

European Toolkit for Schools

Inclusive Schools - InScool

January 2019 to January 2021

WHEN WAS THE MEASURE FIRST STARTED?

The Inclusive Schools (InScool) project (<https://inclusiveschools.net/>) officially started in January 2019. The Inclusive Schools Education Pack was originally written from March to May 2019 and was first introduced to an international pool of trainers who were trained in InScool methodology during the International Training for Trainers in May 2019. It was then brought to consultation in September 2019 through focus groups in the partner countries comprising teachers, school heads, students and education stakeholders (NGOs, educational institutes, directorates linked to MoEs). It was eventually piloted through teacher training in the partner countries, which started in September/October 2019 and was directly implemented in schools in the school year 2019/2020.

WHAT WERE THE CONDITIONS AND STEPS TAKEN THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED MOST TO THE SUCCESS OF THE MEASURE?

The InScool project's vision is reflected in the Education Pack's comprehensive methodology and was rolled out in five countries through teacher training and direct workshops in schools, while also reaching out to a wider range of territories through student training and advocacy actions.

The Education Pack of Inclusive Schools has been authored by Sian Williams, an international expert with over twenty-five years of experience in formal education and in non-formal education projects of inclusion-in-education across the world.

A collaborative approach and open consultation for the development of the toolkit led to a sense of ownership and contributed to the success of the measure through gradual pilot steps, such as professional development for trainers, focus groups with education stakeholders, and teacher and student training. Working together with school leaders, teachers, advisors, students, parents and policymakers, the project attempted to create a ripple effect across the school community as a whole and supported the creation of an action plan to practically deliver inclusion strategies in European schools. The outreach to the school community as a whole and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders through different activities has also been one of the key success factors for the project.

WHICH STAKEHOLDERS WERE INVOLVED IN IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF THE MEASURE?

Apart from partners and relevant staff within the InScool project, the following stakeholders were involved in needs analysis and co-design of the measure through pilot training and focus groups:

- Non-formal education trainers
- Student activists, teachers and school heads
- Education stakeholders in NGOs, educational institutes, academics and entities affiliated to MoEs

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTING THE MEASURE? WHO HAS THE KEY RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION?

InScool's seven partners were involved in implementing the measure: <https://inclusiveschools.net/partners/>

As the coordinator of the action, the British Council was also the leader of the respective working package, including overall design and the development of the Education Pack, and steered the implementation of activities in all territories (incl. Greece, UK, Spain, Poland and Belgium) through its office in Greece.

Further to that, the Scottish Development Education Centre (ScotDec) in Edinburgh led on the working package related to the implementation of education activities and developed supporting resources such as the Inclusion Week kit, Home Resources for students and parents, as well as resources on equality and diversity. Direct implementation in schools and with teachers took place in three cities in Greece, four areas in Scotland, and two cities in Spain, as well as in Krakow and in Brussels.

In addition, the Organising Bureau of Student Unions in Europe, OBESSU, reached out to students across their network and organised international student training sessions and pilots beyond the project countries (Austria, Sweden, Romania, Slovenia) through their student union representatives.

HOW ARE THE DIFFERENT PEOPLE INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTATION BEING SUPPORTED (E.G., DO THEY RECEIVE SPECIFIC TRAINING?)

The idea around the Inclusive Schools methodology as outlined in the Education Pack is to involve the whole school community as much as possible. Therefore, the project first supported the implementation by piloting the methodology and activities with an international pool of trainers, who then cascaded to more trainers, teachers and school heads on a national level. The second step was to facilitate, in each school community, the creation of core groups that

acted as inclusion ambassadors and put forth the school's needs analysis and implemented methodology and activities with students. Trainers directly working with InScool co-facilitated activities with the five-steps methodology in 65 schools across Europe. Finally, the involvement of policymakers and education consultants through relevant events helped to interpret the outcomes through policy perspective lenses and activate discussions around the needs of school communities towards a path to inclusion.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE OBSTACLES TO INTRODUCING THE MEASURE? HOW HAVE THEY BEEN ADDRESSED?

