



TdiverS

Teaching divers learners in (School) Subjects

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Teaching diverse learners in (School)Subjects

*First Annual Report*

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## Abstract

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The TdiverS-project delivers each year an Annual Report which summarizes the project's findings and results, facilitating their application elsewhere. The reports give an overview of the state of innovation in the respective countries (national level) as well as across countries (international level). They record the current progress of the project work and the respective key products and are available at <http://tdivers.eu>. With respect to the aims, the structure and the objectives of the project, the reports focus on the main steps and developments of the project partners on an annual basis.

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## Introduction

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Within the TdiverS project, each year WP 5 delivers an Annual Report presenting innovative approaches and developments at national and international levels in the different areas of the network's activity. This first report is divided into two parts. The first part gives a brief report about the TdiverS consortium meetings and conferences in Ludwigsburg, Sweden and Luxembourg during the first year of the project. In the second part, country-based information about the state of the art in the field of inclusion and teaching diverse learners in different school subjects for each partner country can be found. Because the situation in all six countries is so different, we decided to collect the information with a questionnaire and present the results in a country collection. The partners from the different countries therefore are responsible for the individual content.

Four headings are leading through Part 2 of this report:

1. Description of the situation with regard to inclusion in school subjects
2. Description of desiderata derived from the previous analysis
3. Description of the innovative character of TdiverS
4. Description of the development of the project including the impetus of TdiverS

This first report draws on materials prepared by network members for workshops and activities in 2014 and includes contributions from authors in Spain, Sweden, Iceland, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Germany.

Further information about TdiverS can be found at <http://tdivers.eu>. The coordinators and authors welcome comments and can be contacted at the addresses above.

# 1 TdiverS consortium meetings and conferences 2013 - 2014

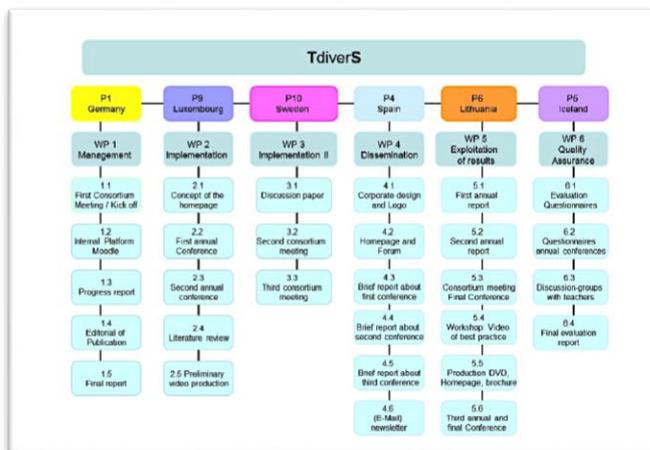
## 1.1 Kick Off Meeting in Ludwigsburg, December 2013

The first consortium meeting/ Kick-off meeting took place in the first week of December at the University of Education Ludwigsburg and was planned, organized and carried out by the coordinators Prof. Dr. Kerstin Merz-Atalik, Prof. Dr. Heike Tiemann, the former project manager Ute Kahle and their team of University of Education Ludwigsburg. Also involved in arranging the first meeting of all partners were Sabine Stuber-Bartmann from the National Institute for School Sports, School Art and Music Education/School Music in Baden-Württemberg, Ulrike Bau and Markus Plath from the Geschwister-Scholl School in Tübingen.

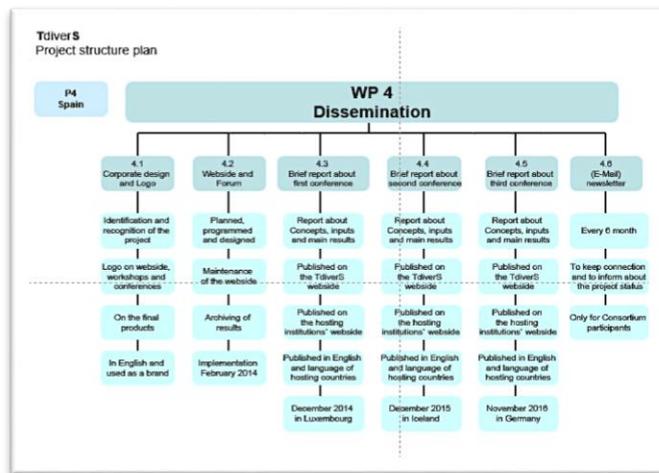
The meeting took place at the campus of the University of Education in Ludwigsburg. At this first meeting, all partners of the project were informed and involved into the organizational and subject-related frame and topics of the project programme. On the first day the rector of the university Prof. Dr. Martin Fix expressed his warm welcome to all partners of TdiverS and gave the partners an overview about the structure of teacher education in Germany, the special institution of a University of Education in Baden-Württemberg and expressed his appreciation for acquiring a Comenius-Project for the development of teacher training for inclusion. The partners were also welcomed by the representative of the Ministry Mr. Daniel Hager-Mann, who works for the Office of Community Schools in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Baden-Württemberg. He talked about the relevance of projects in cooperation between theory and practice for the new task of developing inclusive educational settings in Baden-Württemberg. Dr. Peter Dines, head of the Office for international affairs at University of Education Ludwigsburg, gave an introduction of the possible support with the international traveling and the opportunity of signing Erasmus-Contracts between the partners to strengthen the cooperation besides TdiverS. The colleagues from the EU-Research Office gave a presentation about the organizational and financial issues of a Comenius-Project.

In the five sessions over the three days of the meeting, the project partners were working on the following topics:

- Introduction of partners and institutions (Session 1 and 2). All Partners introduced the consortium into their institutions and their personal research or job expertise;
- Structure of the project (Session 2 and 3);



- Work packages were introduced, including the partners' duties and responsibilities in their work packages (Session 3, 4 and 5) and we discussed the different assignments and responsibilities. All Partners accepted the work packages as presented;

