



## TEN PILLARS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) offers a timely opportunity to reflect on progress and re-examine the forces shaping the future of education. While EASNIE's long-standing **Key Principles** around equity, participation and inclusion remain central, ten new Pillars set out the system-level actions needed to realise these principles in a rapidly changing context.

International organisations and research evidence reflect these actions. The European Union, UNESCO, the OECD and others highlight lifelong learning, digital inclusion, strong governance and cross-sector collaboration as essential foundations for inclusive, resilient education systems.

At the same time, education systems face increasing pressure from social, economic and technological change. Persistent inequalities and the pace of digital transformation highlight the need for coherent policies and strong rights frameworks that protect all learners. Fragmented governance, insufficient resourcing and capacity challenges remain significant barriers, particularly for learners facing intersecting forms of exclusion.

There is broad consensus: transformation is not optional. We must rethink why, how, what, where and when learning happens, and move from aspiration to implementation through deliberate, co-ordinated action. EASNIE's Ten Pillars provide a future-focused framework to guide this transformation and support education systems to uphold every learner's right to high-quality, inclusive education.



## 1. LEARNER WELL-BEING AND BELONGING

Learners' well-being, safety, participation and sense of belonging are essential foundations for meaningful learning. Systems must strengthen agency, support ethical participation and promote social and emotional learning, family engagement and digital/media literacy.

### **Key actions**

- > Make well-being and belonging core system goals.
- > Embed authentic learner voice in decision-making.
- > Ensure access to mental health support, nutrition and digital literacy.



## 2. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Strong education systems rely on family engagement and community partnerships. Inclusive schools function as community hubs that integrate services, offer varied learning opportunities and foster social cohesion.

### **Key actions**

- > Strengthen authentic family and community partnership.
- > Develop inclusive, culturally-responsive engagement approaches that reach all families.
- > Position schools as community hubs.



## 3. LIFELONG LEARNING

Learning must be understood as a continuous, flexible trajectory across the life course. Coherent pathways, reduced transition barriers and opportunities to adapt or reskill help prevent early categorisation or inequalities, promote resilience and ensure all learners can navigate changing personal, social and economic realities.

### **Key actions**

- > Ensure coherent, flexible learning pathways across all stages of education.
- > Strengthen adaptability, learner agency and opportunities to reskill throughout life.
- > Support smooth transitions through co-ordinated policies linking education, training, work and family engagement.



## 4. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

Teachers are central to inclusive education. They need sustained professional learning to equip them with relevant skills, and supportive working conditions to meet diverse learner needs. Collaborative cultures, inclusive pedagogies and attention to teachers' well-being enable high-quality teaching and strengthen system-wide capacity for inclusive practice.

### **Key actions**

- > Provide continuous professional learning for inclusive pedagogy, digital literacy and reflective practice.
- > Create supportive professional environments that strengthen teacher well-being.
- > Promote culturally responsive and collaborative teaching.



## 5. INNOVATIONS IN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Curricula should be interdisciplinary, competence-based and aligned with sustainability and democratic participation. Assessment must value diverse abilities and support human flourishing.

### **Key actions**

- > Embed inclusion as a core principle in curriculum and assessment.
- > Promote equitable, learner-centred assessment that recognises diverse abilities.
- > Develop future-oriented, interdisciplinary curricula that develop human values, active citizenship, critical thinking and digital literacy.

## 6. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND AI



Digitalisation requires equitable access, ethical governance and strong media literacy. Technology must support, not replace, pedagogy, while safeguarding privacy and diversity.

### **Key actions**

- > Ensure equitable access to digital tools and infrastructure.
- > Promote strong media literacy and safe digital practices.
- > Use AI responsibly to support personalised learning within ethical guidelines.

## 7. CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION



Inclusive education depends on co-operation among education, health, social welfare and other sectors. Shared goals, clear frameworks and transparent communication are essential to address complex learner needs.

### **Key actions**

- > Integrate education, health, social and community services.
- > Strengthen multi-professional and cross-sector teams.
- > Promote shared governance and aligned responsibilities across sectors.

## 8. INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP



Strong governance and inclusive leadership are essential for building coherent, equitable systems. Distributed, participatory and networked leadership cultures help align policy and practice, foster collaboration and sustain long-term system improvement grounded in shared responsibility.

### **Key actions**

- > Strengthen distributed, collaborative leadership that drives equity and shared responsibility across the system.
- > Build coherent governance structures aligning policy, practice and accountability.
- > Promote networked collaboration across schools and sectors.

## 9. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MONITORING



Continuous improvement of systems requires robust monitoring, transparent data use and long-term, equitable investment. Multi-level evaluation systems ensure resilience, accountability and the capacity to innovate in the face of evolving social and global challenges.

### **Key actions**

- > Develop robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for improvement.
- > Ensure sustained, equitable investment to build long-term capacity.
- > Use transparent, data-informed processes to guide decision-making.

## 10. FINANCING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION



Inclusive systems depend on strategic, fair and transparent resource allocation. Investment must reach learners with the greatest needs, build system capacity and safeguard education as a public good, supported by responsible regulation of private involvement.

### **Key actions**

- > Ensure sustained, equitable investment to support innovation and inclusion.
- > Allocate resources strategically to strengthen inclusive practice.
- > Regulate private-sector involvement to uphold the public good.



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This flyer presents the Ten Pillars Shaping the Future of Inclusive Education in brief. Use the QR code to access the accompanying **Background Paper**.

Visit the EASNIE website to download free resources and find out more about our activities:  
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Co-funded by the European Union

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