



# Reports on psychology and inclusive education from various European Member States

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2.1.  AUSTRIA by Prof. Dr. Luise Hollerer

Inclusion: Special Needs Education in Austria- a short overview

Students with special educational needs have the opportunity to get particular support to match their individual needs in the best way possible.

The 'School Organisation Act' of 1962 is the basic legal framework for Special Needs Education in Austria, that forms the basis for the current organisation of special schooling, special schools and inclusive education

With the 15th and 17th Amendment to the 'School Organisation Act' in 1993 and in 1996 important milestones were set. The associated legislative amendments of the 'Compulsory Schooling Act', the School Education Act and of the 'Basic Act on the Maintenance of Compulsory Schools' have re-oriented the educational system in providing new forms of special pedagogical assistance for students with special educational needs during primary and lower secondary education (grade 1 to 8).

### **Legal Framework**

In 1993 children with special educational needs have been legally entitled to attend primary school – in their living area. Through the 1996 amendment of the School Organisation Act, this option was also extended to lower secondary education (10 to 14-year-olds) – and since 9/2012 also to polytechnical education (up to 15-year-olds).

With the legal encompassment of the inclusion of children and adolescents with special educational needs (SEN) Austria's school system had the challenge to modify school related organisation decisively. All mainstream schools have been obliged to develop and rearrange organisational and didactical options to meet the special needs of these children at school. Since then parents have the free choice of sending their children to a special school or to the nearest mainstream school. Still it is the District School Board (District School Inspector) who decides whether special educational needs are allocated to a child.

### **Special Interests**

The additional support is quite restricted: A child with diagnosed special educational needs (medical and psychological and pedagogical tests) has the right to get additional support for about 4 hours a week by a specially trained teacher. The goals of SEN-teachers are to meet the special interests of a child and to coach the other teachers how to arrange an inviting surrounding that enables a child to create its own learning processes. The cooperation with school – psychologists, speech therapists and sometimes physiotherapists are well established. With the goal to arrange inclusive learning settings heterogeneous grouping has increased and vocational training of teachers has been intensified.

### **Transition from Kindergarten to School**

Kindergarten in Austria is part of the Social Ministry and not part of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Children in Austria may attend a kindergarten if their parents prefer it and pay for it. Despite the costs about 95% of all 4-6 year old children attend Kindergarten (variation between the federal states). Since 2009 Kindergarten has become compulsory for the last year before a child enters school and access for this year is free.

Children with special educational needs can get profound additional support in Kindergarten up to 10 hours a week by a team of specialists (speech therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists,

social pedagogues, medical care). The amount of support and the form of collaboration between Kindergarten - health care and social care varies along the different federal countries.

### **Transition from School to Employment**

#### **Career planning**

In compulsory schools career planning is incorporated in the curriculum for students' grade 7 and 8. The key elements of career planning are to offering information and to develop the students' individual, social, theoretical and practical competencies regarding their future integration into employment. Especially form 8 co-operation with parents, external agencies and employers is regarded to be taken highly into account. Although career planning is an overall principal in secondary education and can be carried out by offering separate lectures it is more often integrated into different appropriate lectures.

### **SEN pre-vocational year**

For SEN – students a pre-vocational year can be established in special schools. With in-depth general education as well as theoretical and practical education all students shall be prepared to meet the challenges of every day and working life. The goal is to provide learning arrangements to help them develop their individual skills and cross competencies. These pre-vocational education settings are based on: the student's individual preconditions and aim at increasing a student´s individual and professional abilities, developing his/her creativity and the ability for decision making, making use of his/her knowledge and skills and facilitating his/her participation in a lifelong learning process.

Co-operation and collaboration of all key actors inside and outside school is given high priority.

### **General pre-vocational year**

SEN – students may also attend an inclusive/integrative setting at general pre-vocational school (Polytechnische Schule). These settings were established on the basis of trial projects but they got a legal framework in 2012. Usually SEN- students are taught according to the curriculum of the SEN – pre-vocational year. In many cases a kind of "individual curriculum" has to be developed which in general is a combination of the SEN and the general curriculum. These combined curricula may also be applied to students in special schools.

### **Counselling service for students**

Counsellors are specially trained teachers whose task is supporting students, schools, parents and other key actors offering:

- general information on pathways of education and training - in schools, at parents' meetings...
- individual counselling of students, parents and teachers during
- the transition period from school to employment
- co-operation with other counselling services

### **Psychological service for students**

The service is open to any student/ teacher / parent and in a SEN –context often used to answer questions connected with the allocation of a child and cooperation between different professionals , parents and child.

