

Teacher Education for Inclusion Across Europe Challenges and Opportunities

Micheline Sciberras
Director General
Directorate for Educational Services
Malta
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Introduction: Directorate for Educational Services



Children from about 20 nationalities mingle effortlessly at the St Paul's Bay primary school. Photo: Matthew Mirabelli.

- 101 State Schools distributed into 10 Colleges
- Malta's main education employer
- 3700 teachers
- 420 kindergarten assistants
- 2800 learning support assistants
- 500 Heads and Assistant Heads of School
- Curricular support professionals
- Psychosocial support services
- Technical Services
- A Team of 8000 employees serving 35000 students

Profile of Inclusive Teachers

- Seen through the eyes of an education employer with particular emphasis on:

human resources development
student services provision
school resources management



Profile of Inclusive Teachers: Reactions and Reflections



- Main question being tackled in the profile is “how are teachers being prepared via their initial teacher education programmes to be inclusive?”
- Challenge for us as education employers is to take this question and apply it to our own practice.
- How are employers managing educational systems to be more inclusive?

Profile of Inclusive Teachers: Reactions and Reflections

- It is useless for teacher to attempt to value inclusion, if the structure they are working in, the organisation, is not built on a philosophy of inclusion.
- This value of inclusion needs to be evident in policies, procedures and guidelines, as well as, structures and system.

Implications of Profile on Human Resource Development

- Profile can be used for:
 - recruitment purposes
 - employee support programmes
 - performance appraisal
 - induction
 - mentoring
 - deployment of teachers (central)
 - continued professional development

Implications of Profile on School Resources Management

- What design should our schools have to be inclusive?
- Respecting the diversity of educators and learners means creating physical environments that allows them to be creative in their own unique way
- Supporting the professional development of this creativity is crucial in instilling, inculcating and encouraging an inclusive philosophy.
- Physical accessibility
- Profile states teachers need to ensure that students have “access to mainstream education means that all learners are engaged in learning activities that are meaningful for them.”
- What kind of physical environment is needed for this; open spaces, outdoor areas, meeting places, laboratories, etc?
- What kind of equipment is needed? Technology – laptops, IWBs, blogs, virtual meeting rooms, etc

Implication of Profile on Student Services Provision

- Profile is applicable to all teachers; generic and specialized
- Danger of specializations creating segregation and exclusion
- Need to develop services that support teachers to develop profile competences
- Main message that comes across is that the rights based approach emphasizes the belief that inclusion is the responsibility of all educators.
- Of all educators; including multi-disciplinary teams, curricular professionals, technical services and other support staff
- Out of class services also have the precise remit of re-integration into class (nurture groups, LSZs and LSCs)

Challenges of the Profile



- An inclusive philosophy does not solely remain the remit of the teacher; the entire school system needs to embrace, own and implement this philosophy
- The challenge being brought about by this profile is that inclusive education is for all
- It is not solely about meeting the needs of specific groups of learners
- It is a provision for all teachers to have a foundation to work with learners with a diverse range of needs
- This brings about challenging questions:
- Who is today's student? Do we have a student's profile?
- This is often met with fear that needs to be accompanied, phased in approaches to new methods and lots and lots of in-school support

Profile of Inclusive Teachers: Reactions and Reflections

- Profile is not solely a guide to initial teacher education programmes but a motivator, a map for the route of lifelong teacher training and professional development.





Implications of Profile on the DES

- How is the National Curriculum Framework currently being discussed going to be more inclusive in its implementation?
- How is school infrastructure encompassing this inclusive philosophy?
- How are school resources being distributed to reflect this inclusive education approach and belief?
- How is our recruitment system providing for the engagement of inclusive teachers?
- How is our HR system support schools to be more inclusive?

Implications of Profile on the DES



- How are our student services provision developing so as to support teacher to develop the competences listed in this profile?
- What do the students have to say about all this?
- And the parents?
- The community?
- Are our doors open to diversity while still allowing a structure and a framework to guide educators?
- What investment needs to be made in school leadership so as to have leaders who are beacons in the development of such competences?

Profile of Inclusive Teachers

THANK YOU
REFLECTION, CHALLENGE AND THINKING
OUT OF THE BOX!

