

# The Need for a more Dynamic and Ecological Assessment of Children Experiencing Barriers to Learning to move towards Inclusive Education: a Summary of Results of the Daffodil Project

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## Abstract

Although governments have recognized the need to make education more accessible to children with developmental disabilities and/or learning difficulties, many children remain excluded from participation in regular school settings, let alone receive adequate education. Though every country which ratified the United Nations (UN) 2006 Convention on the Rights of People with Disability has committed itself to inclusive education, there are many obstacles. One of them is the currently preferred way of assessing children with standardized, psychometric diagnostic tests with a classifying purpose. This type of assessment, based on a medical impairment model and a static model of intelligence, results in reports which are sometimes not very useful for educational advice.

This paper reports an overview of the results of the DAFFODIL project (Dynamic Assessment of Functioning and Oriented at Development and Inclusive Learning), created by a consortium of eight European partners in order to research more inclusive alternatives and suggest reforms to assessment and coaching procedures. It starts with a critical review of current assessment practices; then it presents criteria for good practices for assessing children with additional educational needs in a more dynamic, inclusion-oriented and contextual way. A Delphi procedure was used by 150 professionals and parents to develop a consensus for guidelines for assessment procedures oriented at mapping functional difficulties, context, interaction and possibilities for learning, with the objective to understanding learning processes, to develop more inclusive, challenging and suitable educational programmes and more useful recommendations for teachers, parents and rehabilitation staff.

### **Keywords**

functional assessment, dynamic assessment, ecology of development, special educational needs, barriers to learning, inclusive education, action- and needs-based assessment, ICF-CY (international classification of functioning, disability and health- children and youth version), portfolio-assessment , curriculum-based assessment, conceptual shift, guidelines