



AIRED
AI reshapes education

WP4: ETHICAL AND INCLUSIVE USE OF AI

D4.3. A Framework for Inclusive Design

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A Framework for Inclusive Design

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1. Executive Summary

The AIRED: Artificial Intelligence Reshapes Education project (2024-1-FR01-KA220-VET-000256094) explores the ethical and inclusive use of artificial intelligence (AI) in education and training. The current report, developed as part of Work Package 4, aims to develop a comprehensive framework for the adoption of AI for the purposes of supporting learners with special educational needs. Through an examination of current applications of AI in inclusive education across Ireland, Spain, and France, as well as interviews with key stakeholders, the report offers a responsive approach to integrating AI tools inclusively within educational settings. The framework provides practical guidance for educators, policymakers, and institutions dedicated to promoting AI use that is transparent, inclusive, and centered on enriching the experiences of a diverse range of learners.

2. Introduction

This document forms the third deliverable of Work Package 4 (WP4): Ethical and Inclusive Use of AI of the AIRED: Artificial Intelligence Reshapes Education (2024-1-FR01-KA220-VET-000256094) project. The overarching goal of this work package is to promote ethical, inclusive, and pedagogically sound approaches to AI adoption in education and training across Europe.

This report consolidates the findings from desk research on the current scope of inclusive AI, an examination of relevant gaps in practice, and a consultation of educators in the special education space into a comprehensive framework to promote the development and application of inclusive AI-powered tools in education.

In this deliverable, Activity 3 focuses on developing a framework for inclusive AI design. The structure of this report is as follows:

- A summary of the national context in Ireland, Spain, and France and their key areas of need;
- The types of tools developed and currently in use across the three countries for inclusive classroom experiences;
- An analysis of best practices and identified gaps for the inclusive use of AI in education;
- Key insights from educators in the special education field;
- A synthesis of the information gathered in this report through a comprehensive framework for the inclusive use of AI in education.

This framework is designed to support educational institutions, teachers, trainers, and policymakers in navigating AI integration in a safe, inclusive, and ethical manner.

3. National Context and Key Needs

3.1 Ireland

Inclusive education in Ireland is underpinned by a combination of national legislation and international commitments that affirm the right of all children to access equitable, quality education within mainstream settings (Murphy et al., 2023). Central to the concept of inclusive education is the recognition of diversity as a strength and the need to remove barriers to participation and learning for students with additional needs. The Irish education system has gradually embraced inclusive practices, guided by evolving policies and legal instruments aimed at ensuring that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can access appropriate educational opportunities alongside their peers (Murphy et al., 2023).

The legislative framework supporting inclusive education in Ireland is broad and includes several key acts:

- 1) **The Education Act 1998** provides a foundational requirement for schools to meet the needs of all students;
- 2) **The Equal Status Acts 2000–2018** prohibit discrimination within educational institutions;
- 3) **The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004** sets out a statutory basis for inclusive education and individual education planning. However, the partial commencement of the EPSEN Act has limited its full impact, creating a gap between legislative intent and educational practice;
- 4) **The Disability Act 2005** reinforces the rights of individuals to access services, including education, that support their participation and inclusion.

Recent literature highlights the evolving understanding of inclusion in education, arguing that it must now encompass digital inclusion as a fundamental component (Kearney et al., 2022). As technology becomes increasingly embedded in teaching and learning, ensuring equitable access to digital tools, content, and skills is essential to realising the broader goals of inclusive education.

Additionally, emerging technologies such as AI offer new opportunities to support personalised learning, identify learner needs, and reduce barriers (Chalkiadakis et al., 2024). As such, AI tools used in education should be designed to ensure inclusivity, fairness, and

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accessibility, making them usable and beneficial for all educators and learners (AI Advisory Council, 2025; Irfan et al., 2023).

Importantly, the Irish government recognises the potential of AI to support learners with SEND, particularly through tools that enhance accessibility. As outlined by the Oireachtas, AI can play a valuable role in promoting inclusion. At the same time, the government acknowledges the importance of regulating AI to prevent bias, protect rights, and ensure equitable access for all learners.

3.2 Spain

Inclusive education seeks to ensure that all students, regardless of their abilities, have access to quality education. To support inclusive education, different legislative and funding efforts have been implemented, including:

- 1) **The Organic Law 3/2020** amendment and the **LOMLOE**, which establish the integration of pupils with SEND in ordinary schools (Government of Spain, 2020a). In the academic year of 2023-2024, Spain has, for the first time, surpassed the one-million mark of students receiving educational support, approximately 14% of the total student body (Gutiérrez, 2025). Among the causes of support, disabilities and serious disorders stand out (25%)—the most frequent being autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities and communication disorders.
- 2) **Andalusia**, the most populous region in the country, **has integrated 89.4% of the 93,106 students with SEND into mainstream classrooms**. The Andalusian Autonomous Government has increased the budget allocated to SEND by 67% from 2019, reaching 586 million euros (Junta de Andalusia, 2024). This effort translates into more than 13,000 new specialised professionals across schools, including special education teachers, therapeutic pedagogy professionals, and hearing and language specialists.
- 3) **The Basque Government have decreed further legislation in inclusive education to further support national efforts**, including: a) complementary measures and support to SEND all programmes in the region; b) curricular measures aimed at centres with a high level of educational complexity, including curricular enrichment programmes and other educational support; c) individualised tutorial actions, including measures to support and reinforce education in the way that the environments, materials, processes and tools are understandable, usable for therapeutic-educational care (Basque Country Department of Education, 2024).