### **Clearing**

Clearing before leaving school is often provided by external services. For students in compulsory schools it is a process that focuses on the identification of the individual student's abilities and needs concerning concerning his/her future professional life. For SEN – students

this process is carried out by experts or organisations that provide further support - in close co-operation with the student, his/her parents and the school and helps to show realistic professional perspectives based on individual assessment, counselling and coaching.

## References:

<http://www.cisonline.at/information> of the ministry of education arts and culture  
<http://www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/bildungswege.xml> bildungswege  
<http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/aen.xml> Austrian education news

## Integration

### Special Needs Education

Quality Standards and Information Material:

[http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/SPF\\_Qualitaetsstandards\\_Englisch.pdf](http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/SPF_Qualitaetsstandards_Englisch.pdf)

### Learning from One Another

<http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/GuideOnIntegration.pdf>

## Special Needs Education - Publications

### Quality in Special Needs Education - ZSE Report Nr. 70/2006

Project Approach, Results, and Conclusions

[http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/QSP\\_Report\\_en\\_14.2.07.pdf](http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/QSP_Report_en_14.2.07.pdf)

Studie von Specht, W., Gross-Pirchegger, L., Seel, A., Stanzel-Tischler, E., Wohlhart, D. Graz, August 2006

## Teacher Training - Publications

Special Needs Education and Inclusive Education – Training and Professional Qualification: Position paper on initial and further and in-service training at the Universities of Education Feyerer, E.; Niedermair, C.; Tuschel,

[http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/Position\\_Paper\\_Teacher\\_Training\\_14.5.2008.pdf](http://www.cisonline.at/fileadmin/kategorien/Position_Paper_Teacher_Training_14.5.2008.pdf)

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**CYPRUS** by Dr. Monica Shiacou European University Cyprus  
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## Legal System

### Introduction

The special education services in Cyprus, in common with those of many other countries, developed out of private and charitable initiatives. In 1929 a school for the blind was opened, followed in 1953 by one for the deaf.

Following the independence of Cyprus in 1960, the first provision for learning disabled children was established with the introduction of a special class at a local elementary school. During the

1960's and 1970's special schools for the learning disabled were founded in all regions of Cyprus.

With the 1979 Special Education Law, the responsibility of providing special education schools for children between the ages of 5 and 18 years was taken by the State. This Law established regional multidisciplinary committees to review the cases of individual children referred for special education and recommended the most suitable educational placement for each child. During the 1980's, there was a trend toward the integration of children with special needs into mainstream schools. By the new millennium a balance began to emerge between mainstream placement and special schools. However, the practice of integration in Cyprus had no legislative foundation until the establishment of the Law for the Training and Education of Children with Special Needs 113(1)/1999.

The inclusion of children with special needs into mainstream education is a matter of major policy for the Ministry of Education and Culture that is in line with current international conventions and philosophical thought. The adoption of this policy has been accompanied by a change in the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of society towards children with special needs whether they are in the education system or the community at large.

### **The Special Education Law 113(I)1999**

The policy is expressed within the Special Education Law 113(I) of 1999, the Regulations for the Early Detection of Children with Special Needs 185(1)/2001 and the Regulations for the Training and Education of Children with Special Needs 186(1)/2001. These last two regulate the implementation of the new law as from September 2001.

The Law for the Education and Training of Children with Special Needs 113(1)/1999 is the legislative framework which regulates the detection of children with special educational needs; their assessment and the development of an individualized educational programme; their placement in the most appropriate educational setting with provision of both teachers and educational resources to meet their needs; and for the ongoing evaluation of the child's progress.

According to the above mentioned Law, a child is considered to have special educational needs if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of a similar age or if a disability prevents or impedes him/her from using the standard educational facilities and resources available in mainstream schools.

Through the core articles of the law, the state undertakes the early detection of children with special needs from the age of three. It will conduct a full multidisciplinary team assessment and will also undertake to provide all the necessary measures in terms of curriculum adaptation, technical and staffing support for the effective education of the children within a mainstream setting.

Special educational services are provided free of charge by the State to those children in need of them between the ages of 3 and 18 years, (extension of education up to 21 years can be provided where it is deemed necessary).

Children with special needs are educated in public schools, which are equipped with the suitable infrastructure, according to the Law for special education. The majority of children with special educational needs are educated within the mainstream classroom.

Special educational provision may also be given in special units at mainstream schools. These children are assigned to a mainstream class with whom they will attend integrated lessons and participate in celebratory or festive events.

Children with severe difficulties are educated in special schools, which are equipped with the appropriate staff (psychologists, speech therapists, doctors, physiotherapists and other specialists as well as auxiliary staff) in order to support and provide essential means to achieve their mission.

