DIGIT ALL

A NEW APPROACH TO DIGITAL EDUCATION AND INCLUSION

Module 2

What do we mean when we talk about inclusion?
Aims to explore:
 - Inclusive policies and practices in Europe
 - How to promote social participation in the educational context

Aims

Inclusive policies and practices in Europe.

Inclusive policies and practices in Europe

- The concept of inclusion was first introduced as an alternative educational approach to segregated learning opportunities for students with diverse needs and abilities.
- The key moment occurs with the signing of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994).
- Since 1994 education systems around the world are striving to implement IE, not only for children with special educational needs but for all students.

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION
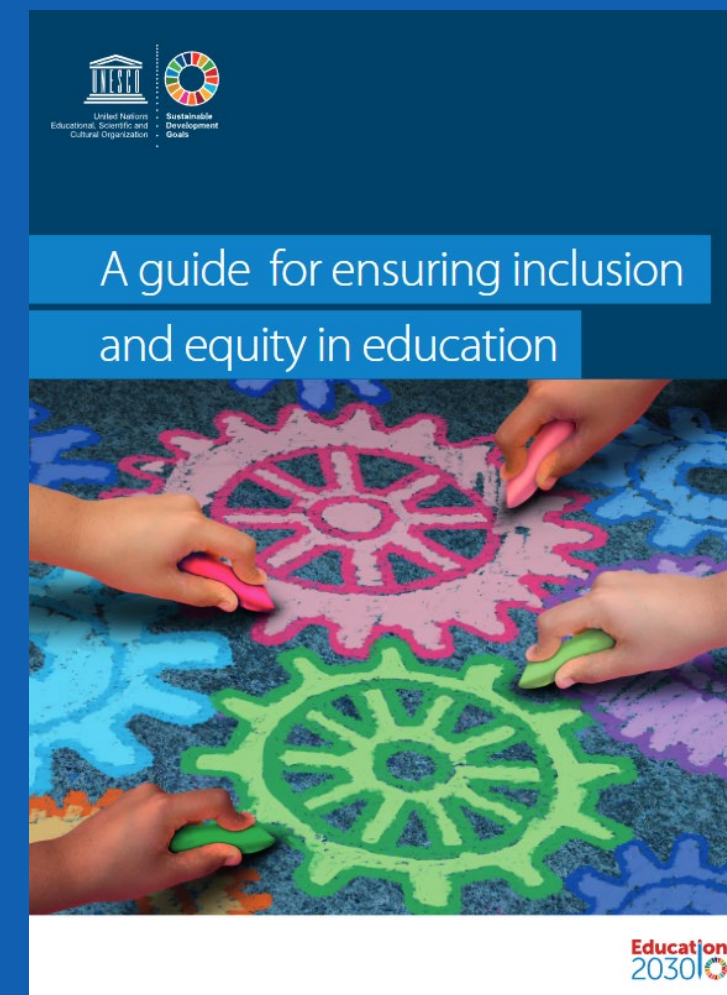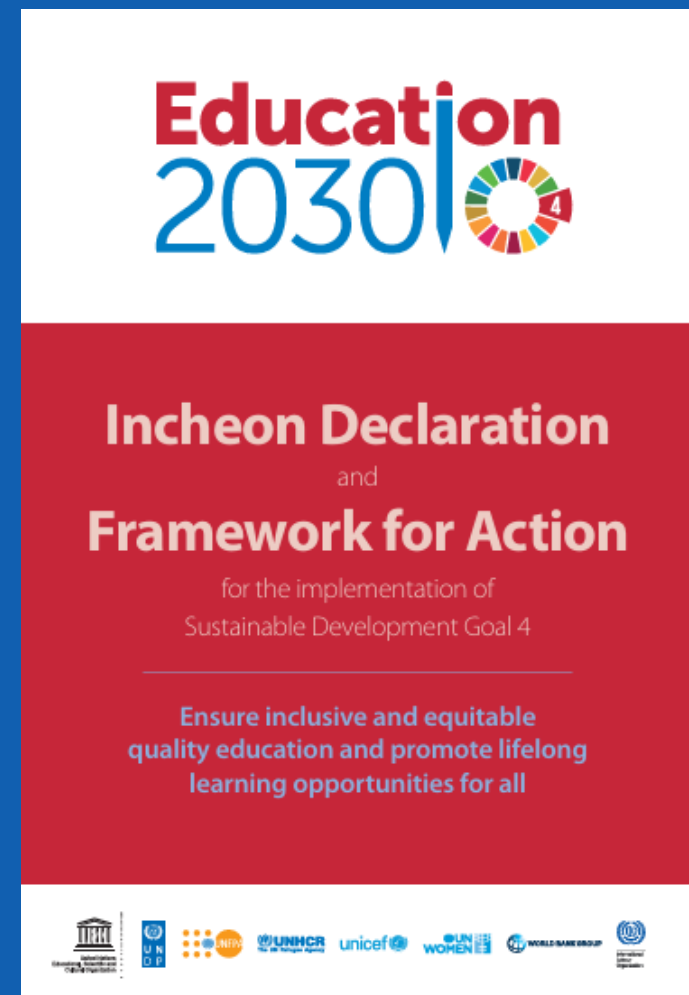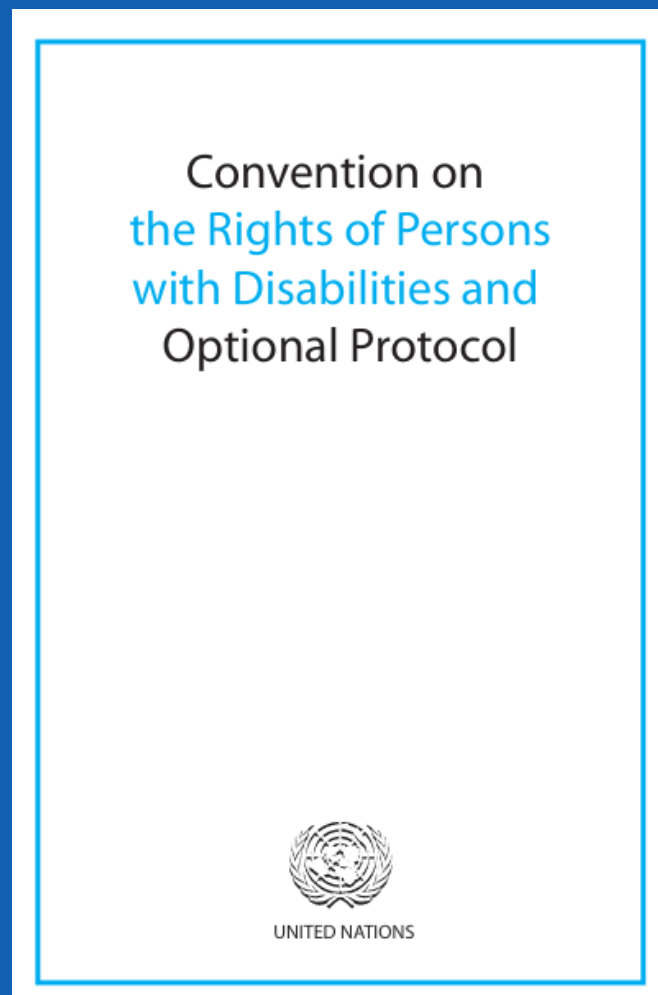
Adopted by the

WORLD CONFERENCE ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION: ACCESS AND QUALITY

Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Ministry of Education and Science Spain

Inclusive policies and practices in Europe

- Additional momentum for the inclusion agenda came from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), Education 2030 and UNESCO Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education (2017)

Inclusive policies and practices in Europe

- However, there is a wide variety of legal frameworks and their practical implementation related to inclusion (e.g., Ramberg & Watkins, 2020).
- The state of the art report point out some differences in terms of definitions and legal framework, identification and assessment, as well as policies and practices.