Beyond these supports, The National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF), a body under the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports

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(MEFPD), published the “Guide on the use of artificial intelligence in education” (Government of Spain, 2024), which aimed to serve as a fundamental resource for educators, promoting the effective and ethical integration of AI in non-university educational stages. It is also aligned with the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy in Spain (Government of Spain, 2020b). However, while the Guide is comprehensive in its content, it does not mention the use of AI to support learners with SEND, meaning educators have little to no guidelines.

Beyond teaching educators to utilise AI, the implementation of AI in inclusive education requires careful planning and well-structured educational policies. It is essential that technological developments are carried out with an ethical perspective, avoiding biases in algorithms and ensuring the privacy of student data (Lacruz-Pérez et al., 2022).

3.3 France

Inclusive education, which ensures that every student receives a quality education tailored to their needs, is a key principle of modern educational philosophy in France. The following legislation and efforts have recently been put in place to support students with SEND:

- 1) **Article L. 111-1 of the French Code of Education** emphasises equality and social justice, aiming for all students to succeed within an inclusive framework.
- 2) **Circular Letter No. 2016-117**, dated August 8, 2016, outlines mechanisms for mainstream education for SEND students. The personalized educational success program (PPRE), defined in **Article D. 311-12**, supports students at risk of failing to master the expected knowledge and skills. It offers coordinated actions ranging from differentiated teaching to specialised assistance and involves the teaching team, parents, and the student (European Commission, 2024).
- 3) **The Projet Personnalisé de Scolarisation (PPS)**, designed for students with recognized disabilities and is developed by the MDPH in collaboration with the student’s family and educational team (European Commission, 2024)
- 4) **The Plan d’Accompagnement Personnalisé (PAP)**, supporting students with long-term learning difficulties; and c) the Livret de Parcours Inclusif (LPI), a digital tool introduced to streamline information on support measures (The National Ministry of Education, 2025a) and facilitate better communication among teachers, healthcare professionals, families (The National Ministry of Education, 2025b). As of early 2025, more than 309,346 LPIs had been initiated, including 44,000 for students with a PPS (The National Ministry of Education, 2025a).

Furthermore, the French education system supports SEND learners through various mechanisms and key stakeholders (European Commission, 2024; The National Ministry of Education, 2025a), including:

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- 1) **Accompagnants d'Élèves en Situation de Handicap (AESH)**, which provides individualised or collective support to students with disabilities
- 2) **The Unités Localisées pour l'Inclusion Scolaire (ULIS)**, which cater to students who need intensive support.
- 3) **The Maisons Départementales des Personnes Handicapées (MDPH)**, which evaluate needs and allocate support for students with SEND.
- 4) **Specialised institutions, such as the Institut d'Education Motrice (IEM)**, for students with motor disabilities, as well as other establishments for students with significant visual or auditory impairments, serve students with severe disabilities. These institutions often collaborate with mainstream schools.

France's approach to inclusive education is framed by several key strategies, including:

- 1) **The 2019 Digital Education Strategy**, which mandated digital skills in primary and secondary education to strengthen inclusion for students with disabilities (European Disability Forum, 2024).
- 2) **The 2023-2027 Digital Strategy for Education**, which aims to enhance digital competencies, support teachers, and improve IT tools for inclusive schools (National Ministry of Education, 2023).
- 3) **The National AI Strategy**, which aims to position France as a leader in AI with a €1 billion investment under the France 2030 plan (National Ministry of Education, 2025c).
- 4) **The Ministry of National Education and Youth's AI**, which plans to develop a "sovereign" AI tool for teachers, an AI training module on the Pix platform, and a generative AI assistant for HR management. France is supporting its strategic vision with concrete initiatives and substantial funding.

4. AI Tools and Solutions in Education and Training

4.1 Ireland

AI-driven assistive technologies, such as adaptive learning platforms, voice recognition, and captioning tools, are increasingly used to support students with SEND, promoting inclusive educational practices across Ireland. Harnessing AI tools to generate and broaden access to assistive technologies can facilitate re-entry into education, training, and employment for individuals with SEND (Cox, 2025), a persistent challenge for these groups in Ireland (Disability Federation of Ireland, 2024).

Table 1. A sample of AI tools and platforms available to learners with SEND across Ireland.

Tool/Platform Name	Brief Description & Key AI-driven Features	Target SEND Group(s)	Current Status/Availability in Ireland
Seeing AI App	AI-driven app that narrates the world around users by recognising and speaking text detected by a smartphone camera, offering additional product information such as nutrition details.	Visually impaired learners, Dyslexia & reading difficulties	Freely available to all users with IOS and Android operated devices.
Dolphin EasyReader	App aimed at readers with dyslexia, low vision, or blindness, allowing them to access talking books, EPUB, and DAISY formats, as well as having text read aloud.	Visually impaired learners, Dyslexia & reading difficulties	Freely available to all users with IOS, Android, Amazon, and Windows operated devices.
ChatterPix	App which allows users to create playful messages and book reports, promoting interactive and engaging learning experiences.	Diverse SEND groups; all students	Freely available to all users with IOS operated devices.
Grammarly	Provides learners with real-time grammar, spelling, and clarity suggestions that enhance writing	Dyslexia, learners with reading and/or writing difficulties	Freely available (with optional paid add-ons) as a browser extension, and

