’ literacy and numeracy performance, their retention levels in the school system, their **wellbeing**, their progression to further and higher education and to teacher education, **parental engagement and community links**.
- The preparation of student teachers as practitioners who will have the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for effective engagement with parents and the wider school community with a view ultimately to the enhancement of pupils’ school participation and outcomes.
- Introducing student teachers to a range of practical Literacy and Numeracy programmes (e.g. First Steps; Reading Recovery, Maths Recovery; Ready, Set, Go Maths) that are employed in ‘DEIS’ schools in Ireland, and concomitantly exploring how these programmes can be incorporated with the satisfactory social-emotional development of pupils and the engagement of parents in their children’s learning, as highlighted above.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- As a consequence of our learning from the EiTTT project, the ‘Educational Disadvantage’ component of MIE student teachers’ Inclusive Education course has been re-structured. The course is now focused as follows:
- The preparation of student teachers in terms of understanding the importance of pupil Wellbeing / Social-emotional Development and introducing them to specific teaching / learning resources (e.g. ‘The Friends Programmes’; ‘The Incredible Years Programmes’) that will support their conceptual and skill development in this regard. (These particular programmes incorporate parent, teacher and pupil development).

### Recommendations

- Arising from our learning during the project, it is recommended that two targets of Ireland’s ‘DEIS Plan 2017’ be given particular attention in teacher education programmes and by teachers in schools in designated areas of educational disadvantage:
- TARGET: ‘Student Wellbeing’: ‘Extend the Incredible Years Teacher Programme and the Friends Programme in ‘DEIS’ primary schools to reach significantly more pupils by 2019’ (DEIS Plan, p. 7).
- TARGET: ‘Improve the level of parental engagement in their school communities through better school planning ... [and] ... improve linkages that help students engage in community activities’ (DEIS Plan, p.8).
- The realisation of these targets may necessitate increased funding and the provision of appropriate continuing professional development for practising teachers.
- It will also require some re-focusing of many initial teacher education programmes.

## Case Study: Inclusion through Education – Students from Refugee / Migrant / Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

### Policy and Practice in Finland

- Education is without doubt the best way to help migrants integrate into the society. Education for migrants in Finland aims at providing the newcomers with skills and competences to act as equal members in the Finnish society. Preparatory education is a bridge to mainstream education. Preparatory education has its own national curriculum. This education gives language and other skills necessary for moving on to mainstream education. The education takes into consideration the fact that pupils are different in terms of age, learning capabilities and background.
- In Cyprus all Day School programme is provided after the obligatory lessons. It is funded by the government. Only lunch is paid by the families. All Day School is open for all students. The main reasons for attending All Day School are the long working hours of the parents, the students' need for extra support and support for students from multicultural families (help with homework). In comparison, Finnish pupils have short school days. Teaching time in basic education is among the lowest in the world. For example the first graders have 19 lessons/week and the sixth graders have 25 lessons/week. In Finland students from the first and second grade have the possibility to attend afternoon school. However, this is not usually organized by the school. Afternoon school can be organized by the municipality, the youth department, the church or by the private sector.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- When the fourth grade students end their semester, their classes are mixed. They will start the 5th grade in mixed classes with new classmates. This sometimes causes confusion and even sorrow among the students. Based on our learning in Cyprus, in our school we will help the students cope with their feelings by making discussion possible and by giving necessary time to cope with the new situation. The use of different methods and materials for teaching emotional skills is emphasized on all grades.

### Recommendations

- The success of the Anthoupolis Primary School is based on recognizing the social and emotional needs of the students. The approach to teaching is one in which the emotional well-being of students is elementary rather than the academic achievements. It is seen that the academic achievements follow when the basic conditions are sufficiently covered. We recommend that the Ministry of Education take note of these facts.
- Being a teacher means much more than just academic and didactic knowledge. In order to be a good teacher one must also possess skills in being a colleague and interacting with parents and cooperating with the partners around the school. The teachers must provide a warm, caring atmosphere and a safe, respectful learning environment in school with a view to the well-being of the children above all else. We recommend that the Ministry of Education take note of these facts.



