

Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion

Methodology Report

T P L 4 I



EUROPEAN AGENCY
for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR INCLUSION

Methodology Report

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education



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Editors: Annet De Vroey and Simoni Symeonidou

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Secretariat

Østre Stationsvej 33
DK-5000 Odense C Denmark
Tel.: +45 64 41 00 20
secretariat@european-agency.org

Brussels Office

Rue Montoyer 21
BE-1000 Brussels Belgium
Tel.: +32 2 213 62 80
brussels.office@european-agency.org



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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the methodology for the first phase of the Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion ([TPL4I](#)) project. The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency) conducted phase 1 of the project between 2018 and 2020.

The TPL4I project aims to contribute to the discussion and knowledge about policy development for teacher professional learning (TPL) across countries. More specifically, phase 1 aims to:

- identify policy priorities stemming from the literature addressing policy issues in TPL for inclusion;
- develop a policy self-review tool to help countries record and review their TPL for inclusion policy;
- collect and analyse information from Agency countries in relation to national policies on TPL for inclusion;
- provide recommendations arising from the literature and the policy mapping in relation to policy development in TPL for inclusion.

This report presents the project rationale and describes all steps taken in phase 1 of the project.

TPL4I project rationale

International and European policy have recognised the need to prepare all teachers to include all learners. For example, at international level, *General comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education* (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016) sets out relevant competences and values for teacher education for inclusion. At European Union (EU) level, the *Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching* reinforces the need to support teachers and teaching. In particular, the EU identified the topic of teacher professional learning for inclusion as a high policy priority (Council of the European Union, 2018).

The 2018 Agency country survey considered the issue of preparing teachers for inclusion. All 28 participating countries identified it as a priority for further work. Countries set out the following reasons why this topic is a high priority for their work:

- Initial teacher education for inclusion is necessary at all levels in all types of schools.
- Capacity building and continuous teacher education are necessary because teaching diverse groups of learners is demanding work. Many teachers report feeling unequipped for inclusion.
- It is necessary to shift the responsibility for meeting all learners' needs from specialists to mainstream class teachers.



Moreover, the Agency's [Country Policy Review and Analysis](#) (CPRA) work, which aims to help countries record and review their policy on inclusive education, identified a gap in TPL policies. Measure 10 of the CPRA Analysis Framework is:

To improve the quality of school staff, focusing on the quality of teachers, quality in continuing professional development, developing teacher competences and reinforcing school leadership (European Agency, 2018a, p. 36).

At the start of the TPL4I project, none of the countries that had been involved in CPRA had provided adequate evidence of strategic plans for staff training, specialised training pathways for implementing inclusive education or research into the effectiveness of different routes into teaching.

There was a need to build on previous Agency work on TPL. Twenty-five countries participated in the [Teacher Education for Inclusion](#) (TE4I) project. It examined the question: how are all teachers prepared via their initial education to be 'inclusive'? The project focused on initial teacher education and identified the essential skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values that everyone entering the teaching profession needs. This led to the [Profile of Inclusive Teachers](#) (European Agency, 2012). TE4I also provided recommendations for teacher education and wider policy.

Subsequently, the [Empowering Teachers to Promote Inclusive Education](#) project in 2015 highlighted the need for clear and coherent links between initial teacher education, induction and continuing professional development to form a TPL continuum.

Finally, the [Raising the Achievement of All Learners in Inclusive Education](#) project offered a self-review tool (European Agency, 2017a) to inform teachers on competence development in continuing professional development. This included pedagogy for all learners, support for learning, leadership roles, learner well-being and participation, curriculum development, partnerships and collaborative working and support systems for staff and leaders.

Overview of TPL4I phase 1 activities

The TPL4I project set out to identify the essential policy elements needed to ensure that all teachers, at each stage of their career, are prepared for inclusive education. It focuses on all policies that affect teacher professional learning (TPL): initial teacher education (ITE), induction, continuing professional development (CPD) and learning opportunities for teacher educators based in schools or higher education institutions.

More specifically, it aims to respond to the following questions:

- What current policy priorities for TPL can be identified in international and European-level documents and in research literature?
- What national policy frameworks for TPL are in place in participating member countries, and how are these situated within national contexts (e.g. within different ministries or agencies)?



- What policy elements or frameworks are needed to prepare all teachers to include all learners?
- What policy priorities for TPL required to prepare all teachers to include all learners need further investigation at the European level?