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	skills and sentence comprehension.		mobile and desktop application.
Elicit	AI software which simplifies complex academic content into more accessible and manageable information.	Dyslexia, learners with attentional and executive difficulties	Basic version is freely available, while commercial options exist for institutions and professional academics.
Gaelspell	AI-powered spelling and grammar checking tool in the Irish language.	Dyslexia, learners with reading and/or writing difficulties in <i>Gaeltacht</i> schools	Commercially available.
Langauge Tool	An AI-powered spelling, grammar, and clarity checking tool available in both English and Irish.	Dyslexia, learners with reading and/or writing difficulties	Freely available as a browser extension.
Geabaire	AI-assisted Irish Augmentative and Alternative Communication device for learners with communication challenges.	Learners with language and speech difficulties	Freely available for users with Android powered devices.

Unfortunately, minority languages such as Irish tend to lag significantly behind in the development of supportive technologies (Wieczorek and Costello, 2024). Recent efforts have been made to supplement *Gaeltacht* (Irish-language) schools with AI-powered tools, highlighted in Table 1. However, findings from Nic Aindriú (2025) suggest that most teachers in *Gaeltacht* schools are unaware of these tools, suggesting that policies and guidelines in Ireland should make specific reference to Irish-language resources to promote their use.

4.2 Spain

A variety of AI tools in inclusive education and training have increasingly been implemented across Spanish classrooms, tools to adapt and help personalise learning and training (Rodríguez, 2020 – 14), intelligent tutoring systems to further personalise learning and training for individuals with SEND (Castellani et al., 2024 – 15), AI-based accessibility tools such as speech recognition and text-to-speech (Prendes-Espinosa, 2023 -16), and educational needs assessment tools which utilise AI (Lacruz-Pérez et al., 2022 -17).

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Table 2. A list of AI-assisted tools used to support SEND across Spain.

Tool/Platform Name	Brief Description & Key AI-driven Features	Target SEND Group(s)	Current Status/Availability in Ireland
Lup Device	An innovative Basque startup device that converts any text into audio in less than two seconds, making it easier for people with low vision to read. It uses AI and computer vision to transform text into audio at the touch of a button.	Visually impaired learners	Freely available to all users with IOS and Android operated devices, with paid options.
Read it Easy	Created by the Spanish Confederation of Organisations for People with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities, this website facilitates reading.	Dyslexia & reading difficulties, general and developmental disabilities	Freely available to all users with internet access.
Atenxia	A Spanish AI that simultaneously supports Dyslexia and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in school-aged children using scientific evidence to address these learning difficulties.	Dyslexia & reading difficulties, ADHD and executive/attentional difficulties	Freely available to educators, researchers, and academics.
TAIX	An app based on iconography and sign language, where pictograms replace words. It is aimed at facilitating communication for the general public with reading or writing difficulties, allowing them to chat and communicate more effectively.	Dyslexia, learners with reading and/or writing difficulties	Freely available to users with IOS or Android operated devices.
Cognii	Detection systems that use AI to analyse data on academic performance, reading, writing, and math skills to detect learner	Learners with general learning difficulties	Commercially available.

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	challenges early and support their academic performance.		
ALEKS	Automatic adaptation systems that use AI to customize the difficulty level of exercises and tasks based on the academic performance of students with disabilities.	Learners with general learning difficulties	Commercially available.
Dystech	This app uses speech recognition, natural language processing, and machine learning to evaluate behavioral and linguistic patterns in individuals who may have dyslexia or dysgraphia.	Dyslexia, learners with reading and/or writing difficulties	Commercially available.

Despite some evidence that these tools are being increasingly more implemented, there continues to be limited literature and/or sources that discuss the use of these tools for inclusive learning within the Spanish context, specifically. As legislation continues to integrate students with SEND in mainstream classrooms, there is a growing need for educators to uptake these AI-assisted tools to respond to the unique needs of these learners.

4.3 France

France has witnessed a notable surge in the adoption of AI-assisted tools within SEND classrooms. In line with recent efforts by the French government to promote inclusive education to a wide spectrum of students with additional needs, these tools are essential steppingstones to increasing accessibility and support to all learners.

Table 3. Selected AI Tools and Platforms for Special Education Relevant to France.

Tool/Platform Name	Brief Description & Key AI-driven Features	Target SEND Group(s)	Current Status/Availability in France
MIA Seconde	AI-driven digital tutor for 2nd-grade (lycée) French & Maths; ~20,000 adaptive exercises, personalized learning paths.	General learning difficulties, students needing remediation	Experimental phase (pilot in 150 lycées), wider deployment planned in 2025.

