

Can information and communication technology be used in physical education classes in an inclusive setting? - A pilot qualitative study

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In the European Union teachers are encouraged to use information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational process, when preparing, teaching and assessing, including physical education (PE) classes. The aim was to explore opinions of teachers conducting PE in grades I-III of primary school in inclusion setting on the use of ICT in their school practice.

As part of the SENDIteach project, 5 focused group interviews (FGI) were conducted according to the FGI scenario of Krueger and Casey (2001) in four countries: Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland among 29 teachers of PE and early childhood education (ECE), who had experience of at least 7 years of teaching PE pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in an inclusive setting. Teachers were asked to share their experiences of using ICT before and after the COVID-19 pandemic at various stages of the process of teaching PE children with SEN; what challenges they face when teaching PE in a group that also includes students with SEN; what support do they need?

Due to the restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers used significantly more ICT than ever before. The most frequently used ICT in PE included: YOUTUBE, Facebook groups, QUIZY, Kahoot, Wordwall, JustDance and others. Most of the teachers reported advantages in the use of ICT in the phase of preparation PE classes and communication; after the pandemic, few use ICT in the implementation and assessment of pupils during PE classes.

Although PE and ECE teachers use different ICT, they express the need to improve digital skills to ensure they choose the best solution available for students. The need to introduce additional human resources in PE classes was emphasized to ensure conditions for inclusion, especially when use of ICT.

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