To explore the need for TPL as an essential part of developing inclusive education systems and to suggest policy goals for its development, the TPL4I phase 1 work involved:

- conducting a [review of international policy and research literature](#) on TPL for inclusion (European Agency, 2019a);
- developing a comprehensive [policy mapping tool](#) for countries to map existing TPL for inclusion policy goals and strategies and to stimulate discussion and plan for future TPL for inclusion policy in the country concerned (European Agency, 2019b);
- gathering evidence of TPL for inclusion policy in European countries through a collaborative mapping procedure involving Agency staff members and Agency member country representatives;
- conducting an analysis of existing TPL for inclusion policy across participating European countries to indicate trends and movements in the development of TPL for inclusion and to highlight shared areas of concern across countries.

Collaborative approach and peer review

In recent Agency work, Agency staff and member countries have collaboratively conducted policy analysis work. This helps policy-makers to review their policies on inclusive education issues, identify gaps in current policy and guide future policy development.

In particular, the Agency [CPRA](#) work (European Agency, 2018a) laid the foundation for policy analysis on different topics for inclusive education system development. Through CPRA, the Agency has developed an iterative analysis process. This process is based on collaborative, co-development procedures of document analysis involving Agency member country representatives and Agency staff members. Recently, the CPRA methodology has been more extensively used in Agency projects and has led to the development of related instruments, e.g. the [Analysis Framework for Mapping Inclusive Education Policies](#) (European Agency, 2018b).

The TPL4I project has largely adopted the collaborative CPRA approach of country policy analysis. In doing so, TPL4I also aims to contribute to further in-depth analysis of current TPL for inclusion policy across Europe, as a particular area for inclusive education system development (European Agency, 2017b).

In addition, the project consultant has provided academic peer review throughout the project activities.



Operational definitions

Prior to the main project activities, the TPL4I team composed a list of operational definitions as part of the project plan and project communication. For the literature review (European Agency, 2019a) in particular, the following operational definitions were used:

- A **policy framework** brings together policies/policy elements that set out the requirements and processes for reaching policy goals in line with national/organisational values and principles. A policy framework outlines roles and responsibilities for policy development, stakeholder engagement, implementation, dissemination, monitoring/evaluation, governance and operational processes (European Agency, 2018c).
- **Teacher professional learning** (TPL) covers initial teacher education (ITE), induction, continuing professional development (CPD) and learning opportunities for teacher educators based in schools and higher education institutions.
- **Teacher professional learning for inclusion** (TPL for inclusion) is understood as reflective practice and personal competence development in the areas of valuing learners' difference, learner support and working with others, in line with the *Agency's Profile of Inclusive Teachers* (European Agency, 2012).
- **All teachers** means early education teachers, primary teachers, secondary teachers, vocational teachers, adult education teachers, specialists collaborating with classroom or subject teachers, and teacher educators.
- **All learners** means learners who attend mainstream or special schools, as well as those out of school. It includes at-risk learners, such as learners of migrant origins, learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, learners with disabilities, non-native language speakers, refugees, etc. (Council of the European Union, 2018).
- **Diversity** refers to the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, developmental and other aspects of human difference that represent some of the many elements of identity that characterise both individuals and groups and account for differences between people (Florian and Pantić, 2017).

The remainder of this report explains the development of the different TPL4I phase 1 outcomes. It provides an overview of all participating countries and activities. It describes the policy analysis approach taken and discusses the possible use of the overall project findings.



TPL FOR INCLUSION LITERATURE REVIEW

A first step in the TPL4I project was an exploration and analysis of international policy and research literature on TPL for inclusion. The literature study aimed to identify main policy issues and priorities for TPL for inclusion and deliver a basic framework for in-depth analysis of the topic.

This section explains how literature was gathered and analysed and how this resulted in the [TPL4I Literature Review](#) (European Agency, 2019a) as a solid basis for further project activities.

Search process

Two parallel search processes were performed. First, the TPL4I team members carried out an online search for international and European policy documents regarding TPL for inclusion policy. They searched the websites of major international bodies, e.g. the Agency, Council of the European Union, European Commission, United Nations (UN), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Bank and World Health Organization (WHO).