The Inclusive Schools Education Pack serves as a guide for school stakeholders in setting up a comprehensive action plan for the unending path to inclusion in education. The project received invaluable feedback from all stakeholders involved in the pilot phase and was then introduced to the school communities through teacher training and workshops in schools. Up until March 2020, when schools across Europe had to gradually close down as a response to COVID-19 restrictive measures, there were no major obstacles in introducing the measure apart from manageable challenges regarding how to reach out to the whole-school community, engaging parents, school heads and others in dynamic interaction to identify the needs and decide on the action points schools would commit to.

Therefore, even though the project was originally designed to set up an Inclusive Schools certification scheme and to organise an Inclusion Week for 500 schools across the EU, this was eventually not possible at all. Instead, trainers in the project attempted to elaborate on the detailed action plan and proposed activities for schools as put forward in the Education Pack, which was translated into 8 languages other than English. A vast number of extra teacher training workshops were introduced in partner countries, as well as webinars and a pilot online course on inclusion-in-education, in order to support teachers and provide them with tools to bolster inclusion in their classrooms – even under the challenging, unprecedented circumstances – using the Edu Pack as a compass.

IS THERE A MONITORING/EVALUATION SYSTEM IN PLACE? WHAT IS MONITORED?

A solid M&E framework was put in place since the beginning of the project, as well as quality assurance led by the Institute of Education Policy: an InScool partner and an entity affiliated to the Ministry of Education in Greece with the shared responsibility of approving educational projects and content for schools.

External evaluator Ms Eliza Popper proposed a set of M&E tools and has been close to the project since the very beginning.

A second focus group was organised in the partner countries and among students in OBESSU's network to review outcomes and feed into the policy paper and recommendations as identified through the project.

WHO MONITORS AND HOW?

Project partners as well as external evaluators through a set of tools measuring qualitative and quantitative data (focus groups, evaluation forms for partners' and stakeholders' feedback, interviews with teachers and trainers).

IS FURTHER EVALUATION PLANNED AND WHEN WILL THE RESULTS BE AVAILABLE?

Results of the final external evaluation will be available at the end of March 2021.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF THE MEASURE?

The InScool project methodology has been introduced and piloted through 55 teacher and student training sessions and directly implemented in around 65 school communities in Europe. Teachers and students have shown great interest in the educational material developed throughout the project and were actively involved in the implementation of activities despite the challenges. Moreover, the project website where the Education Pack is uploaded has reached 6,000 users and 20,000 page views.

The Education Pack will be upscaled in the Inclusive Schools II project and tailored to teachers' and school heads' continuous training.

As the project was completed very recently and under unprecedented circumstances for school communities in Europe, it is impossible to measure a longer-term impact of the InScool educational methodology as reflected in stakeholders' attitudes and school culture.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE INVOLVED (MATERIAL, SPACE, AMOUNT OF FUNDING)?

The methodology of Inclusive Schools primarily relies on setting up an action plan following a specific needs analysis of their students throughout the yearly operation.

Human resources remain a key factor; namely, the engagement of a core group (school heads/teachers/students/parents) to work towards inclusion in their community.

Of course, according to each school's needs analysis, the proposed actions might require extra materials and funding. If, for example, there are students with kinetic difficulties, a school should be able to build on their infrastructure to support their access.

Proposed activities (age groups 9-11 and 12-15) are designed for a face-to-face delivery requiring basic stationary items for implementation, but they can be adapted for online learning.

IS THE MEASURE STILL RUNNING? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

The project officially ended on 14 January 2021, but the Education Pack (available in English, Greek, Spanish, Italian, Polish, French, Dutch, German and Romanian) and related tools have remained as an open resource for schools across Europe and have been disseminated throughout the project period. Stakeholders have recognised the Education Pack as a valuable resource and methodology upon which the project Inclusive Schools II (621471-EPP-1-2020-1-UK-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN) aims to expand on. InScool II will focus on teachers' and school heads' continuous training for the whole school year, including national teacher training in participating countries, as well as the development of a MOOC on inclusion in education.



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