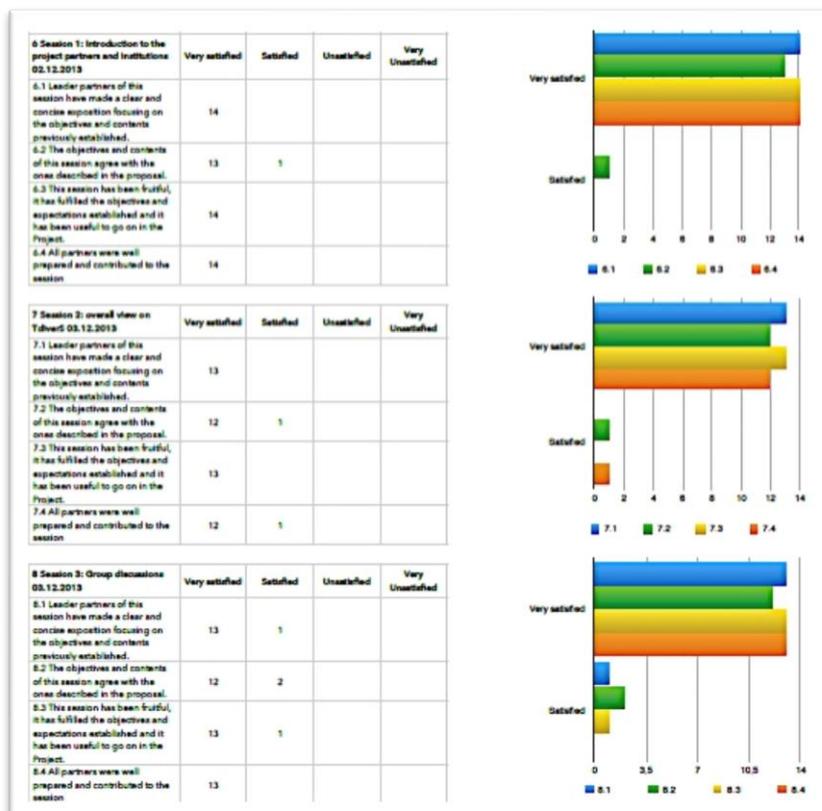


For example the duties and responsibilities of the partner from Spain

- Quality management and methods/strategies for quality management (Session 3, 4 and 5);
- Conceptual planning of the outcomes and the instruments used for internal communication, information diffusion, and transparency (Session 3, 4 and 5);
- Conceptual planning of the outcomes and the instruments for external information, networking (Session 3, 4 and 5);

All partners did get the material in a printed and digital version. During the sessions we were working in changing groups and with different methods to enable all partners to get into a dialogue and get to know each other. The social program was also set up with this intentions.

The Kick-off meeting was evaluated. This evaluation showed an excellent result, which is illustrated in the following excerpt:



All presentations and material, which document the work process of the Kick-off meeting at the University of Education Ludwigsburg in detail, can be accessed on the BSCW-Platform.

## 1.2 Second Consortium Meeting Sweden, May 2014

After a period of three months of preparation, the University of Borås hosted the second consortium meeting in May 2014. The meeting was opened by Vice rector, Professor Martin Hellström who addressed the importance of the TdiverS project in the rapidly changing Europe. He also emphasized the strategic role of inclusion as research field at the University of Borås, being one of the seven strategic research programmes. The actual state of affairs in each of the six work packages was presented followed by comments and critical dialogues taking the project further in a fruitful way. Professor Julie Allan gave a key-note speech where she presented her work within the European Council pointing out critical aspects of the inclusion work in the EU member states. Professor Allan's well-informed overview contributed to an in-depth understanding of the current situation in European school systems and how emerging challenges could be met. The key-note was followed by discussions and also functioned as a common platform for the ensuing preparatory work with the national discussion papers.

Time was also devoted for work with the procedures and practicalities concerning the video production which is an essential part of the TdiverS project. Issues concerning technical support, authorization and permissions were elucidated and discussions of how best to fulfil the aims and purposes of the project made these issues clearer as a starting point for the upcoming practical work with the recordings. The discussions dealt with the following issues:

*What does inclusion mean?*

- Target groups: teachers, parents, children, professors

*DVD of real examples*

- School level strategies
- Classroom level strategies (rules, discussions, ... )
- Subject level strategies (challenges / cases / problems, suggestions of different strategies or principals for solution of problem in the learning situations, examples, how could be managed situations) – there is no specific strategy for specific subject

*Challenge for us*

- How to show the way of inclusive thinking?

*Discussion about*

- We need professional technical training
- This will least surely one year
- Think in segments
- Discussion group with teachers and teacher students
- Look at diversity and inclusion by asking pupil, teacher and parents

The consortium meeting was completed by a questionnaire evaluation. 13 areas were covered on a 4-grade scale and an overwhelming majority of answers was "very satisfactory".

### 1.3 First Annual Conference in Luxembourg, November 2014

The **First Annual Conference**, in the City of Luxembourg, was planned and carried out by Alain Adams, Michelle Brendel, and Justin Powell with key support from the Ludwigsburg coordinating team and staff from the Ministry of Education of Luxembourg and the University of Luxembourg. From the start, this was a joint venture between the TdiverS Project partners, the University, the Ministry, and Info-Handicap Luxembourg, an association of dozens of groups active in advocacy around impairment and disability. Thus, many bridges were built between countries and different social groups and organizations during the planning and, of course, during the actual event.

The **Conference** took place on 14 and 15 November in Luxembourg in the “Forum” at the Campus Scolaire Geesseknäppchen (a school campus with several of the country’s most reputable schools), with around 150 people in attendance on the two days of events. The event was officially registered by the Ministry of Education as a “priority” offering of the Institute of Continuing Education. Scholars, teachers, students, and community members from **Germany, Iceland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Spain, and Sweden**. Participants from **Canada** and the **United States** provided a further extension in terms of types of education systems and histories of special education and inclusion.

A 90-minute **Press Conference** was held with national radio and newspaper journalists to discuss the project and the possibilities for inclusive education reform and using comparisons to emphasize the similarities and differences across Europe in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and scaling-up “inspiring practices” within countries and learning from others how to improve schooling and make curricula more inclusive.

The conference and the project are exercises in collaboration and inclusion, as we cross cultural, linguistic, disciplinary, and organizational boundaries. A range of types of interaction was organized to ensure **effective dissemination** among all societal groups from scientists and administrators to teachers and family members. Furthermore, to ensure **inclusive communication**, the conference on Friday, 14 November 2014 offered simultaneous interpreting from English into German and German Sign Language (DGS). Furthermore, the team translated the dialogue of the first video of “inspiring practices” from Luxembourgish into English for subtitles to ensure that members of the project consortium and guests from the six countries could benefit from viewing the **Short Film** “Zesumme liewen, zesumme léieren” (Living Together, Learning Together) featuring pupils of the Ecole Jean Jaurès in Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg. The film was professionally made by the DPAV team of the Education Ministry’s Institute of Continuing Education (SCRIPT). Justin Powell, Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Luxembourg presented the **Keynote Address** “Challenges, Paradoxes and Opportunities: Comparative Research on Student Disability and Inclusive Education”. This was followed by an hour-long **Podium Discussion** “Inclusive Schooling in Europe and Beyond: From Segregation to Integration and Inclusion” with Stefanija Ališauskienė, Prof. Dr., Šiauliai University, Lithuania; Gerardo Echeita, Prof. Dr., Autonomous University Madrid, Spain; Hafdis Guðjónsdóttir, Prof. Dr., University of Iceland; Kerstin Merz-Atalik, Prof. Dr., U. of Education Ludwigsburg, Germany; and Bengt Persson, Prof. Dr., University of Borås, Sweden.

On Saturday, 15 November, the conference offered a **Seminar and World Café** with a range of topics, including those proposed by members of the community and project partners and guests. This maximized the interaction potential and ensured that the event would address the concerns of the community members present. The day began with **Welcoming Remarks** by Liz Kremer-Rauchs, a Director at SCRIPT. Then, Prof. Dr. Kerstin Merz-Atalik & Peter Hudelmaier-Mätzke, from the TdiverS Coordinating Partner University of Education Ludwigsburg, Germany, gave a **Presentation** of a Study on Inclusive Education in Luxembourg: „Voraussetzungen und Hindernisse bei der Umsetzung der UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention in Luxemburg: Eine Erhebung der Erfahrungen von SchülerInnen, LehrerInnen und Eltern ausgewählter Schulen—im Auftrag des Ministère de l’Education nationale, de l’Enfance et de la Jeunesse (MENEJ).“ The plenary discussion of the results provided the participants and journalists in attendance to ask questions.

