

CHAPTER 6

Needs assessment research in nine European regions: a summary

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Because we wanted to develop an interprofessional in-service training based on real needs, we set up a research project, a “needs assessment research.” The main goal was to explore the needs experienced by parents and professionals, who “take care” or who accompany children with complex and intense support needs. We wanted to have their opinion regarding most the frequent difficulties/limitations and the most frequent environmental barriers regarding activities and participation. We also wanted to have an idea what the situation of these children is regarding their place of education and of daily life.

Participants and methods

This research started with the main question “Who are they?”, with the underlying questions “what are the needs of children with intensive and complex support needs” and “what are the training needs of those who care for them or support them?”. We developed a questionnaire for professionals, and one for parents, based on a literature review about professionals’ opinions about the needs of children with CISN. The questionnaire was made available online and sent to professionals and parents in 9 European regions in 8 languages (EN, FR, NL, IT, PT, HU, RO, BG). It had six sociodemographic questions, followed by three parts: 1) Who are the children with intense and complex support needs (their needs, difficulties, living conditions) 2) How are needs of people with intense and complex support needs assessed? Strong and weak points of the tools used; and 3) ask 10 main bibliographic references about such themes as “The concept of «need» in general”, “Intense and complex support needs” and “The needs that need to be responded in order to assure access to a good quality of inclusive life”.

We also did interviews with parents, in order to have more qualitative data and an in-depth analysis. Before interviewing, we shared with the professionals and parents information