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Domoscio (Hub & Lock)	Adaptive learning platform; ML for knowledge retention tracking, personalized revision, gap identification, resource recommendation.	General learning difficulties, corporate training	Commercially available (acquired by Rise Up).
Pix (AI Module)	National platform for digital skills. AI module for personalized training on AI concepts (prompting, GenAI, bias, ethics).	Secondary students (mandatory 4e/2de), teachers	Public service; AI module in development, pilot Sept/Oct 2025, deployment Nov 2025.
Kardi	Integrated suite: Kaligo (writing), Cantoo Scribe (digital notebook for DYS), Cabri Express (inclusive maths).	Diverse SEND (DYS, writing/maths difficulties), all students	Offered free via TNE.
Glaaster	AI software adapting texts (photo, PDF, image) for dyslexic users' needs; organizational tools, gamification.	Dyslexia	Commercially available.
IRISPen Reader 8 / Readiris Dyslexic 2.0	Pen scanners & software with OCR, text-to-speech, highlighting, translation.	Dyslexia, reading difficulties	Commercially available.
VoxiWeb	Solution for internet access via a spoken interface.	Visual impairment	Commercially available.
CBoard / Pictalk / Picto-Selector	Apps for Augmentative & Alternative Communication (CAA) using pictograms, image-to-speech, customizable libraries.	Non-verbal, speech/language difficulties, ASD	Free or supported by organizations (e.g., CBoard by UNICEF).
Isicrunch	AI for automatic content recognition and semantic structuring in PDFs for creating accessible digital textbooks (ePub).	All students, particularly those needing accessible formats	Service used by educational publishers.

5. Best Practices and Lessons Learned

5.1 Ireland

Recent initiatives across Ireland have begun exploring the potential of AI in supporting learners with SEND. For instance, the [GenAI Champions Project](#), funded by the National Technological University Transformation for Recovery and Resilience, brought together 36 higher education students with SEND to explore AI tools to support their individual needs (Roper, 2025). The project aimed to teach students effective methods for prompt engineering, creating personalised study schedules using AI, experimenting with AI tutors to support their learning, and enabling them to critically reflect on their personal use of AI. At the end, participants claimed to feel significantly more confident in their academic and personal ventures. However, participants also reported challenges in accessing online bi-weekly meetings, including limited access to certain platforms and administrative blocks from universities, suggesting that digital inequity remains a significant barrier for students with SEND in Ireland.

The official portal for the Department of Education and Skills in Ireland, *Scoilnet*, has recently developed a resource for the use of AI for learners with SEND, [Exploring the Use of AI in Inclusive Education](#). The activities outlined in this resource are tailored to teach learners to critically use AI, encouraging them to cultivate AI literacy and to reflect on the impact of these tools. For example, one of the suggested activities asks students to work in groups to research tools that can support students with SEND, including text-to-speech tools and accessibility apps. Students are then encouraged to engage in guided discussions about the applicability of these tools as well as their advantages and limitations.

Further examples of initiatives aimed at supporting educators in using AI to assist learners with SEND in Ireland include online events such as the [AI to Support SEN and EAL in the Classroom webinar](#), hosted by Sligo Education Centre. This session provided teachers with practical strategies for using generative AI to create personalised learning plans, smart targets, and social stories, demonstrating how AI can be applied to foster inclusion and meet diverse learner needs in the classroom.

Sligo Education Centre also offers the [From Curriculum to Classroom: AI-Powered Approaches to Literacy, Numeracy & Assessment](#) course. It is a blended summer programme designed to equip educators with effective strategies, innovative resources, and practical digital and AI tools. It focuses on creating meaningful and inclusive learning experiences for all pupils, including those with SEND. Participants will learn to integrate AI

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tools and apps to support SEND learners, curate digital resources for differentiated instruction, and explore the transformative potential of AI in education.

[The Oide Technology in Education hub](#) offers valuable resources to support Irish educators in integrating AI into inclusive teaching practices. A key offering is the [AI for Schools](#) online course, launched in May 2024, which provides teachers and school leaders with an understanding of AI, its applications, and ethical considerations. The course includes expert insights and highlights tools that can assist in creating personalised learning, benefiting students with SEND. Additionally, the hub links to resources from organisations like the Adapt Centre and Webwise, offering guidance on the safe and effective use of AI.

Technological University Dublin, in partnership with the ADAPT Centre, has launched [Age-Friendly AI: A National Conversation on Artificial Intelligence](#), a two-year initiative funded by Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland's Discover Programme. Aimed at bridging the digital divide, the project engages older adults across Ireland to ensure their voices shape inclusive, ethical AI development. Although the Age-Friendly AI initiative primarily targets older adults, it offers valuable insights into inclusive, human-centred approaches to AI that are equally relevant for supporting learners with SEND. Through workshops and co-designed training, it will reach over 60,000 older adults and directly train 1,200 participants in AI literacy. Insights from pilot workshops reveal strong interest and concerns about AI, particularly around privacy and misinformation, but also a willingness to learn. The project highlights how AI literacy and co-designed training can empower traditionally underrepresented groups, ensuring their concerns and needs shape the development of ethical and accessible AI.

Despite these recent strides, harnessing AI to support learners with SEND remains largely unexplored in Ireland. Many of the current guidelines (Quality and Qualifications Ireland, 2023) and studies (Becker, 2017; Byrne & Mooney, 2023; Dooly, 2024) within the Irish context only explore the application of AI tools in generalised educational settings, with little mention of supporting learners with SEND. As these initiatives emerge, it is crucial that educators take precautions not to perpetuate 'techno-ableism'—the belief that supportive technologies such as AI can 'fix' or 'erase' SEND, ignoring the socio-cultural barriers that these groups face in education (Newell, 2024).

