FACT SHEET 1
ACCESS AND INCLUSION

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RISKS
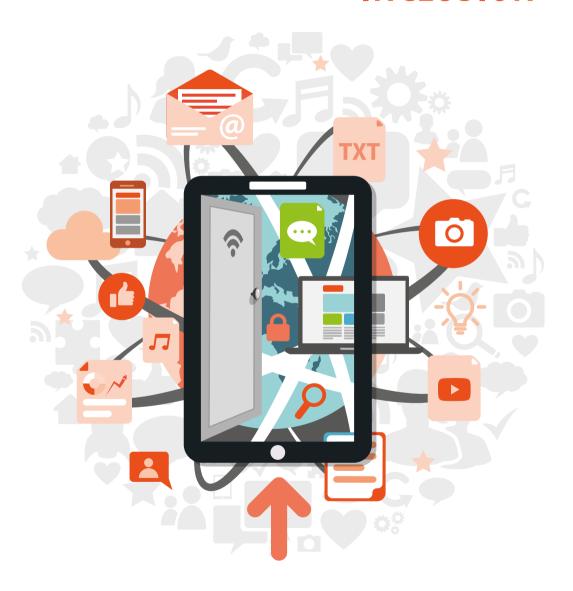
We need to contend with five key obstacles[14] to ensure equitable access and inclusion for all, at home, at school and in the broader society.

1. Existing attitudes and values are the foremost obstacles – Figure 5 (Dimension 1) looks at four steps to reaching inclusion.

2. Lack of understanding – Schools tend to be microcosms, closed to the outside community. To fulfil their vocation to educate young citizens and foster a deeper understanding of the world, schools need to open up to, and become a reflection of, the broader world. Digital technology can prove to be an invaluable means for triggering this process.

3. Lack of necessary skills – The digital revolution has given rise to a whole range of ways that people can become ostracised by their group or society, from cyberbullying and addictions to radicalisation. Teachers and parents, along with their children, need to be provided with innovative opportunities and pedagogical resources to meet these new challenges, through schools, the workplace and the community at large.

4. Limited resources – New challenges require new, and often expensive, solutions, though sometimes rationalised thinking can actually save costs, as indicated in step 4 of Figure 5 (Dimension 1). Yet a quarter of a century after the society-wide introduction of the internet, no country seems to have overcome its patchwork of home-grown remedies to introduce the evidence-based systemic change that will give every citizen the opportunity to develop the full range of digital citizenship competences.

5. Inappropriate organisation – This is a process of chicken and egg. Until equitable access and inclusion are mainstreamed as a fundamental right for all citizens rather than an ideal enshrined in treaties and conventions, our engineers, urbanists and others will be deprived of the tools and the public will to shape our social and cultural frameworks on an "inclusion by design" concept.

IDEAS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

Create an inclusion matrix: With your class, look at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/.

1. Decide which SDGs relate to access and inclusion.

2. Working in small groups, invite your students to create an online checklist/matrix and gather information from across the school to analyse to what extent each of these goals are being realised.

3. Share their findings with other classes in the school and be sure to highlight any impact the activity may achieve. This will underline to students the value of citizenship.

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14. UNESCO, *Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All* (2005), UNESCO, Paris, available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001402/140224e.pdf.

▬▬ **Research on social media platforms:** With your class, look at a social media platform and find a topic that is trending. Invite students to discuss who has access to this information and who does not. Could this have a negative or positive effect?

▬▬ **Conduct interviews with local services to create an Inclusion video:** You can extend Activity 1 in ideas for classroom work above to the local community, too. After a class discussion:

1. decide which person, service or organisation at the community level should be responsible for the SDG areas your students have investigated;

2. have them prepare and send a letter or e-mail to some of these people to seek an interview that could take place in your school, via VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), or in the office of these local representatives;

3. help students define the interview questions in advance, based on their checklist/matrix;

4. before recording the interviews (via mobile or tablet), be sure to prepare with them permission request forms that should be signed beforehand by each interviewee.

▬▬ The resulting video collation can be put online to raise awareness of the school and the community about the improvements that could be made to promote inclusion.

▬▬ **Research on news platforms:** Invite students to compare the top headlines in several newspapers. Ask them to identify who the target reader is and who the publisher is. Then ask them to identify what groups, if any, are not included. Do these groups have access to the content? Are they included in the discussion? How could this oversight be remedied?

▬▬ **Analogue versus digital:** Divide the class into two groups and ask both groups to research the same topic. One group will use as their information sources only books in the school library, the other group will use only the internet and digital sources. Compare the results and the lessons learned from the exercise. How much of a disadvantage is it for students who do not have access to the internet to access resources? What types of skills are necessary for finding information both online and offline? Is there a difference in the quality of information found in books compared with the internet?

GOOD PRACTICE/LIVING DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

▬▬ **Evaluating inclusion initiatives locally:** With your students:

1. make a list of the local organisations that strive to ensure digital access and inclusion in your community;

2. now choose an online tool that will help your students prepare and conduct two or three SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) studies to see how the impact of these organisations could be improved. Many useful online tools are available for this, for example at www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_05.htm;

3. share your results with the organisations concerned and get their permission to use the findings. You can also anonymise the findings if you cannot get their permission;

4. share your findings with any other schools, experts or communities you are in contact with. Your findings may inspire other similar projects.

▬▬ In this way, you are playing an important role as a digital citizen in an ongoing evaluation process that can help lead to a better community for all.

FURTHER INFORMATION

▬▬ The Council of Europe has materials relevant to this factsheet in the Internet literacy handbook. Please see ILH Fact sheet 1, "Getting connected"; Fact sheet 10, "Searching for information"; and Fact sheet 11, "Finding quality information on the Web".

▬▬ The Council of Europe has materials on youth perspectives of social inclusion at http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/social-inclusion.

▬▬ UNESCO provides some interesting insights into access and inclusion in its "Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All" (2005), UNESCO, Paris. Available at: https://bit.ly/2SCrQ7e.

▬▬ The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the main international standards organisation for the internet. They are a set of guidelines that specify how to make content accessible, primarily for people with disabilities – but also for all user agents, including highly limited devices, such as mobile phones. Web content accessibility guidelines are available at www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/.

▬▬ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities sets out what human rights mean in the context of disability. The convention protects the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. It is available in several languages, sign language and easy-to-read versions at http://bit.ly/37jO0zU.

▬▬ The Council of Europe has several publications and resources dedicated to increasing awareness for people with disabilities, at www.coe.int/en/web/disability.

▬▬ The Broadband Commission is a multi-sector group set up with UNESCO to achieve the UN's SDGs and to eliminate the current double standards that are leading to digital poverty. The commission is promoting an age-appropriate design code for privacy protection in UK. This data code will become an online service to facilitate the online presence of children in a way that embodies children's rights as proclaimed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): www.broadbandcommission.org.

▬▬ Google For Education is a suite of Google cloud-based tools designed for teachers to help learning and innovation: https://edu.google.com/?modal_active=none.

▬▬ Accessibility tools – Google tools so that everyone can access and enjoy the Web: https://www.google.com/accessibility/.