## Case Study: Inclusion through Education – Students from Refugee / Migrant / Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

### Policy and Practice in Latvia

- Every citizen of the Republic of Latvia, holders of non-citizen passports issued by the Republic of Latvia, citizens of European Union, European Economic Area countries and Switzerland, permanent residents of the European Community holding a residence permit for Latvia, stateless persons who possess a travelling document issued by the Republic of Latvia, third-country nationals or stateless persons who possess a valid residence permit for the Republic of Latvia, persons having refugee or alternative status and persons who have received temporary protection within the Republic of Latvia have equal rights to education in Latvia.
- We have socio-economically disadvantaged students in our schools. The schools have social teachers who help teachers and these students.
- The State Education Quality Service implements the European Social Fund project “Support for the Reduction of Early Childhood Leaving” – ‘PuMPuRS’ to reduce the number of children and young people dropping out of school and not completing their studies. The project promotes the establishment of a system of sustainable cooperation between municipality, school, teachers and parents in order to identify in a timely manner children and young people at risk of dropping out of training and providing them with personalized support. Teachers are provided with the opportunity to professionalize and strengthen their skills for working with young people, and methodological tools will be developed.

Target group: students with socio-economically disadvantaged background/migrants. The student receive support in order to reduce the risks of school drop-out.

Supports provided:

- Consultations (pedagogue, psychologist, social pedagogue, assistant teacher, special education teacher, surdeon, assistant, ergotherapist);

Compensation for:

- public transport tickets;
- accommodation;
- catering;
- individual teaching aids;
- for individual use items;
- special transport.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- Our school has taken part in the government project “Pumpurs” since October 2018.
- We provide in-school support that aims to facilitate the inclusion of students from refugee or migrant backgrounds and other socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

### Recommendations

- In Latvia the level of parental engagement with schools should be improved. The government should invest more in school planning for this e.g. via supporting schools in liaising with their Parents’ Associations. In this way parents can help schools to overcome difficulties experienced by children and teachers.
- It is very important to recognize the social and emotional needs of the students. The government and the schools should pay more attention to the students’ wellbeing. The School staff should have the training, support, flexibility and resources to encourage and respond to the needs of all students.
- Teacher Educators must ensure that student teachers understand that each activity employed by the teacher in the classroom should be meaningful. Teachers should engage students in active, constructive, cooperative ways. Great instructional intensity, differentiated instruction and visual materials are very important considerations for student teachers.



## Case Study: Inclusion through Education – Students from Refugee / Migrant / Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- We have a great number of refugees coming into Belgium at the moment. According to the Flemish Agency for Education Services, the number of Okan students doubled from 1,592 to 3,120 in the years between 2007 and 2012. The Antwerp province received the most students: 1,250 in the 2011-12 school year, or 40% of the total number that year. OKAN stands for ‘onthaalklas voor anderstalige nieuwkomers’, translated: ‘Reception education for non-Dutch speaking newcomers’.
- The government is doing a valuable job in reminding everybody that in WW2 the Belgians themselves were the refugees and in much greater numbers than the refugees nowadays.
- Non-Dutch speaking pupils who only recently arrived in Belgium can qualify for extra support through reception education. Here, they will learn Dutch and get an opportunity to practise their new language, with an emphasis on the practical use of the language.
- **OKAN in elementary and secondary education**  
Both elementary and secondary schools host reception classes for non-Dutch speaking newcomers. Schools can apply for extra OKAN teaching periods as soon as a certain number of non-Dutch speaking newcomers are registered at the school. Schools are free to decide how they organise their OKAN offer (in a separate class, extra support in the class itself or a combination of both). In full-time secondary education, non-Dutch speaking newcomers are immersed in the Dutch language on a full-time basis before they move on to regular education. In part-time secondary education (Learning and Working), non-Dutch speaking newcomers can avail of reception education. Here, the emphasis will lie on an enhanced transition to labour-market participation. These classes focus on Dutch-language skills, integration and independence.
- There is no extra training for the teachers who work with the refugees.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- KdG is organising an Information Day for teachers and students about the integration of refugees. This will be held on the 22nd of November 2019. We are planning to do this every year from now on.
- A new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course for teachers on Trauma Counselling has been introduced at Karel de Grote (KdG) University. Teachers learn how to work with children who have been through a traumatic experience.
- Students at Tongelsbos Special School can take free meals at school if necessary. These are provided for all children, including refugee children, who may be in need of healthy food.

### Recommendations

- The Belgian government should make people aware of the needs refugees may have for emotional supports and about ways of providing for their wellbeing. There is a general need to understand why people leave their countries and what they are going through when they do so.
- We have a responsibility to ensure that refugees are able to access relevant information. There is a lot of information on the internet but very often people are not aware of where to find it.
- All school children should be provided with a free school lunch or lunch at a reduced price so that they are ensured of at least one good meal a day.