Aims

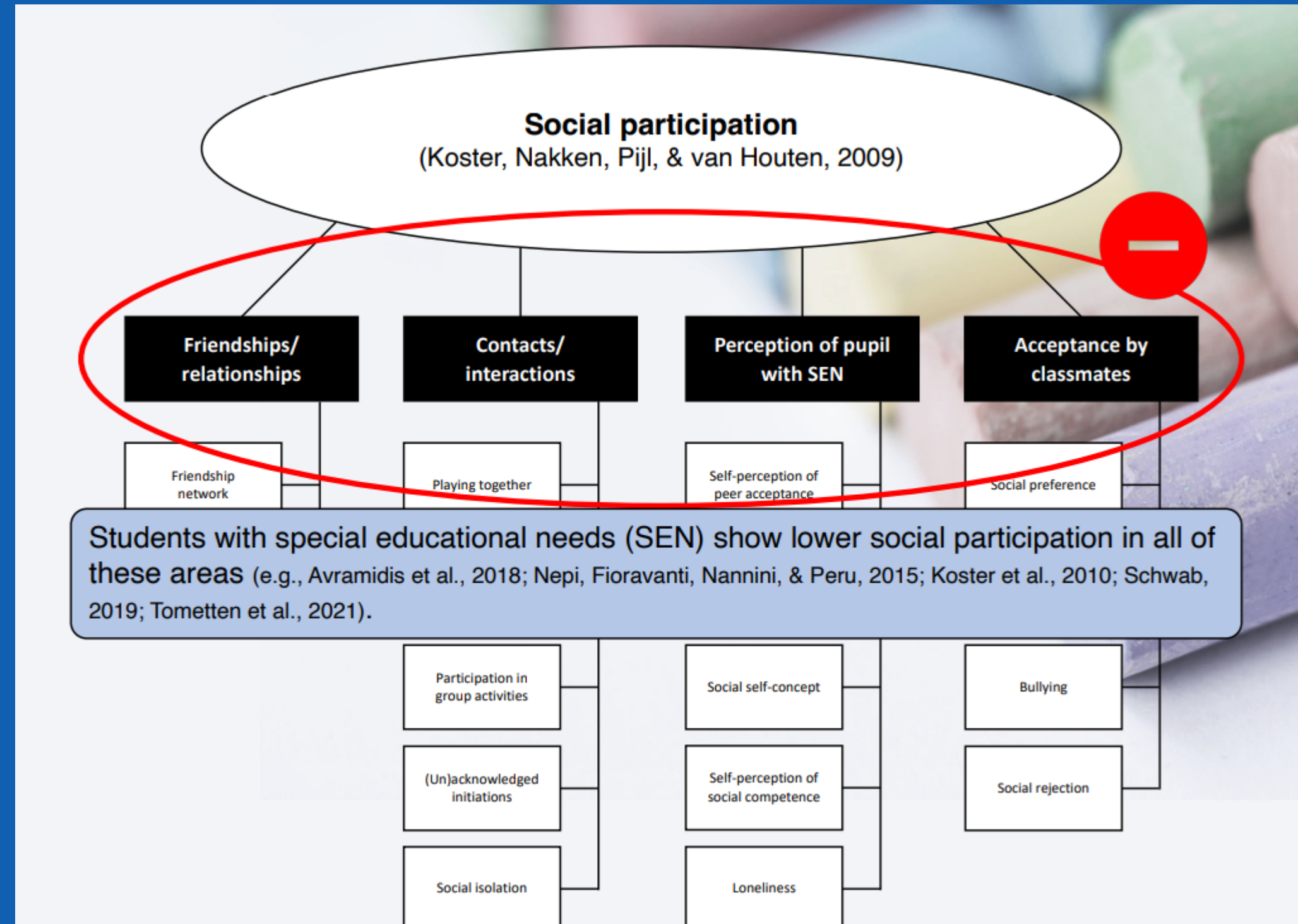How to promote social participation in the educational context.

