

## *Annex*

### **Methodology**

#### **Guidelines for the country background reports**

National authorities of participating countries are responsible for the preparation of a country report. Its purpose is to identify transition policies with respect to the situation of persons with disabilities or learning difficulties. All country reports used a common framework in order to facilitate comparative analysis and to maximise the opportunities for participating countries to share and learn from each other.

In order to present their transition policies, participating countries were asked to describe the context, their current policies and provision, and the key factors that influence these policies. Countries also highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of their transition policies. The reports covered the following nine topics:

1. definitions of disability
2. data
3. policy
4. funding
5. provision
6. support services
7. training
8. parental and community involvement
9. future developments.

In addition, countries highlighted anticipated trends in future policy developments both in the short and long term and indicate their highest priorities for future development in order to facilitate the transition of persons with disabilities or learning difficulties to tertiary education and/or to employment.

Country reports are based on:

- a literature review covering the factors that facilitate or hinder transition to tertiary education or employment for persons with disabilities or learning difficulties;
- an account of national policies;
- visits and interviews allowing for comparisons between national policies and the actual practices.

The guidelines asked countries to provide comparisons or information on trends over a period of time, generally ten years.

### ***Procedures for preparing the country report***

National authorities were responsible for the preparation of the country report. Each participating country appointed a national resource person who co-ordinated the project at national administrative level, attended OECD meetings twice a year and, if required, meetings organised at national level. With respect to the country report, the resource person was responsible for:

- managing the preparation of the country report;
- communications with the OECD about the country report;
- liaising with other ministries that may be concerned by transition issues;
- ensuring the involvement of key stakeholder groups;<sup>1</sup>
- communications within the country about the country report;
- ensuring that the country report was completed on schedule;
- liaising with the OECD about the organisation and the implementation of the visits and the interviews.

### ***Topics covered in the country reports***

#### *Topic 1: Definitions of disability*

This section showed any differences that may exist between the definition of disability for children and for adults. It also indicated the consequences of these differences for individual with respect to the access to rights, aids and support as well as their continuity. In addition, it highlighted any effects that differences in definition might have with respect to transition to tertiary education and to employment.

#### *Topic 2: Data*

This section presented the data available on young persons<sup>2</sup> with disabilities or learning difficulties and the data that was missing, as well as the data collection procedure. It also presented existing data on the situation of young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties in comparison with the average population as well as trends over the last ten years. The data description could include:

- the number of young adults with disabilities or learning difficulties in tertiary education, in vocational education and training, in adult and continuing education, in short-term training, in remedial training, and in employer-based training compared to the number of young adults without disabilities in these situations;

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1. These vary from country to country, but would normally include, in addition to the Ministry of Education, responsible ministries in areas such as finance, labour, industry, research, science and technology; employers and trade unions; representatives of academic staff; organisations for students with disabilities; and agencies responsible for funding and quality assurance.
  2. Although the definition of young persons may vary among countries, the data included persons with disabilities or learning difficulties aged 16-30.

- the unemployment rate of young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties compared to the unemployment rate of young adults without disabilities;
- the number of young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties who are not studying and not working compared to the number of young adults without disabilities;
- the employment rate of young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties compared to that of young adults without disabilities;
- the kinds of employment to which young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties have access (type of work, number of working hours, salary) compared to those for young adults without disabilities;
- the number of young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties not undertaking further education after compulsory school compared to the number of young adults without disabilities;
- the level of training and qualification of young persons with disabilities or learning difficulties compared to that of young adults without disabilities.

The data description also presented, when possible, existing data on the performance of the education system, such as:

- the number of students with disabilities or learning difficulties entering and in ISCED 3A and ISCED 3B courses;
- the number of students with disabilities or learning difficulties entering and in ISCED 5A and ISCED 5B courses;
- the number of students with disabilities and learning difficulties who enter tertiary education or employment after secondary education;
- the number of students with disabilities or learning difficulties who enter employment after tertiary education;
- the number of students with disabilities or learning difficulties who remain in tertiary education;
- the success and failures rates of students with disabilities or learning difficulties who had remedial courses.

All data referred, when possible, to the characteristics of the students (type of disability, gender, age, socio-economic status, ethnic minority background).

### *Topic 3: Policy*

The policy description provided the current government policy statements and goals relevant to transition to tertiary education and to employment of those with disabilities and learning difficulties. These policy statements concern social, employment and education policies and may come from single departments – employment, education, health or social welfare, for example – or they may be the result of inter-departmental collaboration. They cover the objectives, the ways in which they are set, the actors involved in setting them, and the tensions that may exist for their implementation.

This section presented existing legislation relevant to the transition to tertiary education and to the employment of persons with disabilities or learning difficulties. It described legislation prohibiting discrimination, legislation and initiatives favouring accessibility of school buildings and universities, promoting training of teaching and administrative staff, and supporting access to vocational education and training and/or workplaces. The description of existing legislation also covered assessment procedures and the extra support disabled students may obtain (time for exams, proximity to students' home, short courses, modularisation, etc.). It also covered changes in legislation with respect to age and disability.