## Case Study: Inclusion through Education – Students from Refugee / Migrant / Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- The **GOK-decree** was instituted in Flanders in June 2002. This has resulted in extra time and resources for schools with a view to ensuring that every child has equal educational opportunities. The GOK-decree integrated support enabled schools to develop a care-wide operation for all children and young people, and for underprivileged children and young people in particular. It ensured the right of enrolment in a school of their choice for every child or young person. Legal protection is also included. Local Consultation Platforms (LOPs) have been established. These oversee the implementation of the equal educational opportunities policy locally, and oversee a Pupil Rights Committee that monitors the rights of the pupils. **This means that Flanders wants to mix children with different backgrounds in schools.**
- **In primary education** there is no predetermined list of schools with reception education. The reception classes are formed on the basis of non-native children who enrol in one school. Reception education consists of a number of hours of extra supervision for the non-native speaker children.
- **In mainstream primary education** there has been no separate integrated support offered since 1 September 2012, but the SES teaching periods (allocated on the basis of the pupil's socio-economic status) are an integral part of the framework. To grasp the socio-economic status of the pupils, the following indicators are used:
  - home language of the pupil
  - receiving a school allowance
  - the highest level of education of the mother
- **In special primary education** the supplementary framework is determined on the basis of two indicators:
  - Educational level of the mother;
  - Home language of the pupil; this second indicator can only play a role if the pupil in question meets the first indicator.

The Department of Education calculates the extra resources to be allocated to the various schools.
- In the Flemish schools there is the possibility of organising a Reception class for non-native newcomers. Some schools set up a **reception class for non-Dutch speaking newcomers**. Schools have additional counselors in Primary Education, additional hours for teachers in Secondary Education and one extra allowance per non-Dutch speaking newcomer.
- The educational field in Flanders is surely **changing towards more inclusive education, the M-degree\* is a great step in this process**. We want to prepare our future teachers for this new reality.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- We are developing a new curriculum (2018/19) and we plan to put increased focus on making our students aware of the importance of encouraging and enabling parental involvement in schools. We see this as an important element in the role of a teacher.
- We plan to make inclusion experiences more explicit for our students. We want our students to understand and be able to respond to diversity. We have had discussion groups in our faculty to begin to imbue a broader definition of diversity within our programmes.

*\*M-degree On 12 March 2014 the Flemish Parliament approved a parliamentary act on measures for pupils with specific needs. The aim of the new legislation is to make education more inclusive and consists of measures that enable more students with special educational needs to register and remain in regular education. It delineates more clearly the admission requirements to the different strands of special education. The act also contains measures, which allow pupils with specific educational needs to participate fully, effectively and on equal terms in regular schools and classrooms. The right of pupils to reasonable adaptations by the school to their special educational needs will be guaranteed in accordance with the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The provisions of the parliamentary act will be gradually implemented from school year 2015-2016 onwards. The last two years there was more attention for inclusive education and co-teaching. In September 2017 the new degree was implemented in the Flemish education.*

## Case Study: Inclusion through Education – Students from Refugee / Migrant / Socio-economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds Contd.

- With the experiences that we had in Cyprus, about the impact of experiencing another country/vision, we started to discuss in the Advanced B.A. about chances for our staff and students to visit and experience education in other countries. The first pilots have started for students to go abroad. Other contacts have been made to discover possibilities for students and staff to go abroad and experience education for children with special needs in other countries.

### Recommendations

- It is recommended that UCLL's Teacher Education Colleges pays specific attention in teacher education to a **broad range of diversity** rather than focusing on pupils with disabilities. We should also focus on the opportunities that this diversity brings in classes rather than on possible problems.
- It is recommended that Teacher Education Colleges in UCLL invest more in 'parents involvement in schools' as an important partner for your school and the curriculum. We will start with this in the new curriculum. In the postgraduate programmes this subject also gets a lot of attention. We should strengthen this aspect in our education programme.

