Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
Inclusion and education
ALL MEANS ALL

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#AllMeansAll
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All means all

Learner diversity is a strength to be celebrated

Out of 100 students...

...these by race, gender, ability, social status. And this last one? Hi!

come from different backgrounds, bring different experiences, have different needs. All means all.

...these by need, class, ability, gender, social status. And this last one? Hi!

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Sources
National profiles on laws and policies on inclusion in education
Progress has been made towards a rights-based approach to inclusive education

Out of school rates fell by half over the past 20 years

The percentage of children with disabilities in special schools fell from 78% in 2005/6 to 53% 2015/6

The percentage of children in residential institutions fell by 30% in the same period
Education opportunities are unequally distributed

In Tajikistan the medical definition of disability is still used in legislation, leading to a lack of reliable data on children with disabilities.

In Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, the share of youth with disabilities in the out-of-school population is twice as large as their share of those in-school.

60% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian youth in the Balkans do not attend upper secondary school; only 3% complete in Montenegro.

In Central and Eastern Europe, 1 in 3 students with special education needs are in special schools.

In some countries stigma towards children with disabilities influence current attitudes towards inclusion.
Collect data on and about inclusion with care and respect

Avoid labelling that stigmatizes

Inclusion-related data collection must cover inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes:
- **not just for some groups: on all learners**
- **not just for resource allocation purposes**

Monitoring should also be inclusive in method:
- The Monitoring Framework for Inclusive Education in **Serbia** has been **integrated** within the overall school quality assurance policy
Widen the understanding of inclusive education
Include all learners: All means all

2 in 3 countries’ definition of inclusion embraces multiple marginalized groups...

...but 2 in 3 countries’ definition of special education needs is also linked primarily with disability
Put the students at the centre

Inclusion is an experience, not just a result

The right to be in good physical and mental health, happy and connected with others is **as important** as the right to learn

- Schools are a key environment for the development of children’s well-being
- A sense of belonging is vital, especially for vulnerable children
- Diversity in schools strengthens social cohesion

2 in 10 students feel like **outsiders in school**
Engage in meaningful consultation

Inclusion cannot be enforced from the top

Keeping parents, guardians and families **informed** of their rights helps include them

Parental involvement in school **governance** can make them agents of change

Open space for NGOs to support the goal of inclusion as watchdogs and advocates:

- In the **Russian Federation**, NGO’s play a major role raising awareness on inclusion and in independent monitoring of legislation implementation

**25 out of 30 education systems** have policies supporting parental involvement in school governance
Exchange experiences on implementation barriers

Bridge gaps between policies and practice

International conventions and organizations have helped usher rights-based reforms:

- **Tajikistan** and **Uzbekistan** are both signatories to the CRPD

More strategic approach needed:

- laws and policies often remain disconnected from school and classroom practice realities

**Learn from peers** – inclusion is a process:

- from teacher networks/learning communities, to national, regional and global networks

Strategies or action plans for inclusive education exist in **21 of 30 education systems**
Ensure cooperation across government

Inclusion in education a subset of social inclusion

Ensure horizontal collaboration between ministries: data least likely area of collaboration

- In Kyrgyzstan, education, social protection and health ministries collaborate to protect the right to education of children with disabilities
- The needs identification system in the Russian Federation engages multiple government services

Promote vertical collaboration between government levels: ensure schools & local governments have capacity

- Kazakhstan’s central and local governments share responsibilities for inclusion in education
Share expertise and resources

The only way to transition to inclusion

Shift towards **inclusive in-school support**:
- counselling in **23 countries**;
- learning assistance in **22 countries**;
- specialists/therapists in **21 countries**

...but avoid previously dominant targeted, exclusionary and medical approach

Special schools are a potential resource for mainstream schools trying to support those with special needs
- **Poland** is introducing resource centres
Apply universal design: Ensure that inclusive systems fulfil every learner’s potential.

Represent all groups without stereotypes:
- Azerbaijan reviews textbooks for gender equality criteria

LGBTI are often invisible

Nine countries do not mention Roma in their curricula
- There is a comprehensive framing of Roma history in Romania’s curriculum

Adapt assessments too - Georgia introduced sign language standards
All should learn from the same flexible, relevant and accessible curriculum

- Different curricula taught in mainstream schools and for ethnic groups

- **22 out of 30 countries** provide schools or classes in home languages of minority groups

- The **trilingual education** policy in **Kazakhstan** led to new Tajik, Uighur and Uzbek primary school textbooks

- All countries use individualized education plans - but implementation is problematic

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Flexible provision is sometimes necessary

- Eg.“**Kindergartens on Jailoo**” for nomadic groups in Uzbekistan
All teachers must be prepared and supported to teach all students

Inclusion should be a **core** part of initial and in-service training, not a specialist topic

Competences in inclusion not usually required for teacher licensing and **certification**

**Ageing** teaching force is a challenge

Promote teacher **diversity** – Kazakhstan supports admissions from under-represented groups

**Support personnel** often lacking, and their roles not always clearly defined

1 in 2 teachers feel prepared to teach in **mixed-ability** and 1 in 3 in **multicultural settings**
Covid-19 has deepened education inequalities

Of 15-year-old students in the region
- 25% did not have a laptop;
- 10% did not have access to the internet

In Tajikistan, a lack of school meals affected the most financially disadvantaged

Standard distance learning formats geared towards motivated, self-sufficient learners

Among 23 countries, support was relatively low in:
- access in remote areas (43%), school meal services (40%), learning materials for minorities (38%) and child protection services (25%)
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Thank you for your attention!

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