Second, the team conducted a systematic electronic search for research published between 2008 and 2018.¹ This search used the descriptors 'teacher education', 'professional development' and 'inclusive education'. The team included documents and studies if they referred to:

- policy issues and/or policy recommendations for TPL for inclusion;
- various parts of the TPL continuum (e.g. ITE, induction, CPD, specialist or teacher educator professional learning);
- various contexts for TPL (e.g. colleges/universities or schools as sites for in-service learning);
- various pathways (e.g. initial programmes, postgraduate, short training courses and specialist routes);
- a broad understanding of inclusion (cultural and language diversity, education of learners with disabilities or reference to social justice and equity in education).

The team excluded documents and studies if they did not have a prior focus on educational contexts or on professional learning in education.

Figure 1 shows the parallel search and selection that led to a final sample of 177 international, European and national policy documents and research papers on TPL for inclusion.

¹ CEEOL Journals; Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ); ERIC; Gale OneFile; Informa – Taylor & Francis; JSTOR Archival Journals; ProQuest Central; ProQuest Education Database; ProQuest Research Library; Psychology Database; SAGE Journals; ScienceDirect Journals (Elsevier); Scopus; Social Sciences Citation Index (Web of Science); Springer; SpringerLink; Taylor & Francis Online Journals; Wiley; Wiley Online Library.

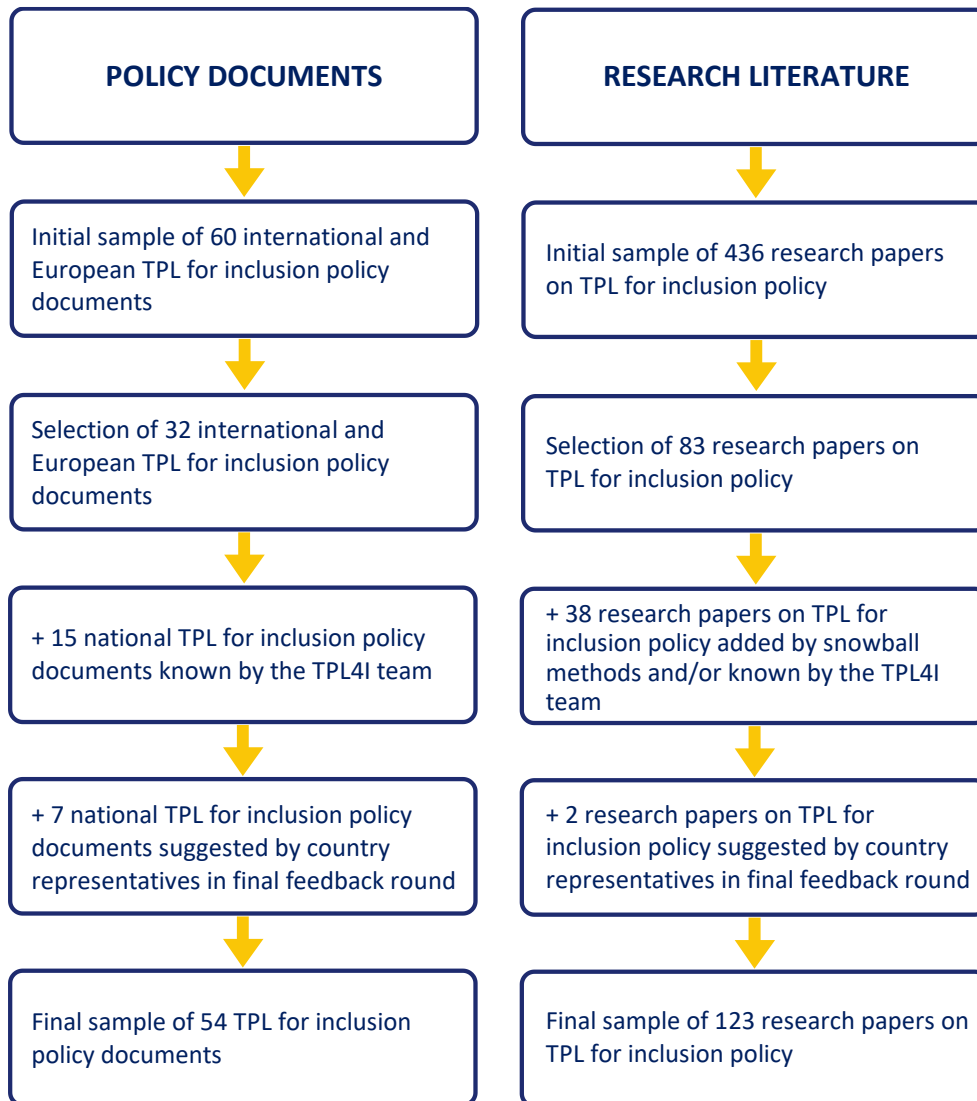


Figure 1. Parallel search process on TPL for inclusion policy

Analysis

To identify key policy elements for TPL for inclusion, the team performed a thematic analysis, using a preliminary policy analysis scheme along the key features ‘policy issues’, ‘stakeholders’, ‘goals’ and ‘implementation’ (Dombos, Krizsan, Verloo and Zentai, 2012; Verloo and Lombardo, 2007).