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EMPOWERING INCLUSIVE TEACHERS  
FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

# Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education

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## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education

### Policy and Practice in Ireland

- With a view to linking schools and their communities for the enhancement of both, and in particular to supporting parental involvement and partnership with schools with a view to enhancing the educational experience of children, the 'Home, School, Community Liaison Scheme' was launched in Ireland in 1990. The scheme has seen selected teachers in schools in designated areas of educational disadvantage, re-trained as 'coordinators' with a remit to work solely with parents and local community organisations to this end. The ongoing success of this scheme has garnered international attention.
- Support from a scheme known as the School Completion Programme (SCP) is also available to many schools in designated areas of educational disadvantage. The SCP aims to help students in designated areas of educational disadvantage stay in school to school leaving age and completion of final 'Leaving Certificate'. It is a support strand within the Child and Family Agency under the Government's Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It forms part of the Department of Education and Skills social inclusion strategy Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) to help children and young people who are at risk of or who are experiencing educational disadvantage. Students taking part in SCP are provided with a variety of supports within school (learning support etc.) and outside school (through other area-based interventions, community youth provision, social work services etc.) designed to make school a more positive experience for students. Since the inception of SCP in 2002 there has been an improvement in attendance levels at primary level and in the retention of students to school leaving age.
- The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) provides psychological services in public and private primary and post-primary schools and in related educational centres. NEPS is a service of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and aims to support the personal, social and educational development of all children through the application of psychological theory and practice in education. It has particular regard for children with special educational needs. The psychologists employed by NEPS work directly with a number of schools and their work includes: Engaging in individual casework with children and young people; Providing a consultation service for teachers and parents; Participating in school-based projects relevant to educational psychology; Promoting mental health in schools.
- Notwithstanding the support provision outlined above, concerns have persisted about the adequacy of funding available to some of these services.
- In May 2018 the Government launched a new project to bring specialised therapists into schools and pre-schools. The purpose of this pilot project is to test a model of tailored therapeutic

supports that allows for early intervention in terms of providing speech and language and occupational therapy within 'educational settings' – a model that could complement existing externally sourced supports. 19 speech and language therapists and 12 Occupational Therapists were to be recruited by the Health Services Executive (HSE) to work with the 150 schools and pre-schools involved.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- In December 2018 following consultation from the Department of Education and Skills (DES), the teacher education team in MIE responded as invited to a review by the DES of its 'Strategy Statement 2019 – 2021' on Education in Ireland. Arising from our learning during the project week in Latvia, the Inclusive Education Department in MIE made a recommendation along the following lines:

### Recommendations

- In Ireland as elsewhere, teacher 'resistance' to the ideals of inclusion may be accounted for in part by the significant challenges experienced in seeking to respond in particular, to the social-emotional needs of pupils in our now much more complex mainstream classroom settings. Teacher educators aim to address these changes by providing above all for the development of 'caring' practitioners, capable of taking an holistic approach to pupils' development and learning needs and prepared to engage competently with families and the wider community in meeting those needs. However, teacher effectiveness in this respect will ultimately be contingent upon services and supports being provided to schools from other relevant national agencies. As many teachers struggle to reconcile their provision of necessary support to pupils who have considerable emotional challenges, with their requirement (EPSEN Act, 2004) to be inclusive of all pupils, it is suggested that satisfactory 'educational' provision for the needs of such 'at risk' pupils is beyond the capacity of teachers / the education system alone. It is apparent that a far more integrated response is called for. Recent welcome developments have seen greater linkages between educational and therapy supports in schools. It is recommended that such provision should become the norm into the future. With a view to truly inclusive educational provision for an inclusive society, each school / practitioner in Ireland should be in a position to liaise with, and receive support from an on-site or readily accessible team of professional personnel (e.g. psychologists, social workers, speech and language therapists, etc.) drawn from the Department of Education and Skills, The Child and Family Agency ('Tusla'), The HSE and other such national bodies.

## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education

### Policy and Practice in Cyprus

- During the British Colonialism the first exemplary in all of Europe Reform School was created in Lapithos. It was destroyed in 1974 during the Turkish invasion. Since then there is no such school in Cyprus.
- Special Schools were formed before and after the Cyprus Independence in 1960.
  - School for the blind (1929)
  - School for the deaf (1953)
  - Nicosia Special School. In 1973 Special Classes were formed within different Primary Schools in Nicosia. Progressively these classes turned into “Children with integration and adaptation difficulties”, under one common administrator. This was the origin of two special schools in Nicosia:
    - Nicosia Special School
    - Special School Evaggelismos
- From then on Special Schools were created in all other cities of Cyprus.
  - Apostolos Loucas Special School (Limassol)
  - Red Cross Special Recovery School (Limassol)
  - Ayios Spyridonas Special School (Larnaca)
  - Apostolos Varnavas Special School (Ammochostos)
  - Theoskepasti Special School (Paphos)

Nowadays these schools continue their function but there is no correlation or association between these schools and the mainstream schools. Thus the concept of Inclusion of the children attending these schools, in mainstream schools does not exist, except in rare and unique cases, where one child could attend a special school for two days and a mainstream school for three days.