It also included how policies promote accessibility settings for postsecondary education (tertiary education institutions, vocational training centres) as well as policies promoting access to professional life.

This section also provided information on measures taken to link employment, education and health issues. It highlighted how policies promote linkages between upper secondary institutions and tertiary institutions as well as linkages between tertiary education and other forms of education such as vocational education and training, adult and continuing education, short-term job training, remedial training and employer-based training. It described how policies aim to involve employers in the education and training process (financial incentives for employers, availability of methodological, technical and human help for firms and employees).

#### *Topic 4: Funding*

This section presented national funding for the education and the transition to tertiary education and to employment of those with disabilities and learning difficulties in addition to the funding allocated for those without any disability or learning difficulty. It covered existing aids for students as well as institutions or families and described eligibility criteria and links between aids and tuition.

#### *Topic 5: Provision*

This section described existing systems with regard to employment, education, health, vocational education and training and lifelong education. The description covered existing provision and programmes to encourage people with disabilities or learning difficulties to become actively involved in professional and social life, those that support employers' involvement and those favouring relationships between employment, education and health services.

The description also highlighted the modes of funding, the agencies responsible for funding institutions and individuals and for assuring the system's quality, requirements for students (tuition), assessment procedures, modes of evaluation of the provision, etc.

It discussed in addition any curriculum development work designed to enhance educational organisation, materials, teaching methods or other support for children and students with disabilities or learning difficulties. It described the mechanisms created to improve quality of provision and the existing evidence on this issue.

#### *Topic 6: Support services*

This section dealt with the types of structures and support services available to those with disabilities and learning difficulties in the education system, those that serve to link health, education and employment issues, and those devoted to support during the

transition to tertiary education, to vocational education and training and to employment. It indicated how students access information, the opportunities available in secondary education and tertiary education, as well as the opportunities for transition between programmes and institutions. It gave information about the roles and added value of academic and non-academic counselling and guidance services, of transition support services, remedial courses and external support services.

The description also covered materials or initiatives designed to assist faculty and staff in working with persons with disabilities or learning difficulties (faculty/staff handbook, annual mailing to faculty/staff, workshops and presentation to faculty groups, one-on-one discussions with faculty staff/staff who request information or assistance, information resources such as books and videotapes for faculty staff). It also described the mechanisms implemented to improve the quality of support.

### *Topic 7: Training*

This section described the extent to which initial and/or in-service training for teachers and other professionals includes information on transition issues as well as any training or other forms of support for non-professionals, notably parents.

### *Topic 8: Parental and community involvement*

This section presented the extent and nature of involvement of parents in the transition process to tertiary education and to employment, as well as initiatives taken in this area. It covered the involvement of voluntary bodies concerned with disabilities as well as other forms of community support, *e.g.* donations by charities or sponsorship by commercial organisations.

### *Topic 9: Future developments*

This section discussed the strengths and weaknesses of existing transition policies and presented the further developments needed and those likely to occur in practice, *e.g.* over the next year or so.

## **Country visits**

The site visits aimed at complementing the information contained in the country reports by taking into account the points of view of various stakeholders.

### ***Procedure***

The site visits lasted three to four days during which stakeholders who play a role in the transition of young people with disabilities from upper secondary education to tertiary education and to employment were interviewed. Stakeholders were identified by participating countries which also, in conjunction with the OECD, prepared an agenda for the visit and made the necessary arrangements. Stakeholders included:

- ministers and/or senior officials in ministries/departments of education, employment and health;
- representatives of employers and trade unions;
- representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs);

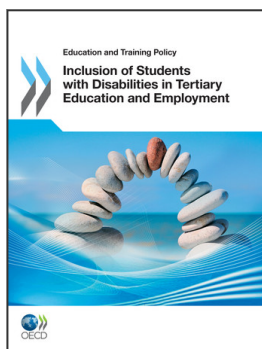
- staff of schools and universities;
- students in schools and universities;
- staff of service providers.

### *Topics covered*

Interviews focused on the strengths and weaknesses of existing policies and practices as well as on factors for improvement. Information was gathered on:

- the implementation of current legislation and policies on transition issues;
- incentives (funding, training, technical support) developed to empower schools, tertiary education institutions, companies and disability support/transition services to implement high-quality transition programmes and how they facilitate or impede cross-sectoral approaches and effective transition;
- incentives (funding, supports, and benefits) developed to empower students with special needs to go on to tertiary education and to employment;
- policies developed by schools and tertiary education institutions to foster continuity of educational pathways with regard to admission procedures, information systems, needs assessments, support, family involvement, collaboration between settings and between departments, etc.
- policies and strategies developed by schools and tertiary education institutions to create links with the employment sector as well as with disability support/transition services;
- policies and strategies developed by employers and disability support/transition services to create links with education sector.

In order to improve the quality of interviews, these were carried out jointly by the OECD and, as far as possible, by a representative of the research centre appointed by the country.



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