

PRESS RELEASE

Inclusive education for people with disabilities: meeting of the Local Promoting Group for Spain of the European Network on Inclusive Education and Disability, incluD-ed, lead by Fundación ONCE

Madrid, 22 October 2014

The Local Promoting Group for Spain of the European Network of Inclusive Education and Disability, the incluD-ed network, lead by Fundación ONCE and co-financed by the European Social Fund, held its third annual meeting in Madrid on 21 October 2014. The meeting was opened by Fundación ONCE's Director for Social and International Relations and Strategic Plans, Miguel Ángel Cabra de Luna, and by its Commissioner for University, Youth and Special Plans. During the event, the Group went on to draft a joint document that analyses and shares information on the principal initiatives and projects developed by the Group's member bodies to promote full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Spanish educational system.



This set of initiatives took their inspiration from the [Statement on promoting inclusive education systems in Europe](#), issued at the **First Conference on Inclusive Education and Disability, promoted by incluD-ed and held in the European Parliament** in April this year. A further outcome of that Conference was a video in which several of the participants responded to a series of questions about inclusive education, and this served as a basis for discussion at the Local Promoting Group meeting. Both of these documents set out the key recommendations made to the EU institutions and the Member States and are aimed at ensuring full inclusion of persons with disabilities in educational systems. The meeting therefore pinpointed the seven main areas where action is required, ranging, *inter alia*, from the establishment of mechanisms for early detection, teacher training, to support for transitions between the different stages of education or for universally accessible school curricula.

Over the course of the day, the Local Promoting Group for the includ-ed network in Spain — consisting of a wide range of players from the field of education, including representatives of voluntary sector associations working with people with disabilities and their families, universities, businesses, schools and other entities in the cooperative and voluntary sector — identified the key initiatives that each of them develop in their specific areas, resulting in a wide range of initiatives and proposals aimed at promoting inclusive education for persons with disabilities.

In opening the meeting, Miguel Ángel Cabra de Luna told the participants that “inclusive education is crucial to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and for compliance with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”.

For her part, Isabel Martínez Lozano said: “increasingly, education will become one of the key factors in social inclusion or exclusion in the future. The position of those with disabilities must be improved in this area, in which they currently find themselves at a clear disadvantage”.

Carla Bonino, the Fundación ONCE Coordinator for the includ-ed network, outlined the path followed by the network and its major milestones and actions since its launch in 2010. At the close of the event, Maria Tussy, the head of Fundación ONCE’s European Programmes Unit, emphasised that “while views and educational models differ, forums such as the includ-ed network allow us to speak with one voice in order to be heard in Europe”.

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