Inclusion does exist in different forms, in various mainstream schools mostly in the Primary level. In very rare cases this inclusion exists in the secondary level.

The types of inclusion are:

1. Special education units where children of different disabilities (maximum six children) attend. Some of these children, depending on their disabilities, attend mainstream classes like Music, Art, Physical Education, Maths and Greek Language. After finishing the Primary Level, very few of these children have the opportunity to join a special unit in High school. Most of them are mainstreamed. These mainstream children in some lessons are released from attending some subjects. They are given support on different subjects mainly on Greek Language and Maths. They are also given some extra benefits (such as extra time, use of calculator in exams).
2. Hyperactive children with movement and/or mental disabilities or emotional problems, are provided with an escort and/or speech language and special education services.
3. Mainstream children in the primary level, according to their needs attend lessons with a speech therapist and/or a special teacher.
4. Children with special needs of primary and secondary education who, due to health reasons, cannot attend the regular school program for a prolonged period of time, are provided home-schooling.
5. For children to whom Greek is not their native language, it is provided individual or group teaching during schooltime (once or twice a week). A Greek Language Program is also available in the afternoon for children and adults. Teachers who teach in this program are obliged to attend seminars once or twice a year.

Nowadays, because of the Inclusion in our classrooms, co teaching takes place between a mainstream teacher and a special teacher or a speech teacher.

## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education Contd.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- Children with different types of special needs or disabilities also attend the Anthoupolis Primary School. These disabilities include:
  - i. ADD/ADHD
  - ii. Dyslexia
  - iii. Motor movement
  - iv. Behavior/emotional
  - v. Deaf
  - vi. Different syndromes
  - vii. Autism spectrum
- We do not have a “Support Team” as it exists in Latvia. However, we have a special education teacher and a speech therapist whose sessions are individual or group. That means that each child has an individual schedule for his/her needs. Nowadays there is an increase of the caseload of these specialists and as a result, not enough time is given to these children. Educational Psychologist visits the school two to five times a year to evaluate kids for their educational needs and also in cases of emergency. On rare occasions a social worker might visit the school: e.g. child abuse, violence in the family.
- Teachers and specialists try to find time to cooperate in order to create common goals and lesson plans for each child. Such time is not provided by the Ministry of Education.
- Furthermore, co-teaching between teachers and specialists takes place in our school.

### Recommendations

- A complete support team including all specialists is a must in every school, so it can help the children, teachers and parents effectively. A support team should include nurse/doctor, clinical psychologists, physiotherapists, social pedagogues, special education teachers, speech therapists. The size of the support team is depended on the schools population and needs.
- The Ministry of Education should provide the teachers and specialists of the school time for cooperation and the setting of goals for each child in the special education program.
- A teacher free of teaching each day, so that he/she can be responsible for helping kids with behavior problems.
- Special equipment and material is needed for every specialty by the Ministry of Education.
- Additional time for every child must be given by the specialists. Thus more specialists are required for the school.

## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education

### Policy and Practice in Finland

- Support for students plays the key role in the principle of Finnish education to provide equal opportunities for learning and growth. Students have the right for adequate support in learning and studying. This entails removing barriers to learning (physical, attitudinal or pedagogical), early intervention and support and welfare. Early intervention is very important and efficient.
- Student welfare services include health services, social services, psychological services and consultation/aid from the multi-professional team. Students on all steps of support (general, intensified, special) benefit from the student welfare services. These services are voluntary for students. Every school in Nurmijärvi has a support team. This team has meetings when necessary, but at least twice during the school term. The principal can summon the needed assemblage to attend the support team, for instance the special needs teacher, the school's social worker, the nurse, the psychologist, the classroom teacher, other teachers, the municipalities social worker, the doctor, parents, the police and/or the principal.
- Lukkari Primary School's support team has weekly meetings. **The school social worker** meets students in private. Together with the special needs teacher they instruct small groups for students with the need to strengthen their social skills. She co-operates with other support team members and contacts municipality social services when needed. She works in our school for a few days/week. **The nurse follows** the student's health, growth and development. Once a day she has an open-hour when students can visit her without a reserved time. She works in our school for few days/week. **The psychologist** supports the student's learning, welfare as well as social and mental abilities. She meets students in private or observes them during lessons. She also makes some tests for students, but nowadays less than before. She works in our school for a few days/week. **The special needs teacher's** main priority is to prevent learning disabilities, but also to rehabilitate occurred problems in learning. She concentrates on teaching reading, writing, mathematics and some speech training. She works in our school five days/week.