5.2 Spain

In recent years, the integration of AI-based tools in education has introduced new possibilities for supporting inclusivity and diversity. In Spain, various experiences in educational centres have demonstrated the potential of these technologies to support students with SEND—promoting more inclusive, personalised, and accessible education. The [Prodis360 Project](#), developed by the Institute for Inclusive Training (i360), uses AI to

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adapt teaching and learning processes to the diverse needs of students. This project focuses on personalising learning through AI algorithms that analyse each student's performance and needs, with positive results reported in several educational institutions. Additionally, some schools in Madrid and Catalonia have implemented AI-based platforms such as [Smile and Learn](#) or [GNOSS](#), which adjust educational content to the pace and learning style of students with SEND. These platforms use algorithms to detect student progress, provide adapted activities, and offer accessible visual and auditory feedback.

Other schools have begun using AI to analyse patterns in assessments and digital activities to detect early signs of dyslexia, ADHD, and other conditions. Tools such as [Dytective for Schools](#) conduct assessments and issue reports that guide specific pedagogical interventions. Another tool, [CEIP Maestro Román Baíllo](#) is designed to support gifted students. The tool uses digital and AI tools, such as Bee-Bot® and LEGO® Education WeDo, to stimulate logical thinking and creativity, adapting teaching to individual needs. Likewise, [Colegio Corazón de María](#), with its "[Dynamis](#)" project, seeks to identify and develop students' talents from an early age by using innovative methodologies and digital technologies to personalise learning and address individual differences.

In experiences in the Basque Country and the Valencian Community, AI systems and some smart learning environments allow to predict the risk of school exclusion and recommend methodological changes. The University of the Basque Country delivered a summer course in 2025 on [Inclusive Artificial Intelligence: Rights and Opportunities for People with Disabilities](#), aimed at the broader population as an effort to divulge the potential that AI technology promises. Additionally, the Down Syndrome and Other Intellectual Disabilities Foundation of the Basque Country has also collaborated with [TECNALIA](#), Spain's largest centre for applied research and technological development for the implementation of technological tools that help people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to practice everyday tasks in a safe environment.

Despite these examples, it is difficult to find a recent study on the current level of use and impact of AI application in the teaching and training of non-tertiary students with special needs. A recent article describes an international project that has created an open, accessible [digital platform for developing adaptive skills in students with intellectual disabilities](#), which was implemented in three schools in the Basque Country. In it, the authors state that, "the greatest difficulty was finding studies focused on students with special educational needs, which ultimately required streamlining the search and expanding it to include experiences with any profile of primary school students." Furthermore, they describe how only one of five articles/conference papers explicitly focused on students with SEND, with a notable gap in the literature highlighting digital and

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AI-powered tools to support this cohort of students—particularly those with intellectual disabilities (Kerexeta et al., 2025).

While there are sources exploring the integration of AI at the university level, none are specifically tailored to support SEND learners and educators. Official guidelines, such as the 563-page report on [Artificial Intelligence and Higher Education](#) and [Summary Report: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Learning, Teaching and Education](#). In 2025, [an international online Forum](#) attended by numerous educational professionals was organised by the online University, [UNIR](#), to address the topic of how to personalise learning and drive inclusion. The way AI can adapt to different learning styles and special needs was highlighted, enabling more equitable teaching. Among many others, tools such as [Microsoft Immersive Reader](#) and [ClassVR](#) were cited as examples of accessibility. José Gabriel Aguilera, one of the speakers, aptly stated that, “teachers must be aware that they must attend to each and every one of their students. Artificial intelligence can help, but the teacher's willingness is key.”

5.3 France

Beyond the classroom teaching platforms and AI tools mentioned earlier, as well as the tools suggested by [Eduscol](#), AI is increasingly aiding the development of assistive tools that address specific learning needs directly across France. For instance, [Social robots for autism](#) is a tool developed by the Inria/LORIA LARSEN team, pioneers the use of robots as mediators in specialised autism classes. Children work in pairs with a Cozmo, a small robotic toy truck with an expressive digital face, to play games. Cozmo encourages cooperation by making grumbling sounds when ignored and smiling when praised. Evaluations show increases in joint attention and communication behaviors (Inria, 2022). Crucially, the robot acts as a social catalyst; its predictable and uncomplicated emotions put autistic learners at ease. The educational goal is inclusion—the robot itself is not the end goal, but rather a means to promote human-to-human interaction.

France's research community is developing AI to assist deaf learners (The Conversation, 2024). For instance, the Université Bretagne-Sud is working on a project that uses 3D avatars and generative AI to translate text or speech into French Sign Language (LSF). These “signing avatars” can generate sign language videos from web text or spoken French and can be used to create digital learning resources, such as videobooks and apps, for deaf students. By automating translation, educators can provide real-time sign interpretation and create captioned sign language materials, thereby opening access to mainstream content.

Inclusive AI is also being used in vocational schools and workplace training. For example, Apolearn's LMS automatically adds captions to videos and transcribes audio, and uses

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image descriptions to help learners who have difficulty seeing. The same AI can help learners with dyslexia or language difficulties by providing alternative formats. France Éducation [International's AI4T project](#) created an open textbook and MOOC on AI in education for teachers (GTnum, 2024).