Critical issues for TPL for inclusion found in the literature were:

- the need to enhance a deeper and broader understanding of inclusion, across a range of diversity challenges and beyond classroom practice;
- the need to include all education staff, including teacher educators, in TPL for inclusion at all stages of their professional careers and across educational roles;
- the need for professional learning of specialist teachers and other education staff offering teacher and learner support.



As a response to these issues, the literature highlighted the need for:

- a comprehensive policy, addressing all professionals involved and fostering collaboration at all operational levels, based on the ethical notion of responsibility and engagement as reflected in inclusive pedagogy and international human rights legislation;
- intersectional policy, acknowledging all diversity issues and their complexity;
- an effective policy, increasing learners' achievement, decreasing early school leaving and narrowing the gaps in learning outcomes caused by inequalities;
- an operational policy to provide competence frameworks, teacher standards, quality assessment, funding and co-operation for capacity building (European Agency, 2019a).

Synthesis and peer review

The analysis led to an overall structure of three main categories of TPL for inclusion policy elements. Policy elements were identified as:

- policy vision and principles for TPL for inclusion;
- policy goals for TPL for inclusion, including a continuum of professional learning for inclusion;
- policy objectives and strategies for implementing TPL for inclusion policy.

For each category, policy elements were described and formulated as goals and objectives for TPL for inclusion policy.

There was twofold feedback on this synthesis of the policy and research literature on TPL for inclusion. First, the project consultant – a teacher educator and researcher in the teacher education for inclusion field – critically reviewed the report from an academic perspective. Second, the TPL4I team invited all Agency member country representatives to give feedback and suggest additional sources to be included. Eight countries responded to this feedback and peer review round, stimulating further clarification of TPL for inclusion elements and offering additional reports. The TPL4I team carefully considered and accounted for all the feedback, leading to a better integration of European examples of TPL for inclusion policy.

In the final literature review (European Agency, 2019a), the suggested goals cover five main policy priorities for TPL for inclusion:

- The professional continuum and professional areas involved in inclusive education
- Competences and curriculum design
- Capacity-building elements
- Cross-sectoral co-operation and funding
- Quality assessment and monitoring.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE TPL4I POLICY SELF-REVIEW TOOL

To map European countries' TPL for inclusion policies, a policy analysis framework was needed. Based on the key policy issues and priorities that emerged in literature, the project team developed the TPL4I policy review tool, highlighting the major policy elements needed to map country-level activity in this area. As with other Agency projects, the findings produced by the tool were validated in collaboration with each country's representatives. The final version has been published as the [TPL4I Policy Self-Review Tool](#) (European Agency, 2019b). This section describes the main steps taken to this end.

The need for a policy framework for TPL for inclusion

The significance of a policy framework to map, compare and guide the development of policy actions in a particular field is increasingly supported. Policy frameworks are critical elements of policy-making: they offer an organising principle that transforms fragmentary needs into a meaningful problem, goals and strategies (Verloo and Lombardo, 2007). They highlight what is worthy of public attention and provide a context for policy development (van Hulst and Yanow, 2016).

To make policy frameworks valid and relevant, the methodology for developing them must include the following steps:

- making sense of the complexity of the problem to avoid ambiguity;
- selecting features considered to be the most relevant characteristics;
- illustrating and explaining critical policy features through 'storytelling' (ibid.), highlighting different ideas and solutions as seen by various actors.

The literature review (European Agency, 2019a) provided an initial policy framework. It highlights and defines the most relevant characteristics of TPL for inclusion illustrated by international policy and by national examples provided by member country representatives. The review identifies categories and highlights key themes for TPL for inclusion. Through a broad content analysis, it aims to contribute to a better understanding of the identified problem and its suggested solutions and to illustrate international and national TPL for inclusion policy.