### Impact of Project Learning in our School

- Our school's support team will give lessons in classes during this term. They will focus on different skills such as social ability, teamwork, communication. Therefore, more students will benefit from their support and support team will get to know students and their needs.

### Recommendations

- It would be important that every support team member would work only in one school so that they would be more available during the school days. Extra resources would be needed for that.
- Also if all support team members worked under the principal, they would belong more fully to the school community and be a part of school life.
- Many pupils need a speech therapist because of phonological or vocabulary challenges. Having a special person for those problems would be helpful and a special needs teacher could concentrate on other learning problems.
- A 'Crisis Service' also sounds like a very good system. Every support team member would have her / his own day when she / he is available to visit a class promptly when needed. It would be good if the school social worker could also meet pupils outside of the lessons. In that way pupils don't miss any lessons and there is more time for meeting students each day.



## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- In Belgium's Education system we have mainstream and special needs schools. Recently there has been a lot of change due to the M Decree. Inclusive education is now the preferred option. The goal is to move more school pupils to mainstream education and thus to refer fewer pupils to schools for special education.
- Therefore the idea of having in-school support teams was recently introduced in mainstream schools. This is just the second year that support teams are in the schools, and the universities are still setting up programmes to train personnel for these teams. Special schools continue to support mainstream schools that are working with children with various special needs.
- Care in mainstream education is aimed at all pupils who need extra attention because of developmental and learning disadvantages, social-emotional problems or socio-economic status. In addition, there are also pupils with a disability who can receive extra support in mainstream education.
- Mainstream education:

Schools develop their care policy on the basis of a continuum of care: In the **broad basic care phase**, the school provides a strong learning environment for all pupils, paying attention to the needs of each pupil. In the **phase of increased care**, the school provides extra care for those who require care in the form of remedial, differentiating, compensatory or dispensing measures. In the **phase of care expansion**, the Centre for Pupil Guidance starts the process of action-oriented diagnostics (AOD) for a pupil, in order to determine educational and support needs. The school continues the measures of basic care and increased care during the AOD trajectory. The outcome of the AOD trajectory may be to continue or extend the initial measures or may result in a "substantiated report" for the learner identifying educational and support needs, including special education supports for the school for mainstream education.
- If the measures taken in the phase of care expansion and the support provided by special educational needs education are not sufficient for a pupil to be able to follow the common curriculum in the school for ordinary education, an individually adapted curriculum may be introduced. The Centre for Pupil Guidance will then draw up a 'report for access to special educational needs education or an individually adapted curriculum in ordinary education'.
- In developing a quality care policy for all pupils, the school uses its regular resources and the resources it receives within the framework of the care and equal opportunities policy. The school can also be supported by pedagogical support (school support) and the Centre for Pupil Guidance (e.g. within the framework of consultative pupil guidance). In phases 2 and 3 of the continuum of care, for the guidance of pupils with a motivated report, a school for ordinary education can request support from special educational needs education (see 12.1.2.1 Support model).
- Specific Support Measures

For pupils with a substantiated report, an ordinary school may request support from a special needs school (Circular NO/2017/02, Dutch only). The school for ordinary education determines the support needs in consultation with the parents and the Centre for Pupil Guidance and then formulates its support request. Support can be used in a team-oriented, teacher-oriented or pupil-oriented way. The school grant is there for pupils in pre-school, primary and secondary education. All support questions about pupils based on a substantiated report must be included.
- For pupils with hearing impairment, support is organised through bilateral cooperation between the mainstream and the special educational needs schools.

## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education Contd.

