

# NCSE Research Conference

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Empowering Teachers to Promote Inclusive and  
Equitable Education

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# High quality inclusive education in Europe

- Promoted through measures to empower teachers, school leaders and academic staff helping them convey common values, and promote active citizenship while transmitting a sense of belonging and responding to the diverse needs of learners



# Contexts for ‘empowerment’

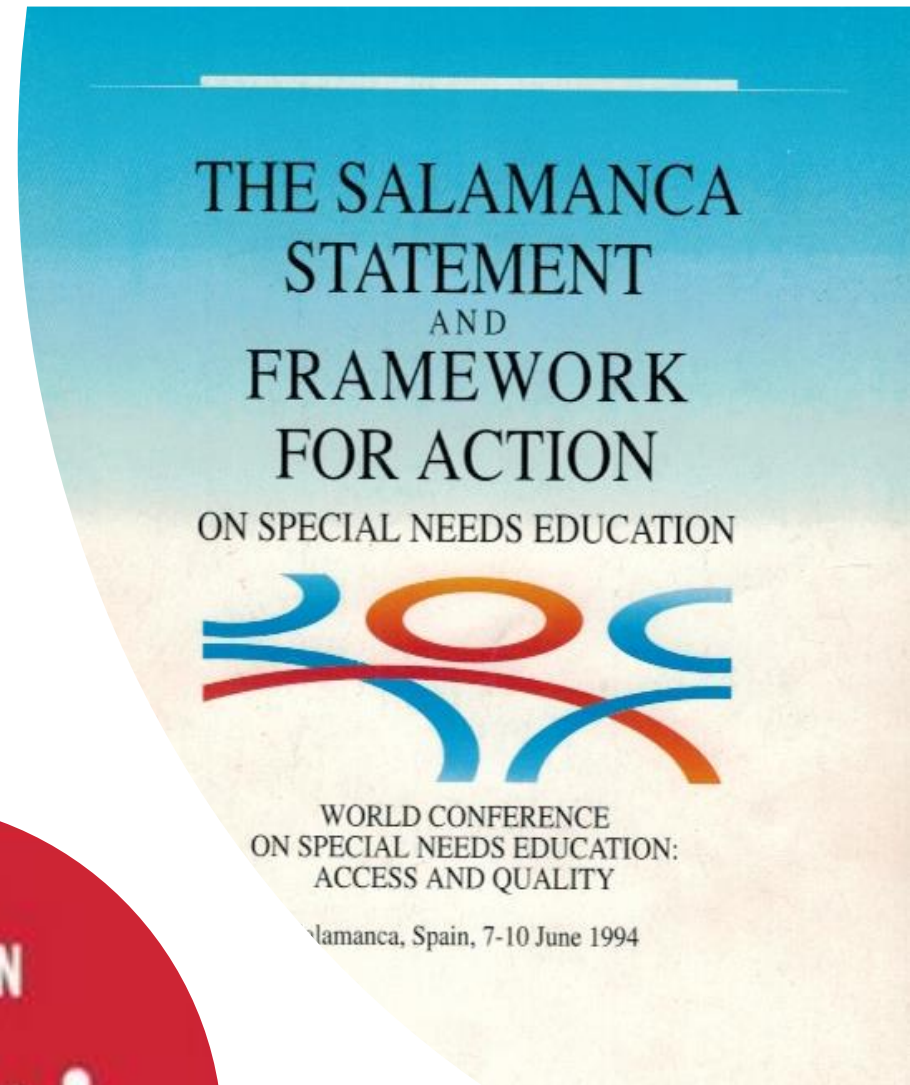
- Special and/or Inclusive Education?
- Inclusive Pedagogy –same or different? For some or for all?
- Teacher education and professional learning – universal or differentiated?



# A trilemma?

- Everybody all together all the time?
- Differentiated options for different types of learners?
- Everybody together much of the time with differentiated options for some?