However, the review also confirmed the need to develop a comprehensive policy mapping tool for TPL for inclusion, to support national policy-makers to consider key policy priorities found. These include the need:

- for a national policy vision on TPL for inclusion that ensures all teachers' learning throughout their professional careers;
- to agree on the main principles for TPL for inclusion policy (e.g. include all education professionals, enhance collaboration, strengthen cross-sectional discourse on diversity);



- for policy goals to provide a continuum of support for all teachers at different points in their careers, to build capacity, co-operation and funding, and monitor TPL for inclusion.

To deepen country reflection, stimulate discussion and address priorities for TPL for inclusion, the TPL4I team developed the Policy Self-Review Tool. With this tool, the Agency aimed to provide a comprehensive policy resource for TPL: a tool that would ensure a clearer pronunciation of the policy issue, lift the discussion beyond lists of specific policy features and stimulate a dynamic conversation on TPL for inclusion (van Hulst and Yanow, 2016).

Additionally, the tool was designed to collect and analyse TPL for inclusion policy across Agency member countries, map current TPL for inclusion policy trends and highlight main points of concern.

Developing a policy self-review tool for TPL for inclusion

Taking into account the abovementioned review process and policy analysis approach, the TPL4I Policy Self-Review Tool aimed to be a comprehensive resource developed on the basis of a combination of international policy and research literature and previous Agency policy analysis tools.

In particular, the following Agency analysis frameworks were considered:

- [Analysis Framework for Mapping Inclusive Education Policies](#) (European Agency, 2018b)
- [Country Policy Review and Analysis framework](#) (European Agency, 2016; 2018a).

The literature review structure already reflected the Agency's policy framework for inclusive education system development, e.g. by referring to capacity building, funding and quality assessment. Therefore, this structure was also the foundation for an initial TPL4I policy mapping tool. The tool was used as a basis for collecting country information on TPL for inclusion. It specifically:

- highlighted the main policy categories and key priorities for TPL for inclusion as its basic structure;
- highlighted the essential policy elements for TPL for inclusion based on the literature review's suggested goals in order to achieve a comprehensive overview;
- clearly described these policy elements as policy statements for policy-makers to consider, reflect and act upon.

The policy mapping tool designed for country data collection contained 39 statements to be qualified by quotes and sources of evidence, e.g. policy documents, indicating the awareness and steps taken so far. As with the Agency CPRA work, the policy mapping tool was designed for collaborative use in an iterative process of analysis by TPL4I team members and country representatives. It contained two blank columns: one for the initial findings collected by the team and one for updates and comments from country representatives. The tool also provided clear guidelines for data collection and updates.



Feedback and peer review

Before the data collection process began, the project consultant and Agency Representative Board members gave feedback on the TPL4I policy mapping tool. This feedback was incorporated into the final TPL4I Policy Self-Review Tool.

The feedback mentioned:

- context diversity within countries, e.g. in federal states where TPL policies differ across regions;
- diversity across educational levels, e.g. differences between pre-primary and secondary TPL for inclusion;
- coherence with previous Agency work, e.g. Financing Policies for Inclusive Education Systems ([FPIES](#)) (European Agency, 2018d);
- terminology.

The TPL4I team discussed all concerns, which led to the following changes in the final version of the TPL4I policy mapping tool:

- One policy priority was added to align the self-review tool with the FPIES project findings.
- The wording changed from ‘legislation exists’ to ‘policy exists’.
- Policy priorities were reworded.

Other concerns, such as the need to reflect context diversity within countries or across educational levels, were not further addressed. This was because the team considered that the final tool could be used at whatever level or context needed.

The final [TPL4I Policy Self-Review Tool](#) (European Agency, 2019b) represents a broad and agreed view of TPL for inclusion. It contains 39 policy statements for policy-makers to reflect upon. It was found to be consistent with previous Agency policy analysis work. As such, the methodology used contributed to the development of an instrument for policy-making that may serve as an open method for policy reflection and development. It has the potential for policy dissemination on the topic of TPL for inclusion. More specifically, the tool provides a policy framework that:

- defines TPL for inclusion policy, highlighting its most relevant characteristics;
- enables situated information to be included in a general tool for TPL for inclusion policy;
- is designed to represent policy development or policy ‘storytelling’ on the topic of TPL for inclusion, explaining the situation and proposing solutions;
- shows coherence and process in TPL for inclusion policy.



Its main components are the following sections and subsections:

- Section 1: Wider policy context
- Section 2: Vision and main principles of TPL for inclusion policy
 - Vision
 - Main principles
- Section 3: Goals and continuum of support of TPL for inclusion policy
 - Goals
 - Continuum of support
- Section 4: Capacity building, funding and monitoring of TPL for inclusion policy
 - Capacity building
 - Funding
 - Monitoring.