If children with special needs, due to health or other problems, cannot attend school for a long period of time, education may be provided to them in places other than the public or special school.

The key elements of the law are:

1. The defining for each individual child of what special education is for him/her, the process for its implementation and the place where it should take place (mainstream school, special unit or special school).
2. The establishment of Committees for Special Education (Central Committee, District Committees, Board for Special Education and Training).
3. The development of a mechanism for recognizing children with special needs.

4. The reduction of the total number of students within a class where a child or children with special needs is/are placed.
5. The development and implementation of assessment procedures for every child with special needs.
6. The recruitment of coordinating officers to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the special educational program recommended for each child.
7. The differential assessment of the educational progress of children with special needs according to their individual differences.
8. The right of parents to appeal against the decision of the Committee for Special Education.
9. The provision of placements for those children in need of special education, in mainstream classrooms, special units within mainstream schools or in public schools for special education according to their individually assessed needs.
10. The legal framework for the functioning of private schools for special education.
11. The establishment of a coordinating special education services committee (Caretaker Committee).

Special educational provision can be made in any of the state school education levels. Hence pre school institutions, elementary schools, gymnasium (lower high schools), lyceum (upper high school) and technical schools) must provide adaptations and facilities for children with special needs. As the compulsory age for mainstream education is up to 15 years the lyceum schools currently only provide adaptations for access to the standard curriculum, e.g. for pupils with mobility problems, sensory disabilities etc.

Where a special educator is part of the child's education, they must cooperate and interact with the classroom teacher of the child in the development and delivery of an individualized education programme for the child.

Unless there exist exceptional circumstances these services should be provided within a class of the child's local school that should be provided with all necessary adaptations and resources. Where full school attendance in a mainstream classroom is not appropriate for the child's needs special tuition in a resource room for a specified period of the day may be prescribed or the attendance at a special unit within a mainstream school. Special units provide more intensive special education to a small number of pupils (usually up to 6 children) in a classroom whilst maintaining contact and integration with a specific reference class of the school. Where none of these adaptations are suitable to the needs of the child attendance at a special school may be specified.

Currently there are 6 regional special schools for children with severe learning difficulties, 1 school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, 1 school for children with visual impairments and 1 for children with hearing impairments. The last two schools provide services

to children with visual or hearing impairments that are integrated into mainstream schools and also to adults requiring specialist assistance or guidance. Special educators are also provided to non-governmental institutions providing specialist services to distinct groups of children e.g. those with multiple or severe physical handicap. Services are also provided to children who are in hospital for a significant period of time or who, for medical or other reasons, must be educated at home.

### **Financing**

Funding for special needs is mainly provided by the government. The State is obliged to equip special schools or mainstream schools where special education is provided, with all the required equipment and staff, according to the provisions of the Law. The number of the staff and the budgets for each school depend on the number of pupils and the provisions at the school.

If the District Committees, who evaluate children with special educational needs, decide the attendance of a child in a school for special education and training, which is not located in the area where the child lives, the State cares for the transportation of the child to and from school. Children in special schools are transported to and from school free of charge.

The Education of Children with Special Needs Regulations 186(I)/2001, Part IX concerns the Building Specifications of Public and Private Schools. In the Regulations it is reported that all schools (public and private), in which children with special needs study, should fulfil the building specifications of the Regulations. The State is responsible for making school buildings accessible for pupils with special needs. The Local Education Authorities are financed by the Government to pay for school assistants for pupils in special units or mainstream schools that need, according to the District Committees, this provision. Special individual equipment for the child (wheel chairs, special seats, assistive technology) is also provided by the State, according to the child's evaluation.

### **Identification of Special Needs**

Through the core articles of the Law the State undertakes the early detection of children with special needs from the age of three.

Any person, especially any parent, director of a nursery or kindergarten or elementary school or secondary school or any other member of their education staff, doctor, psychologist, social worker, is responsible to acknowledge to the District Committee each case, came to his/her knowledge or notice of a child who may have special needs.

The District Committee, then, has the duty to efficiently evaluate the needs of any child considered to have special needs, wherever that child attends classes or stays and provides all the necessary measures in terms of curriculum adaptation, technical and staffing support for the effective education of the children within a mainstream setting.