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

Before start, please take a moment and think about the following questions:
- What does »social participation« mean to you?
- What characterises the »successful« social participation of students in inclusive education?
- What experiences have you made with social participation in your class?

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

- Several definitions exists;
- Students with SEN repeatedly show lower social participation.

Social participation
(Koster, Nakken, Pijl, & van Houten, 2009)

| Friendships/ relationships | Contacts/ interactions | Perception of pupil with SEN | Acceptance by classmates |

Friendship network

Playing together

Self-perception of peer acceptance

Social preference

Students with special educational needs (SEN) show lower social participation in all of these areas (e.g., Avramidis et al., 2018; Nepi, Fioravanti, Nannini, & Peru, 2015; Koster et al., 2010; Schwab, 2019; Tometten et al., 2021).

Participation in group activities

Social self-concept

Bullying

(Un)acknowledged initiations

Self-perception of social competence

Social rejection

Social isolation

Loneliness

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

The extent and the quality of social exclusion tendencies are particularly evident among students with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties and among students with learning difficulties (Krull, Wilbert & Hennemann, 2018; Zweers et al., 2021).

Social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties

Active rejection (Victimisation)

Learning difficulties

Passive rejection (Isolation)

Ongoing experiences of exclusion, isolation, and victimization can lead to serious and lasting problems, such as loneliness, low selfworth, the development of depressive symptoms, or poor academic performance (e.g., Juvonen, Lessard, Rastogi, Schacter, & Smith, 2019).

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

For this reason, finding and implementing ways to significantly improve the social participation (!) of students with SEN is currently an important requirement.

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

Social and emotional learning interventions (SEL; cf. Elias et al., 1997)

- Academic learning and achievement are embedded in social processes.

- Necessity to support students in their academic development, but also in their social-emotional development.

- Preparation for a life in a heterogeneous society (Mahoney, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2018).

- SEL can be understood as "the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel, show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions" (CASEL, 2020, p. 5)

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

Social and emotional learning interventions (SEL; cf. Elias et al., 1997)

a) **Self-Awareness:** *the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values, and understand how they influence behavior. Students who develop self-awareness are better equipped to assess their emotional states, reflect critically on their actions, and engage in goal setting with clarity and intention (Denham et al., 2012; Schonert-Reichl, 2017).*

b) **Self-Management***: the capacity to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in various situations. It is especially relevant in helping students cope with academic pressures and interpersonal conflicts (Zins et al, 2004; Jones & Bouffard, 2012).*

c) **Social Awareness:** *the ability to understand and empathize with others, including individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures. This competency encourages students to act with compassion, engage in perspective-taking, and build a sense of belonging among peers (Jagers et al., 2019; Zins et al., 2004).*

d) **Relationship Skills:** *the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships through effective communication, listening, cooperation, conflict resolution, and seeking or offering help when needed. These skills also serve as protective factors against social isolation and peer conflict (Wentzel, 2010; Denham & Brown, 2010)*

e) **Responsible Decision-Making:** *involves making ethical, constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across varied contexts. This competency encourages critical thinking, accountability, and a long-term orientation toward achieving positive outcomes for individuals and communities (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2017; CASEL, 2023).*

How to promote social participation in the educational context?

How to improve successfully in inclusive education (cf. Hassani et al., 2020)**?**

- Implementation at an early stage in students' social development

- Regular integration into lessons

- Long-lasting approaches

- Involvement of the entire class (not only focus children)

- Engage students cognitively, affectively, and behaviourally

Reflection

Please take a moment and think about the following questions:

- To what extent do the presented information correspond with your teaching experiences?
- Which practices do you use in your class to improve the social participation of all students?