

Inclusive Education Policy Analysis of Belgium's Secondary School System: A Focus on Foreign Language Education

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Abstract. Belgium's educational system is structured around linguistic communities, which makes the educational policies quite complex. This research paper aims to study Belgium's policies especially on inclusive education policies, focusing on language learning and disability access. The paper analyzes the management of foreign language policies, specifically the integration of all three official languages and additional foreign languages. The study also analyzes the creation of inclusive language-learning environments providing students with diverse language backgrounds and disabilities. Choosing a qualitative method of content analysis, the research provides insights into Belgium's federal structure and constitutional provisions, particularly emphasizing Article 24, which guarantees freedom of education, and Article 22, which promotes inclusion for people with disabilities, aligning with the UNICEF principles. Nevertheless, the paper reveals that the Constitution vaguely allows for varied interpretations that lead to unequal implementations of inclusive education programs. Specific educational policies of communities, legislated by federal law, may foster disparities, that contradict constitutional standards of UNICEF inclusive education principles. Finally, the findings contribute to a broader discourse on inclusive education, offering detailed information about the challenges and opportunities within the distinctive educational framework of Belgium.

Keywords: Disability, Foreign language education, Inclusive education, Policy, Secondary school