

Inclusion of autism

Citation for published version (APA):

van Kessel, R. (2020). *Inclusion of autism: an analysis of education policy in the EU*. [Doctoral Thesis, Maastricht University]. Gildeprint Drukkerijen. <https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20201210rk>

Document status and date:

Published: 01/01/2020

DOI:

[10.26481/dis.20201210rk](https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20201210rk)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Please check the document version of this publication:

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
- The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
- The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

If the publication is distributed under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license above, please follow below link for the End User Agreement:

www.umlib.nl/taverne-license

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at:

repository@maastrichtuniversity.nl

providing details and we will investigate your claim.

1. Approximately one in 160 children in the world is on the autism spectrum, which often corresponds with having significant health and education needs (World Health Organisation, 2019);
2. Inclusive education has become a priority in international and national policy over the last few decades due to its significant benefits for children with special education needs in later life, such as improved social capabilities, employment outcomes, and ability to live independently (Hehir et al., 2016);
3. The right and access to education were implemented in all twenty European Union Member States under study. Nine-teen out of twenty European Union Member States are in the process of developing or have developed inclusive education;
4. The twenty European Union Member States under study showed few autism-specific policies and/or strategies. Most policies are aimed at special education needs in general, which allows a wide spectrum of conditions to be addressed, yet runs the risk of not providing specific guidelines for complex conditions, such as autism;
5. Teachers play crucial roles in the development of children on the autism spectrum and in delivering inclusive education, yet many feel unprepared, are unmotivated, or portray other attitudinal barriers towards incorporating children with special education needs in an inclusive classroom (Van Mieghem et al., 2018), which can be related back to the lack of specificity in guidance;
6. The infrastructure for teachers in the European Union (in particular teacher training and multi-disciplinary support) at a policy level has to be massively improved in order to be able to adequately implement inclusive education consistently;
7. Countries outside the European Union are found to experience similar barriers when attempting to implement inclusive education as European Union Member States (Dubkovetska et al., 2016; Kavelashvili, 2017);
8. The rise of the coronavirus-19 pandemic has changed the landscape of education considerably (Deguen et al., 2020). This landscape calls for novel policy solutions that incorporate options for in-person and remote delivery of education and SEN services in a way that ensures inclusion.