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# Salamanca Statement

- Challenged the idea that some children do not belong in regular or mainstream schools;
- Called into question the structures of schooling that rely on different forms of provision for different types of learners;
- Introduced the idea of inclusive education to the wider education community



# Article 24 UNCRPD

- a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability....
- b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live



# Article 24

- c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
- d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
- e) Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.





# SDG 4

- Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning

*..... for EVERYONE!!*



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*those in  
vulnerable  
situations*

persons with disabilities,  
indigenous peoples, those  
in remote rural areas,  
ethnic minorities, the  
poor, women and girls,  
migrants, refugees, and  
displaced persons  
whether as a result of  
conflict or natural disaster.



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# Specialist support in the context of inclusion- some problems

- ▶ Variability in practice
- ▶ Knowing what constitutes good practice
- ▶ What counts as evidence

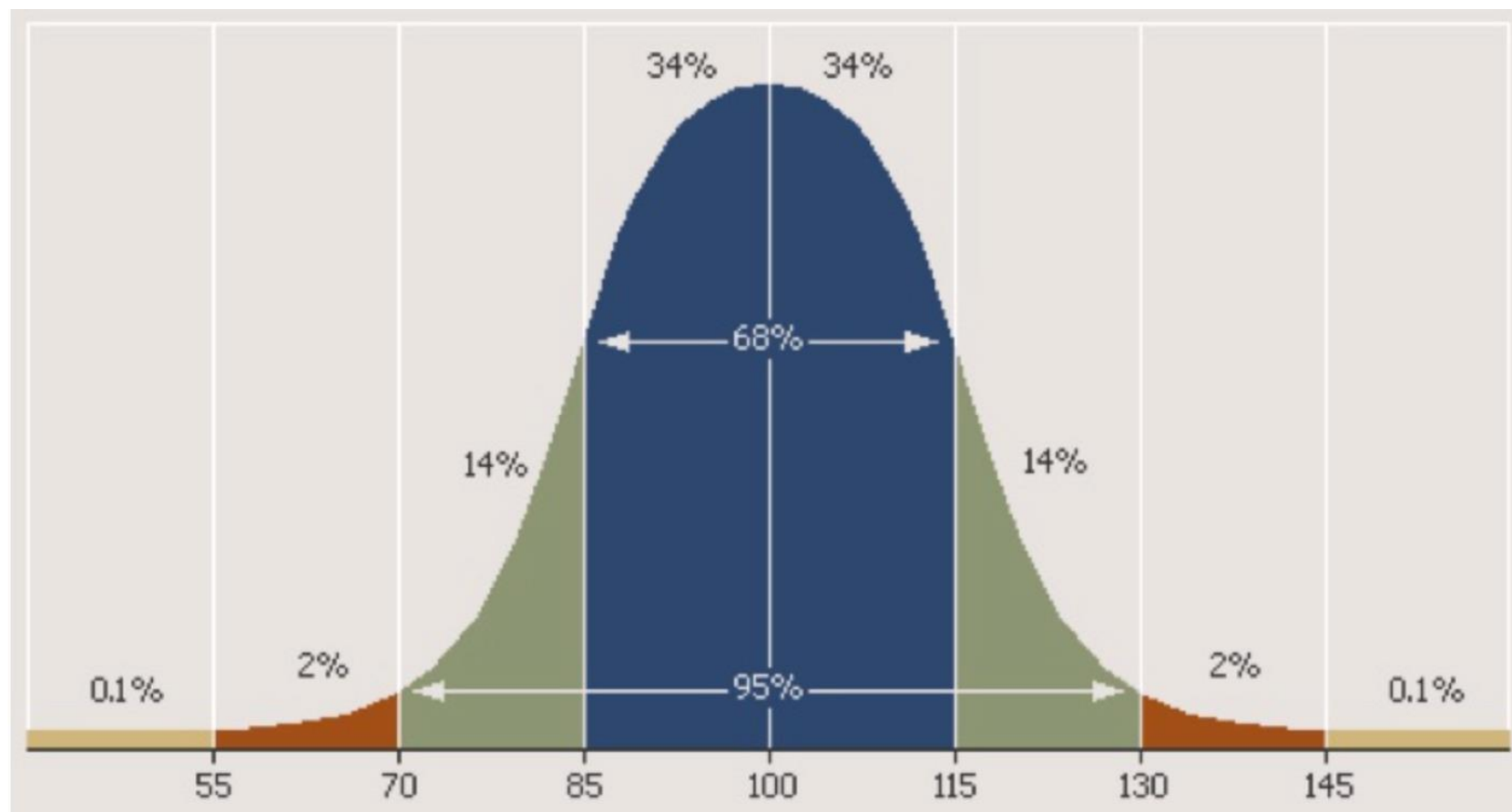


# The Repetition of Exclusion

- learners are included in the classroom but excluded from opportunities to participate in collaborative or group activities because the work they are given is **differentiated** to such an extent that they end up isolated from the classroom community even though they may be physically present



# The Bell Curve Structure of Schooling



# Inclusive pedagogy

- Concerned with educational attainment and other outcomes.
- Attends to individual differences between learners while actively avoiding the marginalisation of some.
- Extending what is ordinarily available in schooling routines (not doing something ‘additional’ or ‘different’ for some).
- Working with others to remove intersecting barriers to inclusion.



# The IPPA Road Map

Underlying Assumptions	Actions	Key Challenges
Difference must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning	Replacing bell curve views of ability with a concept of transformability  Understanding what/how difference matters	'Bell-curve' thinking and notions of fixed ability still underpin the structure of schooling
Teachers must believe (can be convinced) that they are not qualified/capable of teaching all children	Demonstrating how the difficulties students experience in learning can be considered dilemmas for teaching rather than problems within students	The identification of difficulties in learning and the associated focus on what the learner cannot do often puts a ceiling on learning and achievement.
The profession must develop creative new ways of working with hers	Modelling new creative ways of working with and through others	Change the way we think about inclusion (from 'most' and 'some' to everybody)



# Teacher education and professional learning

*Teachers are dealing with more diverse groups than ever before, but they often do not feel adequately prepared for the job*

