



CITIZENS AND GOVERNANCE
IN THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY

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INCLUD-ED

Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from education

Integrated Project

Priority 7. Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-based Society.

**REPORT OF INTEGRATED RESULTS TOWARDS ACTION AND POLICY
RECOMENDATIONS**

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Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

This report's main contribution are the policy recommendations that have emerged from the project results obtained through an intensive and rigorous scientific activities oriented to identify the Successful Actions and the ongoing dialogue that has been established with the major stakeholders in education, the four areas of society (housing, health, employment and participation) and vulnerable groups, for instance, civil society organizations, policy-makers, teachers and other professionals, including the end-users: students, families, community members, and others.

INCLUD-ED, framed under the Communicative Methodology, has followed a communicative organization of the research allowing for maintaining this ongoing dialogue that has gone beyond the research consortium. The communicative organization has been crystallized through a series of managerial structures. An outstanding one has been the Advisory Committee (AC) composed by representatives of the five vulnerable groups. Three meetings have been organized with the AC where the ongoing results were problematized and revised according to their views, experiences and also by engaging with critical dialogue with the researchers. In all these meetings, the main goal was to deeply tackle with the core of the scientific results and policy recommendations. The Panel of Experts, composed by experts from a wide range of disciplines and policy-makers has been also another body that has played a different but complementary role in supporting the research team in defining policy recommendations. The different *Free Task Oriented Groups* have also been part of this dialogue, for instance, teachers groups, teachers' training, evaluation, and statistics. Each of these groups has contributed to the definition of these policy recommendations from their own expertise.

Last but not least, during the five years, 157 international congresses and seminars from different disciplines, 62 project conferences and seminars (Two of them at the European Parliament headquarters in Brussels), 94 training seminars throughout the 14 participating countries. Thus, INCLUD-ED researchers have participated and/or presented in 137 events for teachers, 81 events for stakeholders and end-users and 213 for other agents, such as students, deans or expert groups. In each of them, located in different EU State members and outside, in front of scholar colleagues, policy-makers, professionals and end-users, INCLUD-ED researchers have engaged in critical dialogue with the unique goal to make the results and the policy recommendations stronger and relevant in addressing the challenge of

promoting social cohesion. After all these efforts, the INCLUD-ED team hopes that these policy recommendations will be helpful for those who are seeking for evidences of what works in education and social policy in order to make a change in society and in the live of those groups who are more at risk of social exclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

Same resources, better results: Successful Educational Actions (SEAs)

- **Foster educational policies based on successful educational actions**, which have scientifically demonstrated to both increase academic results and improve living together in the school and beyond. Health policies are based on scientific evidence about the most successful treatments; we need educational policies based on scientific evidences about the most successful educational actions.
- **Base teacher's training on scientific evidences**. Teacher's training is very important for the development of the best educational results. Receiving this training allows teachers to know what works in education, and be socialized into looking for evidence from research of the most positive outcomes. This scientific based teacher's training enables them to move from assumptions and to work according to evidences. It is advisable to do the in-service training in those schools which are obtaining the best results in relation to their socio-economic status.
- **Encourage the inclusive successful actions overcoming both streaming and mixture practices**. Mixture is the traditional way of organizing heterogeneous classrooms which does not guarantee that all, and each of the pupils are attended. Streaming or ability grouping widens the achievement gap of academic performance and legitimises low attainment of some pupils. There are inclusion actions that have already provided evidence of its successful outcomes with children.
- **Promote the actions which achieve better results with the same resources**. Research demonstrates that when the already existing human resources (often used to separate children into special groups or classrooms) are reorganised into inclusive successful actions, schools improve all pupils' academic achievement, including Roma, migrants and children with disabilities. These successful actions include interactive groups, afterschool learning programmes and dialogic reading.

- **Develop interactive groups in classrooms.** Interactive groups accelerate children’s learning and have been found to be a very successful classroom organization. Pupils are grouped in heterogeneous groups with more adults in the classroom (teachers, educators, support or special education teachers or social workers, relatives, siblings, community members or other volunteers). No child is segregated from the regular classroom, instead help is included inside. Interactive groups guarantee the success for all.
- **Favour the extension of the learning time without reducing curricular goals.** Schools can extend the learning time in order to implement successful educational actions to foster children’s attainment, through also using the existing human resources (professional or volunteer) in afterschool, weekends and holiday programmes. Children who need additional support can get it without being removed from the regular classroom. Some successful examples are homework clubs, afterschool clubs, tutored libraries and weekend centres. These activities include instrumental learning, such as support to language learning, literacy or mathematics, instead reducing curricular goals.
- **Facilitate dialogic reading: more persons, more time, and more spaces.** Reading is an action that takes place in many and diverse contexts during more time (beyond school hours), in more spaces (from the classroom to home and the street) and with more people (with peers, friends, family members, teachers, neighbours, volunteers and other community members). Children from all social backgrounds improve communicative abilities and increase reading standards.
- **Encourage *decisive, evaluative and educative* types of family and community participation.** Research has shown that these are the ones which most positively influence pupils’ success, both in academic and non-academic aspects. Besides participation in the school decision-making processes (decisive) and in the evaluation of children and curriculum (evaluative), family and community members participate in the learning process of children (educative).
- **Foster family education in schools that is related to learning outcomes.**

While some interpretations of statistics make a relationship between parents' level of education and children's learning outcomes, there is a need to break from the determinist prejudice which creates negative expectations on the families without academic background. Families' low educational levels have a major influence only when successful educational actions are not implemented. Certain family education actions have demonstrated that we do not need to wait for the next generation (better prepared) to change the closed circle of educational inequality. Among successful actions in family education we find dialogic literary gatherings, host language learning and other instrumental learning activities.

- **Dialogic literary gatherings is an example of a successful family education** in which people who had never read a book and, in general, people who do not have an academic background, read and discuss books by authors of universal classic literature. These authors may include, among many others, Tolstoy, Shakespeare, Homer, Kafka, Sophocles, Cervantes, Zola, and Orwell. Through dialogic literary gatherings family and community members improve literacy learning and foster a critical reading of the social reality.
- **Support the development of schools as learning communities.** Schools as learning communities agree on a common vision and increase the commitment of pupils, parents, teachers and stake holders in supporting school quality. They all focus on school improvement and take ownership of their own learning process through helping to the implementation of the successful educational actions. Based on scientific evidences, this has already been recommended by the European Commission and the European Council¹.
- **Move forward beyond ghettos in Europe through the dialogic inclusion contract.** This contract helps to overcome educational and social exclusion and attract the engagement of middle and upper class children to schools that had previously been ghettos. Through the Dialogic Inclusion Contract teachers, social workers, families, administration, community organisations and researchers dialogue about the evidences of the successful actions provided by

¹ European Commission. (2011). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Tackling Early School Leaving: a key contribution to the Europe 2020 agenda*. Brussels: European Commission.

research. The objective is to recreate the successful actions into their context to overcome educational and social exclusion.

- **Facilitate integrative successful actions.** The implementation of successful educational actions in schools lead to social transformations in the same communities in other areas of society, such as employment, health, housing and political participation. Research shows that successful actions in these areas include an educational component.
- **Enhance inclusive vocational training,** which allows pupils to return to the educational system and move forward to higher education, contributing to avoid unemployment. Instead of reducing vocational training curriculums that focus only on specific skills for concrete occupations, they include academic subjects for higher qualification, together with workplace-related skills. This guarantees that young people in these programmes study a more thorough and integrated curriculum, and therefore acquire both the key competences for lifelong learning they will need in the labour market and the possibility to access academic tracks that can lead to higher education and better working conditions in the long term.