Through the experience of these tools in France, several success factors for the effective use of AI for inclusive education are identified. Namely, successful AI tools are co-developed with input from teachers, learners, and specialists. The [P2IA projects](#) were developed with the help of cognitive researchers and classroom feedback (Go Student France, 2025), while Inria's autism project engaged educators and parents through the regional DANE (Inria, 2022). Engaging stakeholders early on ensures that the AI meets real needs and considers the cultural context. Additionally, it is essential to equip educators to use AI. Platforms that offer built-in training for teachers see better uptake (Learning Technology France, 2024). In France, resources such as the [AI4T MOOC](#) and vendor-led webinars teach teachers how to use and integrate AI tools pedagogically and technically. These projects also embed ethical practices (such as GDPR) and remain compliant with France's [national accessibility standards \(RGAA\)](#), allowing providers to avoid retrofitting and ensuring that learners with various impairments can use the tools (Government of France, 2025).

Despite these successes, several challenges persist in the implementation of inclusive AI tools across the country. For instance, AI trained on narrow or non-French datasets may malfunction. For sign language, the lack of annotated LSF corpora means that translation systems may be imperfect. Consequently, developers must constantly validate AI outputs for accuracy (The Conversation, 2024). Additionally, tools which rely on collecting sensitive data on learners, especially minors, raise ethical concerns. Some programs address this issue by processing data locally or by obtaining explicit consent from families. The extra compliance workload is a known barrier (GTnum, 2024).

Inequitable access to digital tools is another prominent gap. Rural or underfunded schools may not have enough tablets to use apps like Navi, and they may not have Cozmo robots. Solutions often require hardware, such as tablets and robots, and training, which some schools struggle to afford. National investment programs and partnerships have been used to bridge this divide (e.g., providing robots to pilot classes). Finally, if not carefully managed, AI could inadvertently isolate students (Walden University, 2024). For instance, a hyper-personalized app could reduce peer interaction or teacher engagement if used without coordination. In general, AI should foster collaboration, not replace human contact.

6. Insights from Special Education Practitioners

This section explores insights gathered from four interviews with special education professionals in Ireland and Spain - each offering a unique perspective on the use of AI to support inclusive practices in the classroom. By examining their respective accounts, this section aims to uncover the benefits, practical applications, potential challenges, and recommendations with using AI to improve access and inclusion in education.

6.1 Assistive AI tools used to promote inclusion

Interviewees cited several AI-powered tools that they regularly implement in their work with SEND students. *Table 4* outlines all tools mentioned during interviews and how they support inclusion.

Table 4. *AI-powered tools used by special educators to support inclusion.*

Tool/Feature	How educators use it for inclusion
ChatGPT	Multiple educators stated that this tool was helpful for differentiation, as it easily tailors learning materials to specific learner needs (e.g., adjusting reading level). One teacher stated that they would use ChatGPT to read out the text as the student followed along to assist in developing reading fluency. One educator described using the premium version to create “choose-your-own-adventure” stories to support learners in engaging with History.
Text-to-speech / Speech-to-text	Tools with integrated text-to-speech, and particularly speech-to-text, were commonly cited as allowing increased accessibility, especially for students with dyslexia or general reading difficulties. Two educators praised these features for their ability to grant students more autonomy and encouraging them to independently study.
PlayLab	One educator described using this tool to develop their own AI tools tailored to specific learner needs. Additionally, the tool was used to co-create AI systems to support teachers in their specific needs with students. This was achieved by interviewing teachers/students on the difficulties they face and adjusting the AI to include the appropriate curriculum, reading level, and safeguards.
DeepL & Google Translate	AI-powered translation tools were praised for their effectiveness in reducing language barriers for students learning in a second language or with general difficulties in reading and communication.
SonoAI	SonoAI, an AI music generator, was described by one educator as a supportive tool for students who benefit from associative learning and who benefitted from creative learning activities.

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Microsoft Copilot	A couple of interviewees described their frequent use of integrated AI systems when using their day-to-day tools. There were mentions of supporting students with SEND through these integrated tools, especially regarding practical assistance while writing.
Grammarly	Grammarly was used to facilitate assignment completion for students with dyslexia or general reading/writing difficulties.
Canva image generator	One educator described using Canva's AI tool to generate images to support and complement learning activities.

6.2 Benefits of AI for inclusion

Features increasing accessibility

Features such as text-to-speech and speech-to-text were cited as major propellers for inclusion across all four interviews. These features were described as particularly supportive of students with dyslexia and with other reading/writing difficulties. As a result, educators favoured tools which included them and actively sought them out when searching for tools to support students. One educator stated:

“We have also used text-to-speech and speech-to-text tools, which are very useful for students with reading and writing difficulties, and in general, the experience has been positive, because these tools, eh, facilitate autonomy and make certain tasks more accessible.”

Another educator, when describing a past student with physical disabilities, reflected on how image generation features present in several AI tools could have assisted her, saying that “on web pages you also generate images, and it [image generation] would have helped her quite a lot in speed.”

Facilitating student autonomy

Another major benefit of AI tools was the boost in personal agency it granted students with SEND. Educators often described how they observed students gain more confidence in their study skills with the assistance of AI. One interviewee described a particular case where a student with dyslexia and other general learning difficulties often struggled to independently study. However, as they taught him how to use AI to adapt study materials to better suit his level, “a switch kind of went off”, and how, on his own, “he's actually now studying second year maths.”

Furthermore, interviewees expressed how these tools helped assist students in areas they were not always an expert in. One educator states:

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“As a Special Ed teacher, who is an art teacher, who is supporting students with Numeracy, and Literacy, and Geography, and History, and Science, and all of the other subjects [...] it was kind of like, oh my God, this is going to make the difference! Because, although I'm an expert on my students, I'm not a subject content expert.”