Each subsection contains three to ten policy priorities to be reflected upon and/or developed and evaluative comments to add more contextual information.

The [TPL4I Policy Self-Review Tool](#) is available in English in print and in accessible electronic format on the Agency website. It is open source, so countries or organisations can adapt it to their local needs.



THE TPL4I POLICY MAPPING ACTIVITY

First, the Policy Self-Review Tool was used to map the national policies that support TPL for inclusion. Second, based on the identified national policies, TPL for inclusion policy was mapped and analysed across 26 participating countries.

TPL4I national policy mapping activity

A collaborative approach

It was agreed that both the TPL4I team and policy-makers in participating countries would use the Policy Self-Review Tool to identify and record relevant national policy information on TPL for inclusion. Policy information was searched for in legislation, regulations, action plans, guidance documents, documents stating standards, national analysis reports and international and European-level reports commenting on national policy. Quotes, extracts and comments, with references, page numbers and links to the official policy documents, were inserted in a mapping grid presenting the policy self-review statements, to indicate that the country had taken policy actions on the corresponding policy element. The aim was to identify, in a clear and non-judgemental way, whether there was information indicating the existence or non-existence of a policy initiative linked to a specific policy priority in a given country.

This collaborative process took an iterative approach, involving the following steps:

Mapping initial findings on TPL for inclusion

To address policy priorities as stated in the Policy Self-Review Tool, the TPL4I team prepared an initial mapping grid for each country. It contained an 'initial findings' column and an 'updated information' column for collecting information related to the statements in the Policy Self-Review Tool. To start with, the team gathered a body of purposefully selected documents for each member country to complete the initial findings columns.

The documents selected for the initial mapping stage were:

- Eurydice National Education Systems, Chapter 9: Teachers and Education Staff
- Agency Country Information: Legislation and policy, Financing of inclusive education systems, Assessment within inclusive education systems, Systems of support and specialist provision, Teacher education for inclusive education
- Agency CPRA grid, if available
- National policy reports if available online, in English and referred to in the initial feedback on the literature review.

For all 35 European jurisdictions affiliated with the Agency, the TPL4I team prepared an initial grid in a similar way. The aim was to prepare an overview (mapping) of national policy information on TPL for inclusion for each member country/jurisdiction.



After completing the initial findings column with relevant policy information quotes, a TPL4I team member reviewed all the drafts for consistency before sending them to the country representatives.

Validation and updates of TPL for inclusion

To ensure up-to-date, extensive and reliable information, the TPL4I team invited all Representative Board members (RBs) and National Co-ordinators (NCs) to participate in the TPL4I project. To facilitate the updating process, the grid included clear guidelines for the RBs and NCs to:

- check the initial findings column and add, amend or delete information that was out-of-date or a repetition of findings;
- complete the updated information column with additional information from other country sources that had become available since the country reports were published;
- insert quotes or short text extracts from relevant policy documents in line with the policy priority in the first column, with title and page reference and a link to the source of the information if available;
- complete the 'evaluative comments' section at the end of each subsection to include information on proposed changes or reflections on perceived policy challenges or areas for development;
- consider a list of suggested policy documents to consult;
- reassure them that they were not expected to complete the entire grid with findings and updated information if their country did not have relevant policies for some of the TPL for inclusion policy priorities listed.

If country representatives did not send an update, the TPL4I team asked the RBs to verify the initial grid and consent to it being used for further analysis. Twenty-six countries participated in the mapping activities, either by validating the initial information only or by updating the country information on TPL for inclusion policy:

- Twenty-four countries provided updated or additional information: Austria, Belgium (Flemish community), Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (Northern Ireland), United Kingdom (Scotland) and United Kingdom (Wales).
- Two countries approved the initial grid without further updates or additional information: Slovakia and Spain.

Completing the policy mapping grids

The TPL4I team integrated all information into a final country grid that was agreed with each participating country. RBs co-ordinated the process and approved the completed mapping grid. The grid offers countries a view of strengths and areas for future policy development. All agreed [policy mapping grids](#) are available on the Agency website.



Analysis and synthesis of TPL for inclusion policies across countries

If the country representatives gave consent or updates, the TPL4I team included the country policy mapping grids in the further analysis stages of the TPL4I project.