**This evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team, including a child psychologist, an educational psychologist, a teacher of special education, a doctor, a speech therapist and any other specialist, as the case may need.**

**Educational Psychologists, in cooperation with other partners in education, ensure the inclusion and support of children with sensory, cognitive or learning difficulties through the development of various programmes within schools.**

**Educational Psychologists also help in the development and application of preventive programmes that aim mainly towards the promotion of mental health. They work within the framework of Health Education for the development of social and emotional skills,**

**the improvement of communication skills and the prevention of school failure and school violence and delinquency.**

The parents of the child to be evaluated have the right to attend during the evaluation and to participate alone or with a specialist. After the evaluation, parents are informed of the decisions concerning their child, taken by the Committee, and have the right of appeal to a Central Committee for special education and training.

The District Committee decides that a child is in need of special education and training or facilities. It also decides whether special education and training shall be provided in mainstream classroom, in a special unit in mainstream schools or in a special school.

As from September 2004, the Ministry of Education of Cyprus has put into action the Mechanism for Identification and Support of Children with learning difficulties, emotional and other problems. This Mechanism facilitates in-school support for children and families before any official special education is carried out.

To ensure the appropriate staffing of the various services, the Ministry places a high priority on staff development through local training schemes and participation of staff in training programs abroad.

Every two years, or earlier if required, a re-evaluation takes place in order to assess the child's progress, the educational program and further needs, if any.

## **Special Needs Education within the Education System**

### **Mainstream School System**

The State recognizes that all children have a right to an education appropriate to their needs. The State attempts to provide a legal framework where those with special educational requirements can receive, in the least restrictive environment, an education which meets their individual needs. It attempts to ensure through ongoing re-evaluation that the child's educational program develops along with the child and that every effort for the least segregated educational setting is made.

Whilst the law is specifically for special educational needs, it has assisted in advancing the integration of special education into the mainstream of education. Whilst special education has its own legal framework special and mainstream education are part of one school system with common administrative procedures.

Special educators who are either fully assigned to mainstream schools, run special units at mainstream schools or are peripatetic, are considered part of the teaching staff of the school in much the same way as the music, physical education or art teacher.

Children, to whom special education and training has been determined, attend ordinary schools, special units or special schools with appropriate infrastructure, adapted to their own needs and to their individual program, which is setup by the Special Education Coordinators (SENCOs), in cooperation with the teachers and parents of the child. The same officials supervise the child's progress.

The majority of children with special needs attend mainstream schools and follow the normal curriculum, which may be adjusted to suit their particular needs. Where a special educator is part of the child's education, they must cooperate and interact with the classroom teacher of the child in the development and delivery of an individualized education program for the child. During the development of the child's Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) staff will make every effort to ensure that the child is fully involved in all school and class activities. The education team developing the I.E.P. will often determine what instructional methodology will be

implemented for the child. Where a child requires individual assistance outside of his/her classroom, this is arranged so as not to restrict their access to all subjects of the curriculum.

With the introduction of the term "education and training" the 1999 law expands the concept of special education to include not only academic subjects but also areas of self-help skills, social skills, vocational training and anything that may assist the person in his/her holistic development.

Coordinators of special education (SENCOs or special needs advisers) offer guidance both in special schools as well as in mainstream schools. These advisers work under the guidance of the inspector of special education, offering advice and support to special teachers, cooperating with teachers and administrators in ordinary schools and with other professionals. After assessment and diagnosis is made, special needs advisers visit both special as well as ordinary schools and offer advice and suggestions to school staff, parents and children.

Children attending special units within mainstream schools have the same school day as the mainstream school and, depending upon their individual needs, may spend the majority of lessons along with their reference class. They are assigned to a mainstream class with whom they will attend integrated lessons and participate in celebratory or festive events. The amount of time spent within the special unit is analogous with the level of learning difficulty that the child presents. This will also determine the amount of differentiation that the child's personalized curriculum will have from that of his/her peer group.

Within the secondary school system support is primarily in the form of additional language and numeric tuition. Where necessary, a child may be exempted from certain subjects. Children with special needs attending mainstream secondary schools will receive transition services designed for their age equivalent peers. This will normally consist of careers or further educational opportunities advice. Those with specific sensory disabilities will be given specialized assistance from the special schools.

The use of practical equipment and information technology is increasing continually in an effort to maximize learning. Hands on learning, visits and course trips are also an integral part of the tuition process.

Those attending technical schools are by definition in a vocational training environment.

### **Special School System**

As the majority of children with special needs attend mainstream schools, those attending special schools present the greatest learning difficulties. Hence, the curriculum that children attending special schools follow contains a major element of self-help and independence skills, social and emotional skills development, recreational skills, communication skills and vocational training. Where a child can follow aspects of the mainstream curriculum this will be accommodated. Where a child presents a specific disability e.g. a visual, hearing or mobility impairment specific training and therapeutic interventions will be part of the curriculum. The prevailing philosophy is that the child should receive an education suited to his/her developmental needs.