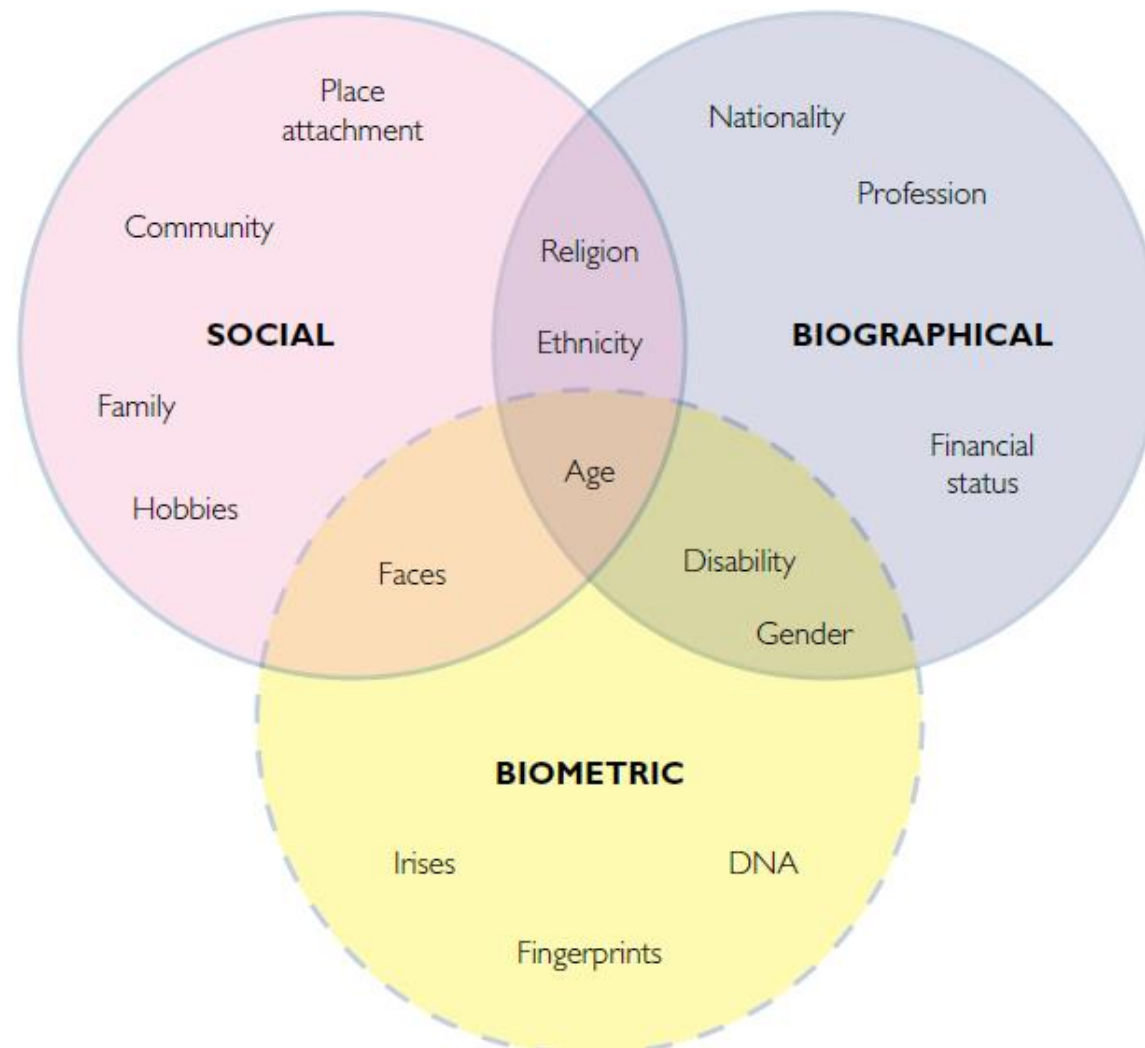


# A shift in thinking

*A new sociocultural consciousness based on the idea of the idea of overlapping identities as fundamental to individuality*



# Types of identities: social, biographical and biometric identities and examples (Source: Foresight)



# Lessons learned from research on teacher education for inclusive education

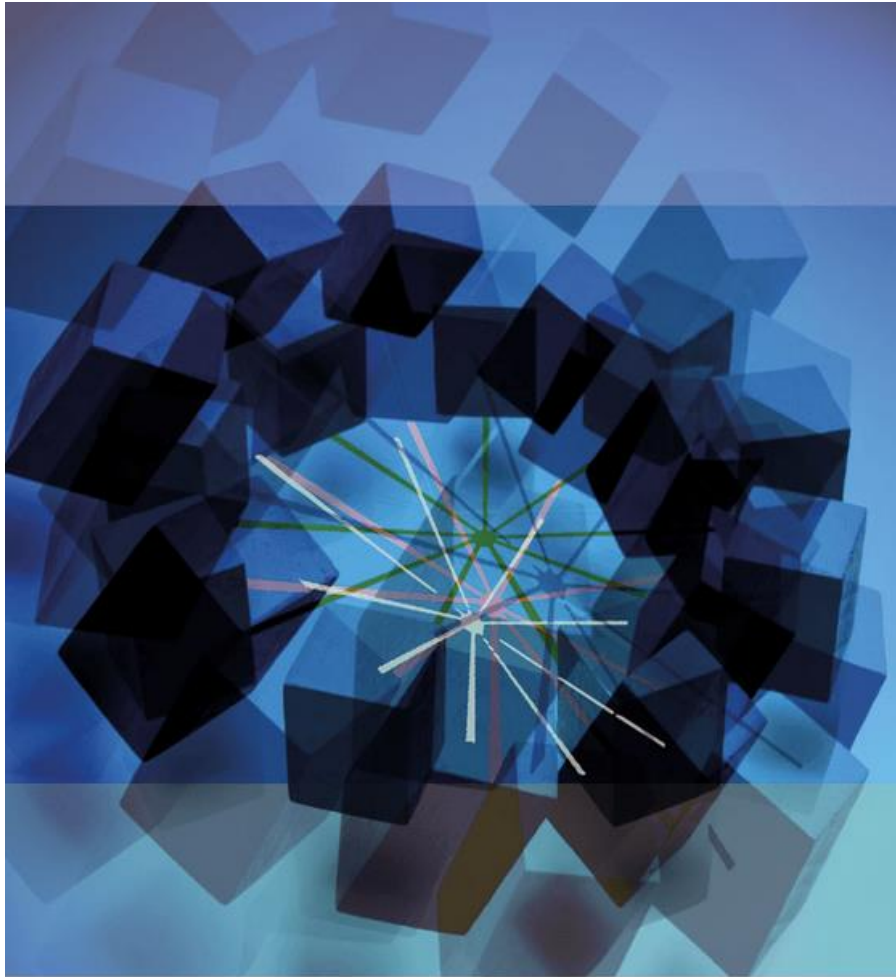
- Two main approaches – Add *or* infuse content knowledge
- Embrace diversity *and* respond to difference
- Preparing some *or* all teachers – a culture shift