6.3 Persisting challenges

Disruption to learning and cognitive processes

Several interviewees expressed concerns over the possibility that students could develop an overreliance on AI, reducing their acquired knowledge during learning activities. AI's ability to easily generate answers to complex questions caused concerns over the validity it has as an education tool. One educator described their concerns, saying:

“I think sometimes, for example, when they use ChatGPT, it's good for certain things, but then I think it kind of... replaces their knowledge a bit, because if they're, for example, copy-pasting, or they're using tech, AI texts, then they don't necessarily know the vocabulary, so that's... it's not... it's not aligned with what they truly know, you know?”

Environmental concerns and digital inequity

Ethical concerns over the widespread use of AI in education were commonly discussed throughout the interviews. One educator described their concerns over the financial and environmental cost of using AI, saying, “with sustainability, it's going to cost a lot in energy. Even if you're not putting money at it yourself, down the line, somebody's paying for this somewhere.”

Another educator expressed concerns over the increasing costs associated with accessing these tools, describing how it can further exacerbate existing digital inequities in schools and in families with fewer resources:

“I don't think anyone can—everyone can afford [it]... so, some of them cost €360, and... You know, like, as I said, if you need a tablet, and you need, you know, and then... I think, for example, the grants for assistive technology in school, it's not easy to get them.”

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AI features preventing accessibility

Despite the opportunities for inclusion presented by certain features, others were described as continuing to present challenges. One educator explained that although they often utilise transcription and translation tools, they felt limited by the decrease in quality in other languages, such as Portuguese. Although several tools were available in languages besides English, they felt the quality significantly deteriorated.

Another educator described how AI is not particularly helpful to the practical nature of the subject they teach. When it comes to supporting educators and trainers in trades and practical courses, they felt AI could not promote inclusive practices, stating:

“Well, especially the tasks associated with practical training, like sewing, cutting fabrics or learning how to operate certain machinery... So, it's true that videos or simulators help, but they can't replace the tactile experience or seeing certain small gestures live, little tricks that we use when we sew by machine.”

6.4 Recommendations & next steps

Specific guidelines for educators

Several educators stated they felt that there were not enough education-specific guidelines on the ethical and inclusive use of AI. As a result, several interviewees disclosed that they often heard colleagues express fears around admitting their own use of AI in their work or express a reluctance to using it at all. One educator expressed concerns around low teacher uptake of AI, stating:

“It's probably best to start embracing it, like we said, because [students] will probably be using it more and more, especially when they're at home and have their laptops in front of them.”

Regarding what educators would specifically want to see from policy and guidelines, another interviewee explained:

“I think the policy really needs to come from the ground up instead of from the top down, or kind of a meeting—a happy medium [...] It's not how to do something, like a step-by-step guide, it's... the principles, I suppose, that we need more so than anything else.”

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Clean & simple interfaces

Another key recommendation that was often mentioned was the preference for AI platforms to have simple and clean interfaces. In general, educators stated they prefer to use tools which are as user friendly as possible. Interestingly, explanations of what a 'simple' design would entail varied, with one educator stating that with "programmes that have like a lot of drawing, a lot of this, that makes it a little bit confusing to see the information." Meanwhile, another educator stated:

"I feel more visual... and clear, uh, language [is better] for them to be able to access it independently. So, for example, a student with dyslexia that is... has difficulty with reading. You know, it needs to be... available in a way, or more visual, or with easier steps."

Although there were slight disagreements over what a user-friendly interface would look like, interviewees frequently mentioned the importance of including this in AI platforms. This could signal a need for adaptable interfaces, where fundamental elements such as text/image size, colour, and basic layout are customisable by users.

Integrate inclusivity into design process

All interviewees presented suggestions to improve the inclusive nature of AI platforms. Central to these suggestions was the idea that AI tools should have inclusivity in mind from the very start of the design process - rather than it being added afterwards. One educator suggested that a simple way of executing this is by including a broad range of users in the creation and piloting process, observing how they interact with the AI and what their specific needs are.

Another educator expressed:

"It should also respect neurodiversity with options to focus attention, reduce cognitive load and even simplify navigation. Furthermore, content should be available in several languages and reading levels, not only translated literally but also adapted in a pedagogical and cultural sense."

Education & training on appropriate AI use

Finally, educators emphasised the importance of training both educators and students on how to integrate AI into their work in a way that is primarily supportive, ethical, and inclusive. Across interviews, there were particular concerns over how to teach students about AI. One educator explained:

