



# IE+

PROMOTING POSITIVE  
ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE-  
BASED POLICY FOR  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

# IE+ Training Manual

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## Acknowledgements

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The other deliverables of the IE+ project can be found on the project webpage [www.easped.eu/en/content/promoting-inclusive-education](http://www.easped.eu/en/content/promoting-inclusive-education)



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## 1. Introduction

This training manual is for the use of all trainers who will deliver the IE+ inclusive education training course. Together with the six training chapters that accompany it, this manual will equip trainers with the practical knowledge and expertise to be able to deliver a training course to decision-makers in the field of education. This training course will enable these decision-makers to implement evidence-based policy making, which will support the realisation of inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities in their region.

In this manual you will find out more about the intended target audiences of this training course, possible motivations that could encourage them to participate and how to include them in the delivery of your course.

This manual is a product of the ‘Promoting positive attitudes and evidence-based policy for inclusive education’ (IE+) project, which aims to provide decision-makers with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence-based policy making to support the transition towards inclusive education for children. This project has been driven by 7 partners across 5 European countries from civil society, academia, the support service sector and NGOs in the field of



education. This manual and its training chapters have been co-produced in their design, development and delivery, and the contribution of key stakeholders, as well as that of our first 10 trainers, have been vital to their creation.

## 2. Inclusive Education: The way forward

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Education is a fundamental human right that is enshrined in many international human rights instruments. The most notable of these instruments is the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, United Nations, 2006). Article 24 of the UNCRPD alludes to the right to inclusive education (IE) for students with disabilities, highlighting that States Parties must ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning to promote (United Nations, 2006, p. 16):

- The full development of human potential;
- The development of personality, talents and creativity to their fullest potential;
- The effective participation in a free society.

Under the UNCRPD, it is highlighted that IE should not only focus on curricular content (e.g. numeracy or literacy skills), but it should be holistic and promote the fullest development of students with disabilities of any kind, and their participation as valued members within communities and society (Amor, Verdugo, Calvo, Navas, & Aguayo, 2018). Through this approach, an inclusive education system promotes the Quality of Life of learners with disabilities and supports their overall personal well-being.

Despite the enshrinement of this right in a number of human rights treaties and the benefits that inclusive education has for all those who are a part of our society, access to mainstream education is still far from being the reality for many learners with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities.

### **Disclaimer**

Given the broad scope of inclusive education, for the purposes of this project, this course focuses on supporting the realisation of inclusive education for learners with intellectual disabilities aged between 3-18 years old, regardless of their gender.

Traditionally, achieving the inclusion of learners with intellectual disabilities in mainstream schools is perceived as more challenging. As a result, the IE+ project partners chose to focus on inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities to address these challenges and support decision-makers to implement policies that can overcome them.



The participants of this training course should be aware of this parameter to the course. It should be stressed however that the information and tools that they will gain through this training will be useful for the inclusion of all learners and are for the benefit of all.

## 3. The IE+ training course

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Via this training course, the IE+ project aims to support the realisation of inclusive education systems for learners with intellectual disabilities across Europe, by providing decision-makers with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence-based policy making.

For the purposes of this course, inclusion in the education sector is defined as every person having the same possibilities to enjoy a high-quality education without being segregated. In an inclusive education system, the framework changes to adapt to the individual needs of the learner and applies attitudes, approaches and strategies that include all learners in all activities, regardless of their support needs, with respect to their individual learning level. An inclusive education refers to education at all levels (e.g. parallel, informal and post-graduate learning).

### The contents of this course

The IE+ training course is composed of 6 'chapters', each of which covers a different topic in the realisation of an inclusive education system. The chapters are as follows:

**Chapter I.** The Human Rights framework and Policy framework

**Chapter II.** Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education.

**Chapter III.** Monitoring and the Quality of Life Index

**Chapter IV.** Funding of Inclusive Education

**Chapter V.** School Environment

**Chapter VI.** How to adapt the classroom



## How to deliver the course

Each chapter represents one 3-hour session of a 3-day training course. This course can be delivered in a timeframe that suits trainers and participants. For example, either in six, 3-hour individual chapter sessions; as three, 1-day trainings or one 3-day course. It is not mandatory for all course participants to attend the training on every chapter. Regardless of the arrangement and timeframe the chapters are organised in, the training course must:

- Be delivered in chronological order of chapters;
- Have a set group of participants throughout its entire duration;
- Offer an opportunity for all participants to come together and interact with each other.