This presentation was followed by several sessions of the **World Café**. Alain Adams and Diane Marx, Moderator, presented Themes & Instructions, organizing Discussion Groups with the following themes:

A	Deutschland/Germany (DE)	Inklusiver Sportunterricht (altersübergreifend). Wie kann ich inklusiven Sportunterricht gestalten?
B	Island/Iceland (EN)	Cooperation & inclusive pedagogy
C	Litauen/Lithuania (EN): Inclusive Lessons	What kind of lesson is inclusive? Planning? What is important? How do you ensure all students learning? Evaluation?
D	Spanien/Spain (EN)	Breaking some rules of traditional school rules to be more inclusive
E	Schweden/Sweden (EN)	Municipality-based research and development work for raising achievement through inclusive education. How can research support school practice?
F	Lux: Inspiring Practices (LU/DE/EN)	Der Bücherkoffer "Unterwegs in das Land der Sprachen", eine Etappe auf dem Weg zu inklusivem Sprachenunterricht?
G	Lux: Zesumme liewen an léieren (LU/DE/EN)	Ecole Jean Jaurès - Living together, learning together. Towards inclusive schooling
H	Implementierung UN-BRK (DE/EN)	Global Challenges and Successes in Implementing the UN-CRPD
I	Canada (EN)	Comparing Inclusive & Multicultural Education

Finally, in a **Plenary Discussion** and an Informal **Discussion** & Reception, Ideas, Comments, and Results were collected. The many connections made across national borders through the World Café discussion groups contribute to the sustainability of the project results. The **Outcomes & Results** of the First Annual Conference are enhanced connections within Luxembourg of relevant actors in science, policymaking, administration, and schooling. Across national boundaries, many new networks have been established and project ideas disseminated among people from across Europe: North, East, South, and West. The results can be found in the TdiverS Newsletter and on the project website: [tdivers.eu](http://tdivers.eu).

## 2 State of the art

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### 2.1 Description of the situation with regards to inclusion in school subjects

#### 2.1.1 Germany

At the end of the 60th in Germany the first classes with diverse learners, including children with disabilities and special needs, have been set up. The first school was a Maria-Montessori-School in Munich, which has welcomed children with learning difficulties. At a Primary-School in Berlin 1975 the first child with Down-Syndrome could visit the general school. The children of this mainstreaming-class have been attended the same kinder-garden (a Montessori kinder-house) and their parents decided to send them further into the school. Since than many projects, models and studies, related to mainstreaming and cooperative settings, have been taking place. Nearly every of the 16 Bundesländer has offered pre-operating schools, mainly accompanied by scientific investigation.

In May 1994 the KMK (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs) published a recommendation „The education of disabled young people is in principal more and more a co-operative task of all schools. The special education should be understood as a necessary addition and key-element of providing general education“. Until 1999 the KMK enacted recommendations for the emphasis of individual education support (sonderpädagogische Förderschwerpunkte). The terminology of „Needs for special school“ (Sonderschulbedürftigkeit) in the legislations has changed to „Special Educational Needs“ (Sonderpädagogischer Förderbedarf) after this recommendation. They have mainly been documented with the guideline: “Mainstreaming as long as possible, segregation as less as necessary”. Inclusive education in Germany

Since 2009, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is legally binding in Germany. Article 24 stipulates the right to inclusive education and postulates the attendance of regular schools for disabled children. The German Institute for Human Rights in Berlin acts as a national monitoring body (see German Commission for Unesco). Since than, the KMK has developed new recommendations, related to Inclusion. In this recommendations we can't find a clear perspective towards the development of an inclusive education system. The 16 Bundesländer have worked out a paper, that enables all of them to transfer the idea of inclusion in their existing systems, without having to change structures or institutions. For example it is said “Special education support systems develop Bundesland-specific different profiles depending on the conditions of the region or the education system. They should support the professional and organizational development of special needs education, SEN counselling and SEN support. These may be regional or cross-regional bodies, comprise single or multiple special education priorities and support the preventative, inclusive and cooperative forms properly.” (KMK 2011) The right of parents to choose the school for their children is also stressed in this publication. This leads into an argument for preservation of special schools in some Bundesländer (f.e. Baden-Württemberg).

The inclusion-quota in the German school system is progressing, without however a loss in importance of the special schools. Although meanwhile every fourth pupil with special needs is visiting a general school and between 2006 and 2010 the inclusion-quota has increased to one third (average 25 percent), however, this has not meant that less is taught in special schools. Same time an increasing number of pupils is diagnosed with special educational needs. The percentage of special education students in the general school population thus remains almost constant. This is evident from a recent study of Education Economist Professor Klaus Klemm commissioned by the Bertelsmann Foundation. The quota are very different between the Bundesländer, depending on the legislation, the policies and the concepts and in some Bundesländer, the exclusion-quota was even increasing.

Looking at the question of teaching strategies in inclusive settings in Germany it has to be said that there is no “inclusive didactic”. This is also a luck in special education, not only in Germany. Aron and Loprecht consider “relatively little research has been conducted on the effectiveness of specific special education practices or programs” in the US (2012, 111; see: Moser 2013). The discussion about didactical specifications or theories did play a neglected role in Germany until the beginning of the 21st Century. Some colleagues did trace back the deficit of research and interests on an inclusive didactic on the fact, that many Educationalists don't believe in a “special inclusive education”, they assume, that it is “not a different education, it is a good, general education”. Others consist, that Mainstreaming in Germany was in a phase of legitimation and the development of quality couldn't be focussed with the research these days. Merz-Atalik (2014) stressed, that the researchers themselves had the problem of finding inclusive settings for their research and another factor was, that a lot of research was funded and driven by the governments and ministries in the *Bundesländer*. Therefore the “...insights of scientific

research have so far been limited by the specifications and the contract and, not least, limited by the real and existing concepts to be evaluated in school practice” (Merz-Atalik, 2013).

Since today we don't have evidence-based research on inclusive teaching strategies in Germany. There are even only a very few comparisons (no long-term-studies; only small populations) between the learning-development of children in special and in inclusive settings, mainly in the case of learning-difficulties or emotional-social disorders.

In 2013 and in 2014 all teacher training standards for “Special Education” (TED program type 6), “Educational Science” for all teacher training programs (type 1-6) and for all subject teaching areas for all teacher training programs (type 1-6) have been revised “with a view to the requirements of inclusive teaching methods in order to enable future teachers for professional dealing with diversity and for joint learning of students with and without disabilities” (Homepage of the Standing Conference of the Ministries of Culture). These standards are the basic for the “Teachers examination regulations” (Landeslehrerprüfungsordnungen) in the 16 Bundesländer. In all Länder there have been different manifestations of the subject Inclusion in the teacher training examination regulations. Some have added one extra module into the programs (infusion model), some have a more integrated concept and have changed the modules on many subjects (integrated model). In some Universities we do have new teacher education programs with a dual-degree-examination (Primary education in combination with special education), for example in Bielefeld and Potsdam. Even the quantity of the ECTS in the programs are very different.

