

Towards a shared vision of inclusion in education: Fostering stakeholder dialogue on legislation and policy

28 April 2022



International Webinar

This event is co-organised by UNESCO and the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education.

Date and time

Thursday, 28 April 2022, 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. (CEST)

Background

The world has recently entered the final decade of action to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 and fulfil the commitment to 'inclusive and equitable quality education' and

'lifelong learning opportunities for all'. Although efforts have been made to promote education for all, there has not been the transformation in educational systems or the policies required to translate the promise of SDG4 into reality. The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened and added new layers of education inequalities, marginalization and exclusion across the world. Before the pandemic, education systems were already facing huge challenges in ensuring all learners had fair and equal access to educational opportunities regardless of their gender, ethnicity, language, abilities and or social background among others.

At [UNESCO's International forum on inclusion and equity in education](#) held in Cali, Colombia in 2019, participants prompted countries 'to review education policies and initiatives through the lens of equity, quality and inclusion.' Consequently, countries will 'need to work together to strengthen the channels for dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders from different countries, so as to share experiences and resources that could help to move forward in a sustained manner worldwide' (UNESCO 2020, [Final report of the International Forum on Inclusion and Equity in Education](#)).

The webinar will support UNESCO's work on strengthening equity and inclusion in quality education for **all** learners. It will also mark the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education's 25 years as a platform for collaboration for ministries of education in its member countries.

The Agency has worked with countries to support policy development in special needs and inclusive education for the past 25 years. Throughout this work, the Agency has recognized the importance of the developing meaningful interactions between stakeholders which lead to changes in approaches to policy implementation.

Promoting inclusive practice in policy-making processes and encouraging dialogue between stakeholders to support policy implementation are key strategies identified by the Agency to ensure inclusive educational systems (European Agency 2021, [Key principles. Supporting policy development and implementation for inclusive education](#)).

UNESCO further highlights that stakeholder dialogue 'must involve the widest participation possible. Education is a decisive factor in citizenship, at the local, national and global levels. It concerns everyone, and everyone can participate in building the futures of education in whatever spheres of influence they are situated within' (UNESCO 2021, [Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education](#)).

The stakeholder discussions in the webinar will be an opportunity to reflect on the midway point of the SDG 2030 Agenda work.

Purpose of the webinar

The focus of this international webinar is on promoting stakeholder dialogue in legislation and policy development and implementation. Throughout the webinar, messages and learning points from various countries will be shared around 'operationalizing' visions for inclusive education so that all stakeholders can understand and effectively implement policy goals.

The webinar outcomes will provide key messages around stakeholder dialogue for promoting legislation and policy for inclusive education at national, regional and international levels – identifying barriers and challenges, as well as opportunities for ways forward.

‘Education is a decisive factor in citizenship, at the local, national and global levels. It concerns everyone, and everyone can participate in building the futures of education in whatever spheres of influence they are situated within’ (UNESCO 2021, [Reimagining our futures together...](#)).

Webinar programme

Views and voices from different stakeholder groups – policy-makers at different levels; researchers; practitioners; civil society; learners and families – will be represented in the webinar – from European countries and other regions. In particular, it will focus on two main themes:

- Stakeholder dialogue as an input to legislation and policy development.
- Stakeholder dialogue as an on-going input to policy implementation.

Each panel will present an example of on-going work from a European country. Panellists from other countries and regions will be invited to enrich the dialogue by sharing their own experiences and observations on challenges they have experienced, as well as recommendations for overcoming challenges to more meaningful stakeholder dialogue.

Target audiences

The webinar will bring together a range of key stakeholders and decision-makers who are drivers of change towards fostering inclusive learning environments. These include representatives from ministries of education and inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations supporting inclusive education, as well as staff from educational institutions, researchers and experts, representatives of youth organisations, learners and families.

Although the webinar will deal with technical aspects, it is anticipated that it will have a broader reach, as speakers spread key messages on how to achieve consensus on what we mean by inclusion in education at the legislative and policy level through dialogue.

Technical platform and interpretation

The webinar will take place on the Zoom platform and will be available in English, French, Spanish and International sign language.

Contacts

Florence Migeon, UNESCO HQ: f.migeon@unesco.org / inclusion@unesco.org

Tamara Marti Casado, UNESCO HQ: t.marti-casado@unesco.org

European Agency Secretariat: secretariat@european-agency.org