It is also recommended that the course is delivered across a timeframe no greater than 2 months.

This course is intended to be delivered as a face-to-face training, rather than an online one. The partners of the IE+ project strongly recommend an in-person implementation. However, the course was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and was tested in an online format. It can therefore be delivered online if needed.

## Who will benefit from this course?

Decision-makers in the field of education are the target of this training course, and will directly benefit from it. The six chapters will equip them with the knowledge and tools that they need for evidence-based policy making. This group of decision-makers is composed of key-stakeholders in the education sector and includes:

- Policy makers at the local, regional and national level;
- Ministry representatives;
- Educational providers, including those from middle management, headmasters or administrative staff;
- Representatives from teacher unions, parents' organisations or student associations (including those representing learners with disabilities);
- School inspectors;
- University Professors;

These decision-makers can come from the local, regional or national level but should, in some way, be involved in the policy making process. It is recommended that trainers aim to have a mix of course participants that is as diverse as possible. Diversity is a key strength of the course, and offering moments for participants to share their personal experiences will provide a



powerful accompaniment to the training content. It can also help to facilitate the co-production of policies for inclusive education in the future.

While decision-makers are the direct beneficiaries of this training, it cannot be forgotten that a number of other groups will benefit from the creation of evidence-based policy that supports the realisation of inclusive education systems. The first of these groups are children with intellectual disabilities. As already mentioned in this manual, inclusive education can help children with intellectual disabilities to enjoy their human rights; achieve the development of their personality, talents and creativity to their fullest potential; fully participate in society and enjoy a higher quality of life. However, all students have individual learning needs and, as a result, it should not be forgotten that all learners will benefit from an inclusive school system that accommodates diversity.

The advantages of inclusive education are not just limited to learners; teachers can benefit from more flexible education systems and better support systems; parents and families can benefit from their family member's inclusion in the community, and policy makers and authorities can benefit from the economic savings that can be the result of moving from a segregated to an inclusive education system. (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017, P.14) These are just a few of the benefits of inclusive education, and the possible motivations of participants will be further addressed in the next chapter of this manual.

## 4. Why this course?

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The IE+ training course offers participants the opportunity to learn more about a broad range of topics to support their policy making activities. Not all participants will be immediately convinced of the need to participate in this course; this chapter therefore gives a variety of possible motivations which could encourage stakeholders to join the course.

As we already mentioned, the diversity of participants in this course will be one of its key strengths, as the training will provide these stakeholders with the opportunity to come together with other education stakeholders to learn and exchange. The course offers policy makers the chance to speak with different members of their electorate. For other participants, this training is an opportunity to gather with policy makers and share experiences, concerns and what is important to them in ensuring a successful transition towards inclusive education.

Below you will find some more reasons to participate, what can be gained from the course and the impact that it can have on participants' work:



## Chapter I. The Human Rights framework and Policy framework

This chapter will provide participants with knowledge on the international framework and standard, and how they can be implemented in participants' national/regional/local environments. It will also:

- Enable learners and parents to learn more about their right to an inclusive education.
- Educate participants on how the current legislation can support the achievement of their goals.
- Give policy makers the opportunity to understand the legal frameworks that they are obligated to implement.

## Chapter II. Socio-ecological approach, Quality of Life, Universal Design and Evidence based Practices as necessary foundations for Inclusive Education.

Chapter II recognises that attitudes are the main barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education. It will support a shift of mindset and inform the trainees on how to understand inclusive education. It will also:

- Provide the opportunity for participants to hear about the attitudes of others and the experiences that have shaped them.
- Help participants understand and overcome the fears and stigma linked to inclusive education.