# Reforming teacher education for inclusive education

- A new way of thinking about human diversity
- A focus on how people learn and how they learn together
- New ways of working with ‘specialists’
- [Scotland’s Framework for Inclusion](#)





National Framework for Inclusion  
3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES INCLUSION GROUP

Work of the Scottish Universities Inclusion Group to ensure that all teachers are prepared to work inclusively with the current Standards for Teacher Education in Scotland

2009, 2014, 2022



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# The Framework task

- Embed issues of inclusion and diversity across all courses, for all teachers, across all phases in all Scottish universities
- Focus on social justice, learning and teaching, legislation/policy and inclusion
- Implications for all teachers and all teacher educators; not just specialists
- The Framework is linked to national teacher education standards
  - Professional values and personal commitment
  - Professional knowledge and understanding
  - Professional skills and abilities



# Mapping the territory

Can teacher education help enrich what is generally available in schools by preparing teachers to respond to the challenges of diversity without relying on different kinds of programmes and services for different types of pupils?



# Mapping the territory

Four clusters of research on teacher preparation for diversity and equity.

- C-1 Coursework and Fieldwork
- C-2 Teacher Diversity
- C-3 Content, Structures and Pedagogies
- C-4 Teacher Educators



# The Challenge

- Many teacher education programmes already aim to educate teachers as reflexive agents committed to social justice.
- How successful are we in these efforts?



# Mapping the territory

## 17th century New England



## 21<sup>st</sup> Century New England



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# Landscape of learning



- Big ideas
  - Principles
- Strategies
  - Programme approaches
- Models
  - Different types of programmes



# Challenge

- How to respond to individual differences between learners and learner groups.
- Within a structure of schooling that perpetuates failure.
- Yet aims to convey common values, promote active citizenship, transmit a sense of belonging, and respond to diverse needs within a rights-based framework of equitable education?



# Empowering teachers to promote inclusive and equitable education

## Inclusive Pedagogy and the Science of Learning

Inclusive pedagogy (Key assumptions) Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011	Science of learning (Key lessons) Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018
Difference is ordinary	Variability in human development is the norm Learning is social emotional and academic
Teachers are capable	Development is malleable What schools do matters
Collaboration is needed	Human relationships are essential Children actively construct knowledge based on their experiences, relationships, and social contexts



# How can colleagues in Ireland work together to establish a roadmap for continuous professional learning based on:

- New ways of thinking about human diversity?
- A focus on how people learn and how they learn together?
- Alternative ways of working with ‘specialist knowledge’?



# Collaboration is the Heart of Inclusion



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