In Germany in March 2015 the Standing Conference of the Ministries of Education of all Bundesländer (KMK Kultusministerkonferenz), together with the Germans Rectors Conference of the Universities (HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz) have adopted recommendations for “A teacher education for an educational system with Diversity” (Lehrerbildung für eine Schule der Vielfalt; Gemeinsame Empfehlung von Hochschulrektorenkonferenz und Kultusministerkonferenz; Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 12.03.2015/ Beschluss der Hochschulrektorenkonferenz vom 18.03.2015; see: [http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/pdf/PresseUndAktuelles/2015/2015-03-18\\_KMK\\_HRK-Text-Empfehlung-Vielfalt.pdf](http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/pdf/PresseUndAktuelles/2015/2015-03-18_KMK_HRK-Text-Empfehlung-Vielfalt.pdf)).

It is said: “The development of schools, which recognize and value diversity as a strength and normality, is an object of the teachers of all schools. Teachers need professional competences to realize special gifts or disadvantages, disabilities and other barriers of and for pupils in schools and to and to take appropriate preventive and educational support. The cooperation and communication of teachers of different teaching careers, but also any multi-professional cooperation beyond teacher profession, is gaining a growing importance. Therefore, even should the teaching-related courses for all school types and levels of education in co-operation to prepare the future teachers for a constructive and professional approach to diversity.” (Page 1).

There is also a Quality Initiative for teacher education of the State Ministry for Education and Research (Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF). All Universities in Germany with teacher education programs can apply for grants to develop their programs. The government is spending 500 Million Euro for the development of teacher education programs until 2023. One of 16 main goals of the programs is related to the “improvement of the handling of inclusion and heterogeneity at all stages of teacher education” (<http://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/24295.php>).

Considering the field of didactics and teaching methods in inclusive classrooms, it can be summarized that there is a lack of research findings, teaching guides and well developed teaching materials for individual school subjects in Germany. Also, the existing publications often focus only on one of the categories of diversity, whereas today's classrooms reflect a wider range of diversity. For the last ten years, the focus of researchers has been more and more on developing inclusive teaching strategies and didactics. In a few Universities research-teams have been set up. The need for research-based teaching strategies in inclusive and diverse classrooms has been recognized by educational politics, research and practice over the last years.

### 2.1.2 Iceland

In the year 2008 the educational act for compulsory schools in Iceland made it clear that schools in Iceland should be inclusive. The national curriculum for compulsory schools from 2013 is built on this act and it indicates that the basic principle in school operations in Iceland involves universal involvement, access and participation of every pupil in school activities. It points out that inclusive education is a continuous process that aims at offering good education for everyone, respect for diversity and different needs, abilities and characteristics of the pupils. It is also made clear that an effort is made to eliminate all forms of discrimination and disintegration at school. Compulsory school pupils are a diverse group and their needs varied.

School subjects are an important part of school activities but not the objectives as such and it is not the main role of schools to teach subjects but to educate pupils and encourage their overall development. Key competences are expression and communication, creative and critical thinking, independence and cooperation, use of media and information, and responsibility for and evaluation of their studies. These competences are integrated into all school subject areas.

School- and class curriculum is general, flexible, and accommodate all pupils in accordance to their needs. The fundamental of equality, recognition of diversity and tolerance is reflected in the curriculum. One of the significant manifestation of inclusive schools in the curriculum is the emphasize on students' learning and social activities. Flexible learning and teaching is built on the notion that all children can learn but at the same time it is individualized. Each pupil has strength but at the same time different challenges. Teachers that build on flexible teaching methods try to develop strategies for learning that maximizes educational performance for each and everyone. Such educational approaches create situation for stimulating learning environment that supports everyone. The emphasize is on the development on differential study lines so pupils with different abilities, interest and learning needs can reach their most possible learning achievement. Active participation and interaction with other pupils is important. Differential study lines can be accommodated through appropriate tools and computers that can open up for students new opportunities for learning and to put into diverse learning community and work out its possibilities.

The learning goals for each pupil emphasize academic, vocational and social components and components that are important for the pupil. The main policy is that all pupils receive their teaching in general classrooms along with their peers. Human resources are used in the benefits for all students and in collaboration with all staff, professionals and their families.

According to Statistics Iceland (2013) 26% of all the students in compulsory schools receive special education support. 63% of them have been formally diagnosed, but the rest are pointed by their teachers or parents. The special education can happen in the general classroom (37%), in the special education room (17%) or a mixture of these two (46%). Over 6% of pupils in compulsory schools have Icelandic as their second language and they receive support to become competent in the language, these students are not formally diagnosed. Some of these students receive their education in a special classroom. Although the most common support is because of difficulties with Icelandic (reading) the pupils can receive support in all subjects.

### **2.1.3 Lithuania**

The creation of a new education system and the implementation of the new educational aims declared in the Education Act of the Republic of Lithuania, passed on 25 June 1991, represented a challenge to the entire educational community at the time. The education of children with SEN and the ensure of educational support in institutions of comprehensive mainstream education became one of the main challenges: schools were not sufficiently prepared to accept every child, mainly due to teacher training issues (teachers were not adequately trained/educated to support every individual child with diverse needs in the classroom).

Since the 1991 till recent years many research were done with a focus on mainstream education of SEN children and inclusion. In the most of research general principles of inclusive education, quality of educational assistance, support for different groups of children having special educational needs, collaboration and the role of teachers and specialists, teachers attitudes were analysed (Galkiene, 2006; Alisaukas et al. 2009; Geleziniene, 2010; Alisaukas et al. 2011; Alisaukas, Gerulaitis, Milteniene, 2011; Geleziniene 2011; Milteniene, Venclovaite, 2012; Ališauskas, Alisaukiene, Milteniene, 2013 and etc.). In the most of them the concept of inclusive education is more or less focused on educational inclusion of children with special educational needs. The main findings are related with:

- the success of inclusive education, which is related to the accessibility of the resources and teacher ability to differentiate and distribute these resources to the students in the mainstream school class;
- the preparedness of a teacher (knowledge, abilities, attitudes) in order to educate all children and develop favourable relationship with the students, their families and colleagues (Ališauskas et al., 2011);
- the ability to apply new teaching methods, especially those based on metacognitive didactics;
- the ability of the teacher to establish partnership networks inside and outside of the school (between the school and the family, the school and other institutions);
- the ability of school leaders and administrators to create appropriate educational environment to divers children and groups.

In Lithuania, unfortunately, there are only few research focused to subject didactics in the field of inclusive education. One of the first evidence based research in this field has been done by R. Meliėne in 2008. This research is focused on the development of text comprehension abilities and enhancement of reading motivation, using metacognitive reading strategies in the heterogenic classroom. It was analysed the text comprehension as an universal basic academic ability of sixth form pupils. Also the text comprehension has been considered as important factor for reading motivation enhancement working with diverse ability children in the classroom.

The most recent study in the field of subject teaching and learning was done by L. Tomėniėne in 2014, which was focused on analysis of functional mathematical literacy development of eighth form pupils having moderate special educational needs. It was found that teachers selected priorities of methods in order to develop functional mathematical literacy of 8 form pupils with moderate special educational needs. Teaching methods and support strategies chosen by teachers considering special educational needs, enhanced pupils' active participation in the lessons. The orientation to the education of functional mathematical skills in the lessons of mathematics positively influenced the achievements of pupils with special educational needs.