All new special schools are obliged to be built within the bounds of a mainstream school and new and existing special schools must develop networks of contacts and joint activities with mainstream schools to minimize segregation. The schools for visual and hearing impaired children have a wide network of cooperation and support for children integrated into mainstream schools and most special schools have developed contacts and joint activities with local mainstream schools.

Special schools usually function with classes of no more than six children with much individual work.

Special schools for the learning disabled or those with emotional and behavioral problems also have pre-vocational and vocational training programs designed to assist the transition from school to work or from school to other vocational training authorities. Many special schools maintain close links with non-governmental agencies providing vocational training programs to facilitate transition.

### **Teacher Training**

Mainstream teachers fall into 2 broad categories:

1. Elementary school teachers follow a 4-year university based general teacher-training course and can then be employed as elementary school teachers.
2. Teachers of special education who can be employed to provide services to children within mainstream elementary schools, special units attached to mainstream schools or in special schools have specific job descriptions.

At present special education teachers are classified as specializing in:

- Teaching children with specific learning, functional, adjustment difficulties
- Teaching children with visual impairments
- Teaching children with hearing impairment
- Speech therapy

- **Psychology**
- Physiotherapy
- Special physical education
- Music therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Audiology.

### **Preparatory service**

Secondary school teachers must complete a university degree in a specific curriculum topic and, upon employment, must further complete a pre-service training programme offered by the University of Cyprus - a short seminar course on pedagogy. In secondary education, regular subject teachers provide support for children with special needs. A programme of seminars regarding special education is being developed to assist them in this task.

### **In-Service Training**

All teachers are encouraged to attend courses of professional development run by the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus, many of which have particular reference to special education. Attendance at in service seminars is compulsory whilst attendance at local seminars is encouraged. The Ministry of Education and Culture will sponsor the attendance of teachers on courses abroad or give leave of absence to teachers wishing to sponsor themselves. Attendance at courses of continuing professional development is considered in the determining of a teachers performance during teacher evaluation.

### **Development of inclusion**

From the middle of the 19th century till the mid 20th century, Cyprus was a colony of Great Britain. Consequently, the educational system for special schools used in Britain was applied to that of Cyprus. The British educational legislation of 1870 suggested the establishment of

special classes for handicapped and mentally retarded children, as well as for children with behavioural problems.

A number of additional legislation acts were introduced since the beginning of the 20th century, but the most important one was the introduction, in 1944, of compulsory education for handicapped children and children with special needs, as well as for children who had spent a long time under treatment in hospitals.

However, it was only in 1970 when it was agreed that every single child is entitled of attending school. A number of special schools and institutions were then established to meet the new educational needs. As a result there was a split of children between mainstream and special schools.

The outcome of the most recent educational theories against any type of segregation of children, which advocated that every child has its special needs, was the Warnock Report in 1978. Amongst other things this report suggested the abolition of any type of segregation, the use of the term “children with special educational needs”, and their integration in mainstream schools.

The need to ‘tidy up matters’ in special education led to the introduction of the 47/1979 Special Education Law in Cyprus. The 47/1979 Special Education Law’s most important provision was that the government was taking full responsibility for the education of children with special needs, between the ages of 5 and 18. This Law gave the government the authority to spend public money on special schools. According to this Law the children with special needs were

categorized as: moderately mentally handicapped, slow learners, emotionally disturbed and physically handicapped.

According to the 47/1979 Special Education Law the education of children with special needs was provided in special schools or in special classes in mainstream schools.

The third step was the integration movement; the Ministry of Education made a very serious attempt, during 1990's, to align its policy with the modern educational trends, especially those referring to the inclusion of children with special needs, into normal schools. Therefore there was provision for children with severe needs, supported by extra educational help, offered by special staff working in ordinary schools. In other cases, children were placed in special units, attached to kindergartens and primary schools with part-time attendance in the ordinary class programme.

The implementation and expansion of the concept of inclusion that was rapidly applied was naturally creating a lot of problems of a technical, practical and social nature. The main problem was the inability of the normal schools to meet the various needs of all their pupils, by introducing multi-speed teaching methods and by securing quality education for all.

Great efforts were made towards this goal, but the problems that children were facing in education in mainstream schools were very complicated and varied and were related to lack of appropriate educational programmes, means, supporting services, administrative arrangements, inability to apply individual educational programmes and the over weighted curriculum. All these factors above caused great difficulties in meeting the special needs of children.

By the new millennium, a balance has emerged between mainstream placement and specialist schools. The educational placement based upon the unique needs and abilities of an individual child was formalised with the passing of the new special educational law in 1999.

