



ACT-INCLUSIVE – Actors of Change Towards Inclusive Education
Grant Agreement No. 101090038 — ACT-INCLUSIVE — ERASMUS-EDU-2022-PCOOP-ENGO



PRESS RELEASE 1

On Country Sheets



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ACT-INCLUSIVE Project Unveils Comprehensive Report on Inclusive Education in Cyprus

Nicosia, Cyprus – September 30, 2024 – The ACT-INCLUSIVE project, a significant initiative funded by the Erasmus+ programme under the "Partnership for Cooperation in the field of Education and Training (ERASMUS-EDU-2022-PCOOP-ENGO)", is proud to present the latest findings on the state of inclusive education in Cyprus. The comprehensive report, that may be found on the project's [website](#), developed by CARDET, details the current structures, challenges, and opportunities within mainstream schools for students with disabilities.

This press release aims to inform educators, policymakers, researchers, and the general public about the current state of inclusive education in Cyprus and the necessary steps forward to ensure a more inclusive educational environment for all students.

What is Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education means that every child has the right to quality education and learning. It is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together.

Why Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education is critical. It promotes diversity, equity, and social justice. It recognizes that every student is unique and has different learning needs. It seeks to create an environment that is responsive to those learning needs.

Inclusive Education: A Historical and Legislative Overview

The history of inclusive education in Cyprus is marked by significant legislative developments. Since the establishment of separate special schools in 1929, Cyprus has seen various phases of integration and inclusion. The legislative framework solidified in 1999 with the Education Act for children with special needs, ensuring that all students, regardless of their disabilities, have the right to be integrated into mainstream schools.

Current Structures and Support Systems

The Cypriot education system provides for both mainstream and special education settings. Special education teachers support students within mainstream classrooms, ensuring they receive the necessary individualized attention. Despite these efforts, the system faces challenges such as insufficient specialized staff, particularly in secondary education, and the need for more comprehensive teacher training programs.

Challenges and Barriers to Inclusiveness

While there are structures in place to support students with disabilities, several challenges remain. These include:

- **Insufficient Specialized Staff:** The number of qualified special education teachers is inadequate, particularly in secondary schools.
- **Limited Teacher Training:** Teachers often lack sufficient training in inclusive education practices.
- **Infrastructure and Accessibility:** Many schools still need to improve physical accessibility and provide adequate assistive technologies.

Voices from the Field

The report is enriched with perspectives from 10 teachers and 25 students across three mainstream schools in Cyprus. Their insights highlight the practical challenges and successes of implementing inclusive education on the ground. Teachers and students both emphasize the need for more resources, better training, and a more inclusive school culture.

Looking Ahead: Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The findings from the Cyprus Country Sheets are instrumental in shaping future policies and practices. Key recommendations include:

1. **Increasing Investment in Special Education:** Allocate more resources to hire and train specialized staff.
2. **Enhancing Teacher Training Programs:** Develop comprehensive training programs focused on inclusive education.
3. **Improving School Infrastructure:** Ensure all schools are physically accessible and equipped with necessary assistive technologies.
4. **Fostering an Inclusive School Culture:** Promote acceptance and inclusion through awareness campaigns and inclusive practices.

About ACT-INCLUSIVE

The ACT-INCLUSIVE project aims to spread inclusive practices and materials suited for raising awareness within school communities and empowering students with disabilities. The project is supported by the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (Belgium) and educational centers from Spain, Hungary, Cyprus, France, and Slovenia.

More Information

For more information, please visit our [website](#) and/ or follow us on [FB](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