In the process of the development of inclusive education system the National Study of Students' Achievement, the international TIMSS studies and international competition results are important as they foster new requirements for updating curriculum and textbooks for the comprehensive school. General curriculum and achievement standards are revised and updated every 5-6 years, based on international and national pupil achievement assessment results, expert evaluations of the said documents as well as international practices.

Innovative inclusive practice is mutually related to changes in teacher education. One of the first initiatives from policy makers in 1995 was a recommendation to include the course on Special Education into the curricula of initial teacher training. The other impact on teacher education for inclusion was in 2000-2004, when the North and Baltic countries project 'School for All' was carried out (e.g. project 'Teacher Training to Educate Special Needs Children in Mainstream Classes', etc.). The teacher educators developed 'Guidelines for Teacher Training to Educate Special Needs Children in Mainstream Classes' (2003)<sup>1</sup> in collaboration with colleagues from other foreign universities.

The real educational practice shows that not all higher education institutions responded to the mentioned recommendations and guidelines. In 2009 national experts of European Agency of Special and Inclusive Education (project 'Teacher Education for Inclusion') carried out the research seeking to evaluate the content of initial teacher training curricula and how this content relates to teacher education for inclusion. The content of 70 universities and 11 higher non-university curricula of initial teacher training have been analysed. It was found that in 25 curricula (31 % of all analysed teacher training curricula) there was at least one course in special needs education or a course related to inclusive education. Usually these courses were found in the curricula for future primary teachers, special teachers, and social pedagogues. Subject teachers are the least prepared to meet the special educational needs of pupils. Most of them do not study any course on special educational needs or inclusive education<sup>2</sup>.

#### **2.1.4 Luxembourg**

At the level of the curriculum and specific school subjects, few studies on utilizing the learning resources that Luxembourg's diverse student bodies bring to the classroom exist. In fact, today, the competence orientation of schooling in Luxembourg emphasizes standards and relatively narrow (psychometric) school performance measurements (as reflected in such international assessments as the OECD-PISA studies). This orientation challenges inclusive schooling, which often focuses on individualized learning progress as well as solidarity and social skills that are difficult to measure with standardized tests. By contrast, there is a steady focus on multilingual schooling—among Luxembourg's greatest advantages and challenges as its population continues to diversify and become more international and multilingual than ever. Thus far, foreign language learning requirements result in exclusion more so than inclusion, given the difficulties many migrants face in an educational system that demands school subjects to be mastered in both German and French, with Luxembourgish (pre-primary language of interaction), English, and Portuguese key further languages in school life. On positive side, multi-professional teams

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<sup>1</sup> Guidelines for Teacher Training to Educate Special Needs Children in Mainstream Classes' (2003).

<sup>2</sup> Milėniėne L. (2010). Teacher Education for Inclusion Country Report /. European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education [interaktyvus]: TE4I Country Report – Lithuania.

provide ambulant services in regular schools that allow students with recognized special educational needs to remain in more inclusive settings.

### 2.1.5 Spain

In Spain there are 17 Autonomous Communities (with 17 educational systems where different policies, within a common national legislative framework, are in force). There are also two Autonomous Cities (Ceuta and Melilla), which are totally dependent on the Ministry of Education of the Spanish government. In this sense, it is complex to describe the situation regarding inclusion in school subjects in a way that represents all of "Spain". Some barriers and challenges to moving forward towards an increasingly inclusive education in Spain are as follows:

At the macro social level:

- The breaking up of **policies on equity/attention to diversity/inclusion**;
- Policies on "**Bilingualism**" carried out by some Autonomous Communities and its negative impact on the most vulnerable students;
- The curriculum overload, both in the primary and secondary schools;
- **The stagnation of the initiatives to promote innovation and improvement** of the centres committed to inclusive education;
- The weakness of the **policies of lifelong learning** and the low impact of the training of new teachers with skills for inclusion.

At the level of **school cultures and policies**:

- How to implement the principles **and values that sustain inclusion**;
- The implementation and improvement of the times **for coordination and joint reflection** of teachers on their practices and policies in the field of educational equity/attention to diversity/inclusion;
- The role of "**guidance services**" throughout the care process and improvement of the educational quality for the more vulnerable student: role of the **educational psychology assessments, labels and the** different ways to provide personal resources of support;
- The vision more or less wide about how to understand **support** in the educational schools;
- The willingness to promote and listen to the "**voices of the students**" as a lever for innovation and improvement with an inclusive orientation;
- The participation of families in this process and opening **to the local community**.

At the level of **educational action of the teachers in their classroom**

- The development of effective **educational practices accessible to all**, elaborated from the framework of the "**Universal Design for Learning**" versus the traditional approaches of the "**Curriculum Adaptations**".

In the background of the students **at risk of exclusion, marginalization or school failure**:

- The doubts about its progress and **personal and social well-being and** their processes of transition beyond compulsory basic education.

On the other hand, there are some experiences regarding specific subjects such as Music or Physical Education. However, this work is clearly insufficient. Additionally, special attention is paid to the framework of the "Universal Design for Learning" applied to curriculum. But more researches and experiences related to this aspect are needed. As we have pointed out before, the application of "Universal Design for Learning" in the classroom is one of the most important challenges in our country. Moreover, specific methodologies such as cooperative learning, peer tutoring, interactive groups, cooperative multitask classroom, project learning, etc., have been developed. Nevertheless, teachers need more information about these methodologies.

### 2.1.6 Sweden

The 2010 revised national teacher education programmes in Sweden stress the importance of school subjects much more than the previous programmes. However this change of focus has not become implemented alongside a development of the long tradition of integrated/inclusive education in our country. On the contrary it would be fair to say that the new ITE programmes and the 2011 national curriculum for compulsory schooling favour a more individualistic stance applicable to professionals as well as students. The far-reaching decentralisation of decision

making implies these two means of national control even more important. Therefore the absence of guiding principles for making school subject teaching, content and learning designs more inclusive, might legitimate a traditional, not to say reactionary, educational development. ITE and CPD are accordingly forceful tools for enhancing practices in schools and teacher education institutions.

Alongside with nationally set goals for ITE, each teacher education institution is obliged to formulate its own local goals. At the University of Borås *inclusion* is one of six such goals, which entails, ideally, that each teacher student gets knowledge and skills covering inclusive practices in the actual school subjects and beyond. UB also supports the idea of inclusive education through the research programme RCIW (Research and Capability in Inclusion and Welfare) which is one of the strategic research programmes. RCIW is a collaborative network with the task of further developing inclusion in education and society, and thus meeting the requirements of a sustainable society with a particular focus on vulnerable groups. The research and development activities have a strong basis in practice, and consists of assessment visits, training, follow-up research or evaluation of educational settings.

### **2.1.7 Short Summary**

There is a big variety in the contextual frameworks in the partner-countries:

- Comprehensive educational systems (school for all) versus segregate educational systems with different special settings for children with special needs;
- Content-/subject-based structure of the curriculum in schools versus competence-based curricula;
- Human and professional resources delegated to the system versus delegation to individuals with special needs;
- Research related to the “legitimation of inclusive education” versus the “development of quality for inclusive education”;
- Standards and curricula for teacher education programs with inclusion on the basis of the “infusion model” or the “integrated model”.