The Policy Self-Review Tool provided an initial means of analysing TPL for inclusion policy at the national level. The systematic analysis of all information from participating countries aimed to highlight shared areas of concern for policy-making across countries and indicate trends and movements in TPL for inclusion policy developments and directions. The total sample of completed country grids also provides individual countries with comparative information to relate to their own approaches.

By using the Policy Self-Review Tool as the basic analysis scheme for all countries, analysis across countries was possible. This second step in the analysis:

- was part of the iterative approach of policy analysis;
- searched for patterns of policy representation of the need for TPL for inclusion and the development of goals and strategies;
- searched for new key themes across TPL for inclusion policies, selecting and highlighting primarily unattended themes;
- searched for roles and identities, change and maintenance processes in the context of national TPL for inclusion policy development;
- searched for rationales, contradictions and missing themes across the processes.

Content analysis

The TPL4I team performed analysis, following a structured approach. First, the team explored the TPL for inclusion policy information provided by all countries for the first section of the policy framework. The team then discussed shared findings and agreed on the working strategy for further analysis. A coding scheme was developed, based on the policy priorities, against which policy quotes were inserted. Each TPL4I team member coded the quotes from a particular section of the policy framework and the team cross-checked the quotes under each code.

Through in-depth analysis of the content included in each code or policy priority, the team identified main policy strands related to TPL for inclusion: patterns of policy vision, goals, implementation strategies and roles and identities involved in TPL for inclusion in different countries. In this process, patterns and idiosyncratic examples were named and illustrated. Furthermore, each section named the strengths of and gaps in policy priorities.

Synthesis

The analysis highlighted specific priorities or policy areas. Some were recognised as strengths and others as areas for development. The [project synthesis report](#) (European Agency, 2020a) classified and discussed the main trends, strengths and gaps across priorities.



The main themes found were:

- the concept of equity in TPL policies across countries;
- the need to strengthen the continuum of support for all TPL at the policy level, in order to:
 - address the gaps in support professionals' and specialists' professional learning opportunities and in teacher educators' professional learning;
 - stress the impact of teacher competence frameworks on TPL for inclusion;
- capacity-building strategies, in particular collaborative work and in-service learning opportunities for TPL for inclusion, funding and monitoring strategies, to embed TPL for inclusion in TPL policies.



SYNTHESIS OF TPL FOR INCLUSION POLICY

A final step in phase 1 of the TPL4I project was to present all the findings in a synthesis report. The objectives were to:

- provide a synthesis of international and national policy trends in relation to TPL for inclusion, based on international literature and national policies described in the TPL4I policy grids;
- identify key issues and common challenges for policy-makers and providers of TPL for inclusion in different national policy contexts;
- identify recommendations for future policy development on TPL for inclusion that are linked with a wider inclusive education policy framework;
- contribute to the realisation of the *Agency Position on Inclusive Education Systems* (European Agency, 2015) by linking the TPL for inclusion policy findings to previous Agency work.

The synthesis was outlined in a comprehensive synthesis report on TPL for inclusion, which is available on the [TPL4I project web area](#).

Synthesis of international and national TPL for inclusion policy

Following the abovementioned steps and objectives, the synthesis first looked back at the key issues about TPL for inclusion policy development raised in the international literature. The international policy literature strengthened the rationale for the project.

Key issues found guided the self-review statements and country analyses. The further synthesis was presented as a distinctive report of the findings of the analysis across the participating countries, as explained in the previous section.

The findings across countries confirmed the essential policy elements outlined in the Policy Self-Review Tool. They also added more insight into strengths and needs in TPL for inclusion, which were summarised and highlighted in a concise overview of TPL for inclusion policy issues, development and recommendations.

Challenges for TPL for inclusion in inclusive education system development

To acknowledge the challenges for TPL for inclusion as part of the development of inclusive education systems and its related processes, the findings of the analysis were also linked to previous Agency work:

- the **Ecosystem model**, following the approach adopted in the Inclusive Early Childhood Education ([IECE](#)) (European Agency, 2017b), Supporting Inclusive School Leadership ([SISL](#)) (European Agency, 2019c) and Preventing School Failure ([PSF](#)) (European Agency, 2019d) projects. Each project represents a 'slice' of the ecosystem model and so contributes to a deeper understanding of inclusive



education system development, by considering the challenges found at four levels: national/regional, community, school, and individual level. The model explains how the learner interacts with the environment and how individual, school and out-of-school factors, such as the community and the national/regional policy framework, influence the learner's way in the education system. Similarly, the TPL4I project findings were linked to the ecosystem model to identify the challenges for the development of TPL for inclusion policy at all system levels.