## Chapter III. Monitoring and the Quality of Life Index

Chapter III will highlight the importance of evidence-based monitoring and give trainees a practical tool to support their policy development. It will also:

- Provide participants with an important tool to monitor the implementation of inclusive education, as well as collect evidence on its impact on the quality of life of learners.
- Help policy makers monitor how effectively they use their funds to support inclusive education, and make adjustments when needed.
- Enable teachers, parents, schools and learners to collect evidence on the benefits of inclusive education, and use it in their advocacy work.

## Chapter IV. Funding of Inclusive Education

This chapter will provide participants with the information and tools to access different forms of funding to support their reforms towards inclusive education. This could include:



- Empower schools to utilise funding programmes outside of their traditional funding sources to scale-up innovative practices, support the continued professional development of their staff or invest in their infrastructure.
- Provide local authorities with additional funding opportunities to help them make the initial investment towards a more inclusive education system.
- Provide policy makers with alternative funding models that can promote the inclusion of learners.

## Chapter V. School Environment

Chapter V will provide participants with a better understanding of the impact of the environment on the well-being, participation and achievements of learners. It will also:

- Open paths through which participants can improve the environment of their schools.
- Provide an opportunity for teachers, parents and learners to discuss their needs and how they can support the realisation of more inclusive school environments with policy makers and authorities.

## Chapter VI. How to adapt the classroom

For authorities, inspectors and school management this chapter will highlight the importance and impact of a good classroom design. It will also:

- Provide participants with effective strategies to promote inclusive classrooms.
- Provide an opportunity for teachers and learners to discuss their needs and how they can support the realisation of more inclusive classrooms with school managers and authorities.

These are just a few of the reasons that can encourage decision-makers to participate in this course. You may find that they differ from region to region, with some chapters providing greater motivation to some participants than others.

## 5. Co-production

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A key feature of this training course is the inclusion of all stakeholders in its design, development and delivery. The development and finalisation of the content of each training chapter has already been co-produced. The IE+ project partners believe that education is, by essence, a great example of co-production because of the need for cooperation between learners, family members, teachers and the system to be successful. To promote cooperation between all actors,



and its importance to the success of inclusive education, this course will also be co-delivered alongside key stakeholders.

As a trainer, working alongside a key stakeholder enables you to take advantage of their expertise and knowledge, as well as promote a greater integration between stakeholders. Your co-trainer could be one of your course participants, who supports you in the delivery of one of your sessions, helping them to take ownership of their own learning experience and that of the group. Although the same level of co-delivery is not expected for each chapter, at least two of these chapters should be co-delivered by a person with an intellectual disability. Below is a list of possible stakeholders who can help you co-deliver your course:

- **Chapter I:** A person with an intellectual disability.
- **Chapter II:** Teachers, a person with an intellectual disability.
- **Chapter III:** While it is not necessary to co-deliver the tool, it may be interesting to work with a parent who values the school environment and quality of life over grades.
- **Chapter IV:** A representative from the National Agency for Erasmus+ or from the European investment bank in your region.
- **Chapter V:** Teachers, school management, learners, school inspectors.
- **Chapter VI:** Teachers, Parents of children without or with an intellectual disability, a person with an intellectual disability.

For further support in co-delivering your training, please see the IE+ Co-production Checklist in Annex.

## 6. Conclusion

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This manual provides the starting blocks for you, as a trainer of the IE+ training course, to go forward and deliver a dynamic course to decision-makers in the field of education. This course will provide these decision-makers with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence-based policy making. While the transition towards fully inclusive education systems is an ongoing process, which will take time to achieve, equipped with what they have learnt in this training and working together with the connections they have formed during this training, participants will be able to continue working towards the realisation of this goal: the provision of high quality, inclusive education for all learners.