## **2.2 Description of desiderata derived from the previous analysis**

### **2.2.1 Germany**

The great lack of research-findings, concepts and materials concerning teaching diverse learners in school subjects available to teachers and teacher educators offers a clear perspective on the desiderata. The main idea is to deliver knowledge, inspiring-practice-examples and concepts which are documented, illustrated and explained on a DVD and an enclosed handbook to support teachers in schools as well as university professors in teacher education. They should be enhanced to teach diverse learners in school subjects.

Referring to Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) social ecological model, three target groups are in the focus of this project:

- Target group 1 - University instructors and researchers,
- Target group 2 – Teachers who participate in continuing education,
- Target group 3 – Teachers teaching in schools.

The importance of the following two aspects also derived from the analysis of the situation with regard to inclusion in school subjects which were neglected in the past: To recognize the diversity of human beings it is very important to take into account different categories of diversity. It is not about mainstreaming pupils with disabilities or special needs anymore, it is about developing an inclusive educational system (UNCRPD) for all. To acknowledge the specific methods and concepts inherent to different school subjects it is also necessary to differentiate between the different subjects or competence areas (respectively in the countries, were we do not have the division related to content/subject areas in the curriculum).

### **2.2.2 Iceland**

Our goal is to collect examples of inclusive practices in subject teaching. Three partners from the University of Iceland are in the TdiverS team and they work collaboratively with teachers from four inclusive schools. One teacher from each school works as a coordinator and helps with gathering information/data from their school on how teachers in inclusive schools organize their subject teaching in inclusive classrooms. Each of them identifies,

collects and documents how teachers in their school teach diverse learners in different school subjects; academic subjects, art and handcraft and sports. They bring data to our meetings and together we work on the collected descriptions of the teaching; analyse, evaluate and interpret.

### 2.2.3 Lithuania

The previous analysis of inclusive education situation in Lithuania allows us to foresee the new directions for the development of inclusion:

- The importance of ecological-systemic approach and enhancement of partnerships between policy makers, universities, teacher training institutions and schools in order to develop inclusive didactics in coordination;
- The innovative educational practices based on subject didactics research findings and ways of dissemination of inspiring practices;
- The importance of the enhancement of the quality of PreSett and InSett teacher training for inclusion; therefore is important to give teachers an opportunity to learn more about diverse needs of learners and to know how to organize learning in inclusive classroom, teach different subjects in inclusive way and ensure high achievements of all learners;
- The importance of teaching materials, teaching aids and resources in teaching subjects in national language;
- The ways of awareness raising and improvement of positive attitudes of schools communities and of all society towards inclusive education.

### 2.2.4 Luxembourg

Studies are needed on inclusive education generally as well as on the specific analysis of strategies for facilitating inclusive learning settings and curricula in school subjects. Very few analyses, beyond language learning, have been conducted thus far.

### 2.2.5 Spain

We can emphasize the following ideas from the discussions, meetings and Luxembourg Conference carried out for the time being. It's very important for teachers that are just facing the inclusion requirements, to perceive directly from their peers (other teachers) that this is "possible" and "real", not only a desideratum or a theoretical exercise. For this reason, contributions made by the different project meeting discussion groups and the Luxembourg Congress, together with the teachers, can result a significant "inspiration" for all and a great opportunity to reflect about the conditions and development processes which enable progress towards more inclusive cultures, policies and practices.

Those analyses helped to highlight, first of all, the fact so many times mentioned that the outstanding educational inclusion is a "process" that arises of a social cultural and educational context. It cannot be changed from the outside or extrapolated from one country to another. It does not fit or make sense to make moral judgments or comparisons with regard to the fact of being "more or less" advanced in this way. What is necessary for each of us, in our circumstances – being a "country" a "school" or a teacher "in our classroom" -, is to find the motivation, and the right conditions for moving towards the goal of developing policies or practices in a more inclusive way and, above all, to be able to sustain the effort required to do this over time. In this line, some barriers identified have been the following: a) an overloaded educational curriculum greatly pressured by the international political/national accountability policies based on standardized a test that only assesses some important knowledge and skills but that is clearly insufficient; b) faculty attitudes and conceptions (sometimes rooted in their initial training) who attributed the difficulties for the inclusion of some pupils on the basis of their conditions or personal characteristics, c) rigid and inflexible models of school organization, d) poorly diversified ways of teaching, e) practices of categorization of the student with a greater risk of exclusion, as is the case of students with special educational needs (SEN), which ends up affecting negatively the expectations of their teachers, their peers and, even in different cases, of their own families, f) A vicious "circle of self-fulfilling prophecies" about the performance of those students that due to the effects of negative expectations has received an impoverished teaching, g) ordinary teachers that delegate responsibilities over those pupils considered as having SEN in the teachers considered as "specialist" (teachers in special education), based on the assumption that those specialist teachers have the *expert knowledge* for working with these students, h) as a result of all this, a *status quo* consolidation that complicates the processes of inclusion and ends up as the justification of the use of more segregated options.

When Spanish schools and researchers (UAM) have reflected on their particular discussion groups (the process of change, improvement and innovation initiated), toward more inclusive cultures, policies and practices, they have shared with us what we might call "*some lessons learned*" during their trajectory to be more inclusive. We consider that these ideas must be (in an explicit or implicit way), in our video. For example:

- "Change is possible", in spite of the many barriers (structural, of the educational system, linked to resources, traditions, old conceptions among teachers and other educational personnel, etc. ).
- "The central role and the importance of some values, to keep alive the effort to change".
- "To dream of different school it has been necessary", as well as having positive expectations of success.
- "It's a worthy process" and that the impact/results (in different educational levels and for the whole of the educational community) are being morally enriching and refreshing.
- "It's crucial to feel the quasi-unconditional support of your respective 'heads'" (steering, foundation, congregation).
- There are people, practices and traditions very resistant to change. We might expect that things are easier in the early stages (infant, primary education), and much more difficult in the upper stages of the compulsory education.

### 2.2.6 Sweden

A desirable development in Sweden would, according to an ecological model, be more forceful policy guidance at the national political level. By tradition and also taking into consideration the solid governance structures in our country, it would not meet with encounter to inaugurate stronger inclusive educational policies nationally. However, and despite the change of government 2014, this is not the case. Unclear political majorities in parliament with a xenophobic party, attracting a considerable number of voters, favour timorous politics free from innovative ambitions. This tendency is also reinforced by what by many is seen as uncontrolled immigration. The great number of child asylum seekers in schools and classrooms are increasingly becoming scapegoats for declining Swedish PISA results. Teachers badly prepared for this new situation are seldom enthusiastic to increase diversity even more in their classes. Instead, separation and homogeneity often are seen as the solution. It goes without saying that more heterogeneous societies/schools presuppose more inclusive settings and practices at all levels.