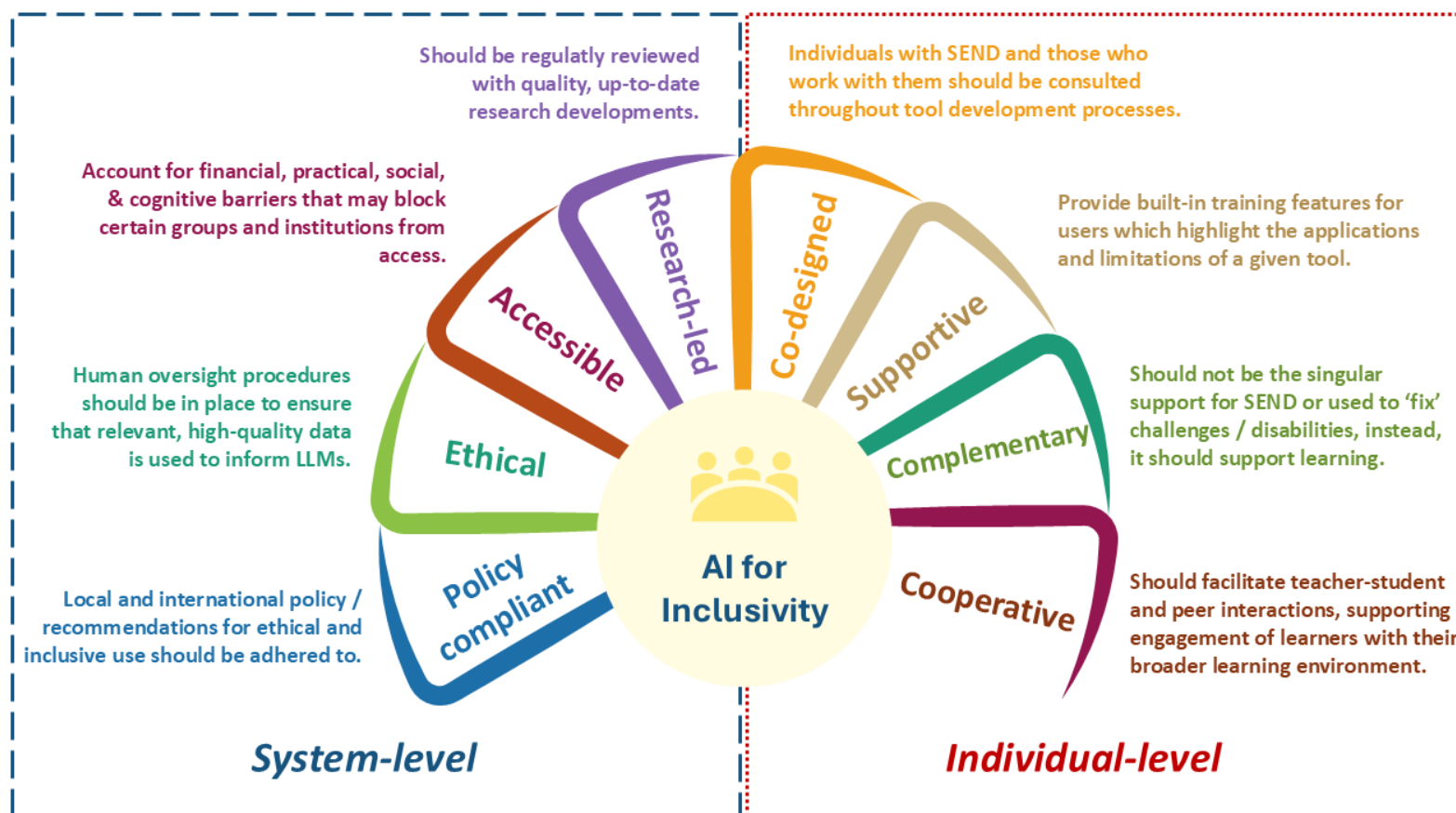
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"I know [students] do need to learn about AI generally in a more theoretical kind of thing, and they do need to learn about the bias, and because, um, they're probably not making those critical decisions when they're using it themselves."

One interviewee suggested implementing a flipped classroom approach when teaching students about AI and how to use it. Meaning, readings on the subject material and about AI are completed at home and class time is dedicated to implementing their learning in the form of assignments, activities, etc. In this way, teachers can supervise how students use AI and provide feedback where necessary.

7.A Framework for Inclusive AI Tools

Through a compilation of desk-research on the three countries' contexts, insights gathered from discussions with relevant stakeholders, and an analysis of best practices and outstanding barriers, we illustrate this framework for the inclusive design and implementation of AI tools for learners with SEND. This framework aims to guide both developers of educational AI tools as well as educators and learners in identifying the main facets of high-quality, accessible, and inclusive AI tools.



8. Conclusion

The level of accessibility and inclusivity of educational AI tools remains somewhat limited across Ireland, Spain, and France—particularly for students with SEND. Through an analysis of each country’s context, their respective solutions, best practice guidelines, limitations, and insights gathered from stakeholder interviews, this report synthesises identified gaps and recommendations into a comprehensive framework. This framework aims to inform developers, educators, and learners on best practices when designing and/or selecting supportive AI tools to increase inclusivity and access in education.

Through the desk research and stakeholder interviews, the following key themes were identified: policy on best practices in inclusive education and AI should be implemented and regularly consulted, technical and practical barriers should be removed wherever possible, tools should be co-designed, primarily supportive, and informed on ethical standards, and further guidelines should be enacted to guide educators in the inclusive use of AI. These themes guided the development of the framework for inclusive design, ensuring that it was based on current research and incentives across the three countries, as well as the lived experiences of special education professionals.

It is essential for these considerations to be brought forward across multiple levels. Policymakers, AI developers, and educational institutions should inform their efforts for greater inclusivity through the suggested framework—with an emphasis on consulting relevant stakeholders, such as individuals with a broad range of SEND and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, it is essential that efforts to improve inclusive education through AI have a common guiding principle: AI should be supportive of the particular needs of students, increasing their ability to participate and benefit from education, but it should not be designed with the express purpose of erasing their needs/disabilities, and should not replace the organic classroom environment.

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