## 7. References

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Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, (2017). *Fighting school segregation in Europe through inclusive education: a position paper*. Retrieved from <https://rm.coe.int/fighting-school-segregationin-europe-throughinclusive-education-a-posi/168073fb65>

United Nations (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Available at: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>



## 8. Annex 1

### Coproduction Checklist

#### Production process that allows genuine participation at all stages.

##### Co-design of chapter (before training)

1. The two trainers chosen to deliver the chapters represent different categories of stakeholders (e.g.: 1 educational system/1 policy background).
2. The participants targeted need to represent the diversity of the decision-makers identified by partners.
3. The objectives of the chapters and expectations are discussed and agreed beforehand with the participants, so they start providing inputs/suggestions before the chapter.
4. The dates for the training chapters are communicated beforehand with a reasonable delay to ensure participation of a wide range of stakeholders.
5. The materials that will be used during the chapter are prepared with different stakeholders and are understood by all.
6. The aforementioned materials are sent sufficiently early to participants to ensure that they are prepared.
7. Participants are informed of the co-productive aspect of the chapter and their role in the chapter and can prepare testimonies, information before the chapter.
8. The communication must be adapted to the targeted participants.
9. The schedule of the chapter training must be adapted to the time constraints of the participants.
10. Trainers and participants are informed of the accessibility requirement and to communicate in an understandable way if people with intellectual disabilities are represented in the training chapter.

##### Co-delivery of chapter (during the training)

11. Trainers deliver the chapter bearing in mind the expectations of people and prejudices that might affect the training. (cf: needs assessment)
12. Energizer games and ice-breaker are taking place at the beginning of the training to increase the group cooperation and re-organised if the audience substantially changed (newcomers)



13. Accessibility rules as well as the mode of participation selected are explained to all at the beginning of the training.
14. Accessibility cards and visuals are used during the training to facilitate everyone's participation and understanding.
15. Based on the work done with the participants before the module delivering, the trainers foster a pro-active approach.
16. Every participant is given the opportunity to speak and share his/her experience and thoughts on the topic discussed.
17. All discussions should happen in presence of all the participants or at least representatives of all category of stakeholders.
18. A statement/memorandum of understanding is agreed upon and signed by all participants and the barriers identified and how to overcome them. All disagreement should be also enshrined and explained in the final document.

### **Co-assessment of chapter (after the training)**

19. All participants are given a chance through an accessible questionnaire to comment their experience of participation before and after in the training chapter
20. Participants can support the development of the deliveries (cf: Quality Assurance Framework on coproduction).



## 9. About the IE+ Project

Promoting positive attitudes and evidence-based policy for inclusive education' (IE+) is a Erasmus + funded project which aims to provide decision-makers (policy-makers and education providers) with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence based policy making. Through these activities the project will facilitate not only adequate policy frameworks but also their real implementation, with a special focus on the transition from segregated to inclusive education settings.

The project partnership is comprised of the following organisations:



The **European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities** (EASPD) is a wide European network which represents around 17.000 services across Europe and across disabilities.



The **European Association of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families Inclusion Europe** (Inclusion Europe) represents the voice of people with intellectual disabilities and their families throughout Europe.



At **Ghent University** the Department of Special Needs Education has a focus on Inclusive Education in teaching research and service to the community.



The first **University of Salamanca's Institute on Community Integration** (INICO) is composed of interdisciplinary professionals that lead activities linked to training, research and counseling in the field of disability and special educational needs with the aim of easing and enhancing the quality of life and self-determination of people living at social disadvantages in different contexts and throughout their life cycle.



**ESTIA - Support & Social Care Center for People with Intellectual Disability** specialises in providing support and care to people with intellectual disabilities from 15 years of age with the aim of improving quality of life and supporting inclusion into the community.



The **National Association of Resource Teachers in Bulgaria** (NART) is a national NGO umbrella for professionals working for full and quality integration, inclusion and education of children with different abilities and needs in mainstream education.



**C.E.C.D. Mira Sintra - Centro de Educação para o Cidadão com Deficiência**, C.R.L. (Education Centre for Persons with Disability) is a Cooperative for Social Solidarity, a non-profit organisation and was recognized by the Government as an organization of Public Utility.

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