## 2.3 Description of the innovative character of TdiverS

### 2.3.1 Germany

In comparison to most of the other partner countries of TdiverS there is not much knowledge and experience in Germany looking at teaching diverse learners in school subjects. Therefore, TdiverS offers the unique opportunity to learn from the expertise of other countries. On this basis, it is possible to work on proven concepts discussing them amongst national experts. Inspiring ideas from the TdiverS network influence the national development and lead to new perspectives looking at teaching school subjects in inclusive classrooms. Always considering the approach explained above focusing not only disability as one category of diversity but taking into account different categories and adapting this perspective on the idea of teaching diverse learners in different school subjects new points of view can be acquired amongst teachers and scientists.

### 2.3.2 Iceland

As can be seen in Icelandic formal documents (Educational law, National, school and classroom curriculum, regulation and official reports) the education in the country builds on the notion of inclusion and individualized learning. However, according to these documents they mostly focus on placement, students with disabilities, support and social inclusion but less if at all on inclusion in subject teaching. Therefore, we focus on inclusive subject teaching and through our work with teachers from four different schools that all accommodate inclusive teaching strategies in their practice, we collect examples from their practice. Our intention is to develop material for use in teacher education and teacher professional courses. The focus is on preparation, methods, structures, environment and the outcome.

### 2.3.3 Lithuania

The TdiverS project is a platform for partner communication joining all important participants and representatives from different national and professional contexts. The project inspired the communication focused on inclusive education between: academics, teachers, academics-teachers, students-teachers-academics, policy makers-academics-teachers. In order to illustrate this we provide with some examples:

- *In 2014 at Siauliai University the group of researchers developed a research project focused on the analysis of what does it mean "the good enough" school for all educational participants in inclusive school (the perspectives of teachers, students, their families, school leaders). Findings allows to plan the improvements of school environment (including social and physical), revise the process of teaching and learning at school (including new methods and strategies in subject teaching), and also to revise teacher training curricula and programmes accordingly.*

- In 2015 the Bachelor's thesis of Kristina Sivica, the student in Education at Siauliai University, was focused on the topic, related to successful teaching practice educating students with special educational needs in inclusive school. On the basis of videotaped lessons found on the Internet, it was revealed the peculiarities of inclusive lesson organization at the school.
- In 2014-2015 the Special Pedagogues Association of Lithuania Republic, as a strategic partner of the project invited Lithuanian teachers to share with good practices "Create and Share: Good Lesson for all and everyone" (take video from inclusive lessons) and learn from each other.

Innovative character of the project can be proved by the networking of teachers and researchers from participating countries in a common events and workshops (discussion groups, World café, international scientific-practical conferences etc.). This made it possible to share with inspiring practices and experiences among researchers and teachers from different Europe countries and to learn from each other. Such a kind of events and activities allows to create international community of practices focused on teaching and learning subjects in inclusive school.

### 2.3.4 Luxembourg

The University of Luxembourg has recently increased its provision of resources for the country's teachers, policymakers, and other stakeholders through considerably detailed attention to these issues, for example, in the inaugural National Education Report of 2015. This report included specific chapters on special educational needs (co-authored by Justin Powell, a TdiverS member) as well as related topics such as repeating grades and multilingualism in schooling. An exemplary project (ASPIN), currently underway and co-led by Michelle Brendel (a TdiverS member), examines science education and alternative forms of instruction and assessment, focusing on teachers' and students' use of narrative assessment strategies in primary science investigations and on the processes of narrative assessment as a learning tool for teachers and students to provide a multifaceted picture of the experiences and learning of children and their teachers as they interact around the assessment of science.

Furthermore, the Luxembourg TdiverS project team is working collaboratively with schools and teachers on effective concepts, didactics and methods of teaching in order to facilitate teachers' teaching and learners' development in inclusive classrooms. For example, expert interviews and site visits are being carried to better understand the principles and concepts of inclusive education and diverse student bodies in Luxembourg's schools. The team is identifying, collecting, and documenting good practice examples of teaching diverse learners in school subjects throughout the country. Through the first international conference on inclusive education in school subjects, held in November 2014 at the main school campus of the City of Luxembourg and organized by the TdiverS project team as the "first annual conference", we began to develop the awareness and competences of teachers in teacher education programmes related to meeting all pupils' needs in inclusive settings. Team members have participated in key events, such as workshops and podium discussion on inclusive schooling, designed to further awareness and recognition of the issues among a broad audience of teachers, family members, and policymakers. Furthermore, we are collecting available research findings and empirical evidence in the field of teaching diverse learners in inclusive settings from the partner countries, translating our project results into different languages and publishing our research (English, German).

### 2.3.5 Spain

The contributions of TdiverS project that could be highlighted are the following:

*Microsystem:*

- To share ways of teaching that capture the curiosity and the motivation of the student, such as the work by *research projects*.
- To show different formats of collaborative and cooperative work, both among the students, and teachers alike.
- To show classrooms wealth in stimulus and choice opportunities, with mixed materials and frequent use of ICT.
- Help to faculty "specialist" that participates fully in the classroom, often in the form of co-teaching with classroom teachers.
- To show leadership teams that contribute to create the conditions and the climate of relations necessary to cope with the constant challenges and "turbulences" of the process toward a more inclusive education.

*Mesosystem:*

- Opening of the schools to their community. Clear strategies to promote and facilitate the involvement of families within a framework of mutual trust and shared responsibility. Alliance construction among school, family and community as a powerful resource for the school.

- g. Teaching teams of different schools that know how to look for and take care of the moments for reflection and analysis of their practices and the relationship of these with the values they want to keep inclusive.
- h. Alliance construction among universities and school in every country and between different countries.

*Exosystem:* Advance in recommendations in generally for educational systems and particularly for the teacher training.

*Macrosystem:* We are conscious that the contribution for the development of more inclusive schools every time, the project purpose, is an important contribution for the inclusive society construction.

### **2.3.6 Sweden**

Taking the above snapshot descriptions into consideration, the TdiverS project has the potential to work as a powerful means for educational change. This is probably true for all participating countries but even more so in Sweden during the parliamentary period 2014 - 2018. This is because the new government, a coalition of Socialdemocrats and the Green party, struggles to balance voters' opinions and hands-on politics. Reactionary debaters extraneous to education, frequently maintain the need for schools to reintroduce more of streaming and selective practice often with Germany and Austria as golden examples. In this climate innovative moves seem to be difficult to implement.

During 2014, however, one of the Swedish TdiverS participants has had the opportunity to meet with the present ministers of education, Mr Fridolin, and for enterprise and energy, Mr Damberg, at official events in Borås. Ongoing research projects including TdiverS were presented and a considerable interest and willingness for change was shown in return. Until present though, no further measures in inclusive directions have been taken.

## **2.4 Description of the development of the project including the impetus of TdiverS**

### **2.4.1 Germany**

TdiverS already influenced the members of the German partners in very positive way. Especially the consortium meetings and the conference were very impressive for all members of the team. The chance to connect theoretical ideas and inspiring practice examples, which for example could be seen by visiting schools during the meeting in Madrid, disclosed unknown perspective of teaching different school subjects in inclusive settings. It helped to understand theoretical concepts, which were discussed before much better and enabled the colleagues to take these impression and ideas back to their field of work at home where they act as multipliers. Partners working in University for example are already using research results, information presented by the international partners and information gained working in the TdiverS network while teaching students. Considering school subjects this takes place for instance in teaching students in the subject of inclusive physical education at the University of Education Ludwigsburg.