- For types of basic provision (e.g. speech or language disorder) support is organised through the support network to which the school is connected for ordinary education. Support networks are networks in which schools for ordinary and special educational needs education unite to organise support. To organise the support, funds are allocated to schools for special educational needs education, appointing support staff to support ordinary schools.
- Special Teaching Learning Support Materials / Resources  
Special educational needs resources may be made available to pupils, students or trainees with a visual, hearing or physical disability who are in pre-school, primary, secondary, higher or adult education. This target group does not include people with learning disabilities. Resources include technical equipment, paper or digital conversions or adjustments to teaching materials, sign language interpreters and copies of notes from fellow students. The Special Teaching-Learning Resources Unit of the Agency for Educational Services (AgODi) finances these special teaching-learning resources.
- Pupils in mainstream and special nursery and secondary education with dyslexia or dyspraxia or other pupils with a substantiated report who benefit from the use of reading software, are eligible for free reading software. Pupils who do not have a substantiated report but need reading software can obtain an “Adibib Certificate” via the Centre for Pupil Guidance, which gives them free access to the software.
- Pupils/students in mainstream nursery and primary, secondary and higher education and students in adult education with a hearing disability also have access to interpreting support. (Circular NO/2009/02 and VWO/2009/01, Dutch only).

## Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- Our special school Tongelsbos has now allocated fifteen of our teachers to visit mainstream schools in order to organise support teams in these schools.
- At Tongelsbos we provide information to mainstream schools about how to organise the support teams and the reasons why they are necessary.

## Recommendations

- We feel it is necessary to integrate the work of special and mainstream schools.
- Schools should have more flexibility in choosing who they wish to recruit in mainstream education for supporting their pupils: teachers, remedial teachers, paramedics . . .
- We recommend provision by the Ministry of Education of more opportunities for the ongoing professional development of all (mainstream and special education) teachers.

## Case Study: Cross-Disciplinary Support for Inclusive Education

### Policy and Practice in Belgium

- In Belgium's education system we have mainstream and special need schools. There has been a lot of change in school structures in recent years as a consequence of the **M-Decree**<sup>1</sup>. Inclusive education is now the preferred option. The goal is to educate far more pupils in mainstream schools and to refer fewer pupils to schools for special education.
- Pupils with special educational needs have the right to apply to enrol in regular (mainstream) schools. All schools are required to build a **'Continuum of Care'** and check with the teacher or teachers, the parents and the CLB (Center for Student Guidance) as to the reasonable adjustments a pupil with special educational needs may require in order to be able to follow the curriculum.
- The M-Decree also advises that there be **peer support by teachers and paramedical personnel from special education schools for staff in mainstream primary or secondary schools**. Peer support is only possible when the mainstream school has already tried a variety of measures to include the pupil and this support is insufficient for pupil learning (the pupil needs more adjustments and support than the school can offer). With support from peer personnel from special schools, the pupil can stay and learn in mainstream school rather than having to move to a special education setting. The provision of such special support in mainstream schools is a new way of thinking about educational provision in Belgium.

### Impact of Project Learning in our Institution

- We will focus on the theme 'professionalize yourself' as a teacher or paramedic in the Advanced Bachelor in Special Education programme. We already encourage our students in this way, but with the experience and observations in Latvia, we will strengthen this emphasis. In those courses in which 'teacher

professionalization' is a topic, we will focus on the importance of students discussing this with their supervisors, and encourage them to seek sufficient funding supports and time from college authorities / the Ministry of Education to undertake this necessary development.

### Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Ministry of Education create more possibilities to professionalise teachers and staff of schools. Teachers and staff of (special needs) schools have to know recent developments about inclusive education and how to create a powerful learning environment for all the children in their classes. For that to happen it is important that teachers/staff gets the chance to follow lectures, do internships, learn from each other, ... about new insights in education.
- It is recommended that the Ministry of Education should consider various ways to integrate special need classes in mainstream schools. Teachers and paramedics from both schools can work together and learn from each other.
- In light of the M Decree and the focus on Inclusive Education, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education should consider how to create more space/hours for the employment of specialists in mainstream schools (remedial teachers, paramedics, ...) with a view to better supporting all pupils in these schools.

<sup>1</sup>On 12 March 2014 the Flemish Parliament approved a parliamentary act on measures for pupils with specific needs. The aim of the new legislation is to make education more inclusive and consists of measures that enable more students with special educational needs to register and remain in regular education. It delineates more clearly the admission requirements to the different strands of special education. The act also contains measures, which allow pupils with specific educational needs to participate fully, effectively and on equal terms in regular schools and classrooms. The right of pupils to reasonable adaptations by the school to their special educational needs will be guaranteed in accordance with the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.