The whole philosophical trend in Cyprus, which led to the implementation of the new Law of 1999, is that children with special needs have the right to education as any other child and should be provided with all the opportunities for an equivalent education, training, guidance and

rehabilitation so as to improve their abilities to the maximum. The State is responsible for guarding the rights of children with special needs and is responsible to place those children in the united body of training.

The 113(I)/1999 Special Education Law gave a statutory basis for the provision of special education based upon the individual needs of the child. Among other provisions, the law introduced, as one of the main responsibilities of the State, to support the integration of children with special educational needs in the mainstream education by any means.

With the implementation of the 1999 law the education authorities aim to make special education an integral part of the education system whilst providing the maximum level of flexibility to best serve the individual needs of children with special needs. Whilst supporting actively the philosophy of integration and inclusion of children with special needs into mainstream education it recognises that not all the highly specialised needs of all these children can be met within the mainstream classroom. The development of the special units ensures that only the most demanding and specialised needs cases are referred to special schools.

An educational research enquiry was set up, by the Minister, to the University of Cyprus jointly with the Pedagogical Institute, in order to research and find possible problems children with special needs are facing in their schools and also possible problems faced in the implementation of the Special Education Law in both Primary and Secondary Education and to make suggestions for improvement.

This research has now been completed for both primary and secondary education. The Ministry of Education and Culture has also produced a Strategic Directions Paper for Inclusive Schooling Practices in Cyprus, prepared by an external consultant. These documents will be considered

as a basis for development and improvement of Special Education within the process of the Educational Reform.

### **Quality Indicators for SNE**

The prevailing philosophy is that the child should receive an education suited to his/her developmental needs.

Where a child presents a specific disability e.g. a visual, hearing or mobility disorder specific training and therapeutic interventions will be part of the curriculum.

The individual needs of the child determine the instructional method that will be applicable to him/her. For the majority of children adaptations or minor adjustments to the subject content will allow the usual class group instruction to be effective. Some children will function more effectively in small groups or with individual tuition for core subjects and will learn adequately in a class situation in other subjects. Specialists such as speech therapists tend to work on an individual basis.

### **Assessment**

Children in elementary schools are graded for internal purposes only. Those with special needs will be graded as per their peers although their individual needs will be considered.

In the secondary school setting special needs children will be graded as per their peers unless they have a dispensation from the District Committee for Special Education and Training. The committee can also give instructions for adjustments to evaluation materials and procedures that are usually designed to facilitate specific needs of the child e.g. visual deficits etc. The underlying philosophy is that a disability should not impede the expression of skill and that a grade obtained by a child with special needs should be comparable to that of peer of equal ability without special needs. The secondary school authorities are currently looking into the

evaluation procedures for those children with learning difficulties who are unable to follow the usual curriculum.

Children attending special schools for the visually and hearing impaired are evaluated using criteria developed for their particular disabilities. Children attending other special schools are evaluated according to their progress in learning without a specific evaluation procedure.

### **Promotion (one class or grade to another)**

Children, including those with special needs, attending elementary schools are promoted from one grade to the next as a matter of course. Under exceptional circumstances a child may repeat the pre-school year if he/she is deemed to be in need of more time to mature for the needs of the first grade. Similarly under exceptional circumstances a child may be required to repeat one grade of elementary school.

At the gymnasium, promotion from one grade to the next is based upon exam results. At present, pupils with special needs who cannot undergo the examination procedures, can be classed as "attendees" and be promoted without examinations. With the development of a comprehensive assessment procedure for children with special needs in secondary education the situation should become clearer.

### **Certification**

Children graduating from the gymnasium or the lyceum receive a leaving certificate based upon overall performance and examination results. For those children with special needs who have adaptations to exams that do not lower the examination content or standard, the certificate is as per their peers. Where a child does not take exams, an informal leaving certificate is issued.

## Transition from school to work

Children with special needs attending mainstream secondary schools will receive transition services designed for their age equivalent peers. This will normally consist of careers or further educational opportunities advice. Those with specific sensory disabilities will be given specialised assistance from the special schools. These schools have vocational training programmes for students attending full time those schools.