In addition, the work on the discussion paper but also on the production of the video sequences for the DVD helped to expand and to deepen the regional and national network of teachers and scientists interested and/or working in the field of inclusive education. Schools were identified as schools, which are on one hand interested to work together with the national TdiverS team in the field of teaching in inclusive settings and/or can offer examples of inspiring practice which can be recorded and used for the DVD.

### **2.4.2 Iceland**

We began by finding inclusive schools, and since all schools in Iceland are supposed to work that way our criteria was finding schools that are known of good practices according to inclusion and in diverse school subjects. We collected data by note taking, photographing and videotaping each inclusive practice during field observations. The field observations gave us an internal perspective of the classrooms and support for the intended videos. The teacher coordinators write narratives and collect students work. We meet with them each month and together we analyse, interpret and evaluate the data from observations and the narratives. This will give us a good frame for creating the videos from the inclusive practices.

Preliminary findings will be introduced at the ECER 2015 in Budapest, Menntakvika2015 in Iceland, TdiverS 2015 Reykjavik, and AERA 2016 in Washington DC. Findings are also introduced in our teaching at the University of Iceland both to initial teacher education students and graduate and developmental studies during spring and fall terms 2015.

### 2.4.3 Lithuania

In the National Education Strategy 2013-2022 new developments in the teacher training and practice have been out-lined: an integral teacher training and qualification upgrading system has been planned to develop; the system of teacher training/retraining has been oriented towards the changing role of a teacher in a knowledge society, and in inclusive school meeting the diverse needs of children.

The main idea and goals of TdiverS project are closely related to the main ideas of the National Education Strategy 2013-2022 of Lithuania. In this sense, the actualization of teacher training (especially of subject teacher training) for inclusive school is of most importance in Lithuania at the moment. The mentioned issues related to subject teacher training and pedagogical practice have been raised up in the recent events:

- International conference “Education of persons having special educational needs: from segregation towards inclusion” which was held at Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania (Vilnius) in December, 2013; the main ideas of TdiverS project has been presented and discussed with Lithuanian and international partners.
- International scientific practical conference “Teacher Education for Inclusive School”, which was held at Siauliai University, Lithuania (Siauliai) in September, 2014. TdiverS project partners took an active part in it (e.g. Hafdis Gudonsdottir). Also the policy makers (the representatives of the Ministry of Education of Lithuania) and teachers, family members, students took an active part in a conference.
- Hafdis Gudonsdottir (Iceland); the aim of the practical seminar was to improve the competences of subject teachers to teach diverse children in the classroom.
- International conference “Learning Together to Live Diversity: Comparing Inclusive Schooling in Europe” which was held by TdiverS project partners in Luxemburg, November, 2014. Group of six Lithuanian teachers took an active part in it. The exchange of pedagogical experiences in diverse groups of participants (teachers, policy makers, researchers, students) from five countries inspired new developments in subject teaching in inclusive schools in different national and school contexts.

### 2.4.4 Luxembourg

TdiverS has facilitated discussion within Luxembourg between the University, the Ministry of Education, schools, and various civil society groups.

### 2.4.5 Spain

The work developed in the TdiverS Project framework, will let us answer some crucial questions for the inclusive practice development.

1. What are the values and reasons that have been allowed to start and sustain the processes toward more inclusive practices in schools?
2. What role do the director teams play (attitudes, strategies, forms of support, etc.) in this process?
3. What key elements of the traditional "grammar school" have been transformed (organization, groupings, teaching methodologies, the contents of the curriculum, relations with the educational community, etc.)?
4. What are the main barriers and resistance that have been found and how has your school tried to resolve them? We know that progress toward inclusion is a complex process, that it is not easy, it requires the effort and participation of many people in the educational community and whose nature, as Norwich pointed out is dilemmatic (can cause a dilemma).

Furthermore, implications for teachers training will be so important. For instance, the Autonomia University of Madrid, such as other Spanish universities, have joined to the teachers competences, some related to the diversity attention in the class in an inclusive framework. Additionally, the purpose is to motivate this competences introduction in other professionals related with the education as Psychology students (in the old curriculum of the Spanish universities there are subjects related to education psychology).

### 2.4.6 Sweden

The Swedish TdiverS team is now and then engaged in different CPD activities around the country. At these occasions, often thematically ranged within 'evidence based practice' research, project activities are presented. As, however, so far few TdiverS results have been published or otherwise disseminated, it would not be correct to say that the project has made imprints nationwide. At the local arena, TdiverS is a living entity though. A recently started intervention project in approx. 20 schools in and around the municipality of Borås, has been inspired by the

international outlooks made possible by TdiverS. The 2 year large scale project in which UB's role is to carry out continuous evolutionary research alongside the intervention measures, is funded by the Region Västra Götaland and aims at developing tools for enhancing, among others, teachers', special educators' and child care professionals' skills and abilities to deal with difficulties among children and youth in schools. Ultimately, the goal is to reduce the number of drop-outs in upper secondary schools. Important in this project is to adapt instruction and the whole learning environment especially in theoretical school subjects in order to involve and interest all students including those with special needs. The connection with the aims of TdiverS is evident.

## Résumé

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As the different feedbacks from all colleagues to the questions in the evaluation-questionnaires after the meetings and conferences, the discussions during the meetings and meantime, and the growing connectivity between the partners does show: there is a remarkable commitment to the project and its goals under the partners. The main strength in this international project, connecting renowned experts and scientists, is on the one hand represented by the diversity of the consortium members (for example in research areas, contents, expertise in different diversity-dimensions, experiences in school-practice and in teacher education in different institutions and on different levels). On the other hand this diversity is also a challenge for the communication and the cooperation. We had to consider a variety of perspectives and individual foci, for example related to the background of the partners and the (national, regional or personal) context in which they are working. The needs in the different countries in the project to develop an inclusive educational system amongst other things are based on basic values in the societies, on political decisions, an inclusion-oriented legislation, on conducive systems and structures for inclusion, on the framework for teacher education for inclusion and last but not least in the concrete practice of inclusive teaching in the classroom. These aspects do represent the different layers of the social ecological model (Bronfenbrenner). All partner-countries are in a developmental and quality assurance process, but on very different levels. While some have already a well developed, legislative and structural framework in the educational system for inclusion, others can't rely upon the development of them during the next years. At some Universities it is possible to develop research based ways to monitor the inclusive practice in schools in cooperation with the school-administration, at others the conditions do not allow a closer cooperation or influence. The diversity in the expertise of the consortium and cooperation-partners (like State Ministries, schools, teachers, teacher-students, parents etc.) to the field of teaching diverse learners is the most appreciative aspect of the international cooperation in TdiverS. The shared values about inclusive education, the cross-national demand of research and good practice in inclusive teaching strategies in (school-)subjects, the research interests and the declared willingness of all individual persons involved into the project to make a contribution to increase the quantity and quality of inclusive education in Europe, can be seen as the guarantor for the success and the goals of TdiverS.

"If you have an apple and I have an apple and we exchange apples then you and I will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas."  
George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

## Literature

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