- the [*Profile of Inclusive Teachers*](#) developed for initial teacher education in the Teacher Education for Inclusion project (European Agency, 2012). This justifies the use of the *Profile's* core values and competences at all levels of TPL for inclusion policy (i.e. from ITE, to beginning teachers' induction, CPD, and teacher educators' professional development). The findings of the TPL4I literature review and mapping activity suggest that the policy elements for capacity building, monitoring and funding of TPL for inclusion are key factors to meet the core values and areas of competence suggested in the *Profile*. Therefore, the core values and areas of competence were linked to particular policy elements, underlining teacher competence development across the professional continuum (i.e. ITE, induction, CPD, and teacher educators' professional development).



SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

Phase 1 of the TPL4I project aimed to explore TPL for inclusion policy as part of the development of inclusive education systems. In particular, it set out to explore the policy elements needed to enhance teacher competences for inclusion across the continuum of pre-service, beginning and in-service teachers and other education professionals.

An overall conclusion of phase 1 of TPL4I was that the [Profile of Inclusive Teachers](#) (European Agency, 2012) remains a potentially useful tool for TPL development work. It highlights all teachers' responsibility, the essential core values and areas of competence needed to prepare all teachers to work with all learners and the key factors supporting the implementation of the proposed core values and areas of competence.

As a result, building on the present TPL4I work, new project activities will be carried out. This extended project work will consider the findings of the work to date in relation to the Agency's *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*. Therefore, the methodology described in this report covers the phase 1 project activities and looks forward to phase 2 activities.

Phase 1 TPL4I project activities and outcomes included:

- a review of international and European policy documents and research literature in the field of TPL for inclusion, which led to the [TPL4I Literature Review](#) (European Agency, 2019a);
- the development of the [TPL4I Policy Self-Review Tool](#) (European Agency, 2019b), based on a selection of relevant policy priorities identified in literature, confirmed by country representatives and open for dialogue with policy-makers;
- a mapping of national TPL for inclusion policies: the Policy Self-Review Tool was used to help countries map policies that support TPL for inclusion. Twenty-six [policy mapping grids](#) were completed and are publicly available;
- a synthesis of TPL for inclusion policy: the Policy Self-Review Tool was the basic framework for analysing TPL for inclusion policies across the participating countries. In addition, findings were linked to the Agency's ecosystem model and to the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* in order to understand the challenges for TPL for inclusion. The results were integrated in a [synthesis report](#) on TPL for inclusion policy (European Agency, 2020a);
- the presentation of all phase 1 activities and findings in a [final summary report](#) (European Agency, 2020b).

The TPL4I project stresses the need for collaborative TPL for inclusion across the professional continuum of teachers and other education professionals. The phase 1 project findings and the abovementioned research and practice examples suggest that the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* can be more widely applied.

Therefore, phase 2 will extend the TPL4I project activities. The intention is to support the implementation of TPL for inclusion opportunities across the professional continuum. The phase 2 activities aim to inform policy discussions on the values underpinning TPL for



inclusion for all education professionals and on the essential competences for all professionals working in inclusive settings. The phase 2 TPL4I project activities aim to:

- investigate the validity of the *Profile's* core values and areas of competence;
- refine, adjust and update the *Profile* to extend its use across the TPL continuum.

Activities will include the development of a questionnaire exploring the *Profile* work so far and a cluster activity in co-operation with the participating countries. Exchange among countries and stakeholders will consider how to develop the *Profile* for use with teachers at different stages of the profession, among interdisciplinary groups of education professionals and for collaborative learner support in inclusive education. Analysis of exchanges will be used to update and refine the *Profile* for inclusive teachers.

The phase 2 project activities' outcomes will be:

- an updated *Profile of Teachers*;
- a 'process report' on how the updated *Profile* was developed and indicating guidelines for its use;
- finally, an infographic presenting how TPL for inclusion and the *Profile* are part of the broader inclusive education ecosystem.

The [TPL4I project web area](#) includes all the project outputs.



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Secretariat:

Østre Stationsvej 33
DK-5000
Odense C
Denmark
Tel: +45 64 41 00 20
secretariat@european-agency.org

Brussels Office:

Rue Montoyer 21
BE-1000
Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 2 213 62 80
brussels.office@european-agency.org

www.european-agency.org