## Some examples of best practices

1. **The Educational Psychology Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture have translated into the Greek Language the handbook titled “Special Education Needs: A Continuum of Support Resource Pack for Teachers”** with the permission of the National Educational Psychology Service of the Republic of Ireland. The handbook is directed to the teachers of pre-school and primary education, whose role is vital in the early tracking and handling of the needs of all the students so that the goals of inclusive education can be achieved.  
The book acts as an aid to enable teachers to detect early on the children in the class that are in danger of presenting learning, social, emotional or other problems, and to act presentably to avoid more serious problems from developing in the future.
2. **The Educational Psychology Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture have prepared a hand book titled “Getting to know my students”** after the realization that there was a great need for the educators to be fully aware of the individual needs of each child and each school unit in general, so that they are in the position to address the ever increasing demands placed by the contemporary society and schooling systems. The handbook is not only specific to students with special needs but includes information about a range of difficulties present in today’s schools; e.g., bullying, juvenile delinquency, racism etc.  
The many different problem e.g., (bullying, juvenile delinquency, behavioural problems) present in the field of education in Cyprus, have demanded the creation of a number of intervention and prevention programs. It was therefore considered necessary to create a handbook that refers to the individual needs of the students and how these can be addressed successfully in mainstream schooling. The book is specific to high school students and was prepared by Dr. Ernie Sismani (Education Psychologist Grade A).

## Summary of the role of Educational Psychologists in Inclusive Education

Educational Psychologists are

- part of the diagnostic team
- have a vital role in the design and implementation of the curriculum of each child diagnosed with learning or emotional difficulties
- design and implement intervention and prevention programs to ensure the goals of inclusive education are achieved.

### 2.3. **CZECH REPUBLIC Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic by Dr. Bohumira Lazarova**

Czech society, social and school policy have shown a marked tendency towards integration and inclusion, especially in the past 20 years. Czech legislation, government programmes as well as various national and local projects endorse the efforts. It is namely the context of education in which the term “inclusion” is most frequently used.

## The term “inclusion“ and dominant target groups

**Inclusion** is a relatively new term and therefore it is not always defined and understood in the same way, it is frequently identified with the term **integration**. However, recently the term inclusion has been increasingly more used and understood broadly. It represents a general approach enabling people with different abilities (or with a specific disability) to get integrated into the wider society, in which they can get involved and strive for the fulfilment of the ideals

and feel as a part of it. Inclusion is then more than simple integration, it is rather a process integrating an individual who is mentally or physically different from the majority among individuals without these differences aiming at mutual adaptation.

Both integration and inclusion are processes which are generally accepted, nevertheless, in a number of points they provoke many discussions. Integration and inclusion is extensively discussed in compulsory school education.

In terms of inclusion in education typically pupils with special educational needs are concerned, that is pupils with:

- a health and sensory disability or disadvantage,
- a mental disability,
- a social disadvantage,
- foreigners (culturally disadvantaged),
- learning difficulties or behaviour disorders, but also gifted pupils.

According to the latest available school statistics in 2010 there were approx. 790.000 pupils in Czech basic schools (ISCED 1 and 2). Out of these almost 71.000 have special educational needs. The largest group with a disability in basic schools are pupils with developmental learning and behaviour disorders (over 36.000) and pupils with a mental disability (almost 22.000). The number of pupils with migrant background is also increasing (approx. 14.000), most often they come from developing countries, only 14% of them come from European countries ([www.UIV.cz](http://www.UIV.cz)).

In the Czech Republic close attention has traditionally been paid to the Roma population, both children and adults. Roma families have been at risk of social exclusion in the long-term and the efforts for inclusion and support do not show tangible results. There are estimated 150.000 – 300.000 Roma people with a qualification, however, only about 11.000 people declare the Roma nationality (<http://web2006.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=16149>). The Roma issue in the Czech Republic has been criticised by the European Union as well as by other organisations (the Government Council for Human Rights, the Czech Public Defender of Rights, etc.). The results of the last year investigations demonstrate a disproportionate number of Roma children in “practical schools”, which are aimed at children with a mild mental retardation.

### Measures to promote inclusion

The integration and inclusion efforts were significantly endorsed by school legislation of 2004. In the school act (act No. 561/2004 Code of law, amendment 472/2011 Code of law) and respective school regulations the measures for pupils with special educational needs are established (mainly Regulation No. 116/2011 Code of law, earlier 72/2005) on providing counselling services in schools and counselling centres and Regulation No. 147/2011 Code of law, earlier No. 73/2005) on educating children, pupils and students with special educational needs and gifted children and pupils).

The education of pupils with special educational needs is carried out using the so-called **compensatory and supportive measures**. The compensatory measures are primarily educational methods appropriate for pupils' needs, providing individual support, using counselling services etc. Supportive measures in addition include compensation and rehabilitation aids, special textbooks, finding an assistant, reducing the number of pupils in a class etc.

The above mentioned legislation enables the implementation of a number of measures which enhance inclusive education in schools:

- adjustments of the curriculum: there are supplements for pupils with a mild retardation in the Framework Educational Programme, pupils with a disability could be provided with an individual educational plan,
- adjustment of evaluation of pupils,
- teachers' assistants,
- reduction of number of pupils in a class,
- use of special aids,
- financing of recommended measures, special aids etc., according to the recommendation of a school counselling centre,
- retraining groups in school, special classes in school etc.
- preparatory years for pre-school pupils (especially Roma children and children with a social disadvantage take an advantage of that),

- establishment of a school guidance centre, hiring a school psychologist or other experts.

All of these measures are used by many schools, some of them have even incorporated inclusion into their long-term school development plans and into their school educational programmes, they offer a range of after-school activities for pupils with special educational needs and they make effort to search for grants on the development of inclusive climate. The supportive measures do not concern only basic and elementary schools, but also universities. Significant attention is devoted to **teacher education** in the area of inclusion.

### **Examples of projects enhancing inclusion in education**

Within the programmes funded by ESF many projects are springing up to enhance inclusion on national level (coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) and regional level, individual school are getting involved as well as non-profit-making organisations. In the following section we present a few more extensive projects conducted on international, national and local level.

#### The decade of Roma inclusion 2005 – 2015

The Government of the CR joined the activities of twelve states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Spain), the so-called international action plan for the inclusion of the Roma. The programme focuses on solving problems of education, living, employment and health, it is based on involving the Roma themselves into the planned activities (<http://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/zalezitosti-romske-komunity/dekada-romske-inkluzie/dekada-romske-inkluzie-74018/> or [www.romadecade.org](http://www.romadecade.org)).

#### Project RAMPS – VIP III (Development and methodological support for counselling services – Education, information, career).

This is a follow-up - already third – project financed by the EU, coordinated by the Ministry of Education CR. In the first stage of the project the focus was on the establishment of school counselling centres in selected schools. The finances of the project covered among others wages, education and methodological support for school psychologists and/or school special education teachers. These activities are developed and extended in the following projects. The project is to finish in 2013, the problem seems to be the integration of the activities (or changes) into the system (school psychologists are financed from the project and therefore their contracts will expire by the end of the project). ([www.nuv.cz](http://www.nuv.cz)).

#### Project “Centre for inclusive education“

The aim of the project coordinated by the Ministry of Education CR is to encourage the implementation of inclusive values into educational process at basic schools. Within the project so-called Centres for inclusive education were established, providing support for schools when improving conditions for education of pupils as suits their needs and abilities. The centres offer to the participating schools (130 schools, mainly basic) long-term consultation and counselling support in the area of psychological and special education services, social guidance and prevention of the socially pathological phenomena. In the school participating in the project there are about 17-18% of pupils with special educational needs (out of these there 36% with learning difficulties and 21% with a social disadvantage). Reports on the state of inclusive education in the Czech Republic in 2010 and 2011 at <http://issuu.com/cpiv/docs/>. The project is finished in 2012 (<http://www.cpiv.cz> or [www.nuv.cz](http://www.nuv.cz)).

#### Research project *Special needs of pupils in the context of the Framework Educational Programme for primary education*

It is a seven-year long research project financed by the Ministry of Education CR conducted at the Faculty of Education Masaryk University in Brno (2007-2013). Within the project a wide range of research activities were conducted, aiming at the identification of the supportive factors in the education of pupils with special educational needs. The project's results include dozens of publications (<http://www.ped.muni.cz/wsedu/index.php?p=vyzkumny-zamer>).

#### Programme of social inclusion

This is a project of the city of Ostrava (northern Moravia), the city which has been burdened with high unemployment and an increased number of people at risk of social exclusion. The project has yielded publications such as Social inclusion – Ostrava 2011-2020. ([www.ostrava.cz](http://www.ostrava.cz)).

#### Civic association Rytmus o.s.

Rytmus is an association implementing various projects enhancing inclusion. They offer a wide range of counselling services and activities, e.g. assistance for parents choosing a suitable school for a child with a disability, they provide training for teachers, help to find assistance for schools, etc. The association has published a Czech version of an evaluation tool for inclusive school evaluation (2007). *Inclusion indicator* (T. Booth, M. Ainscow) ([www.inkluzce.cz](http://www.inkluzce.cz)).

#### Civic association META

European projects make it possible to maintain the web portal *Inkluzivní škola* (Inclusive school), which provides support for the integration of foreigners into Czech schools. The process of integration and Czech lessons are organised, examples of good practice and experience in the area are reported (<http://www.inkluzivniskola.cz/>).

#### Project Keys for life

Yet another project financed by the European funds, coordinated by the National Institute of Children and Youth. The institute organizes leisure-time activities for children with special educational needs, teacher training in the area of inclusion etc. ([www.nidm.cz](http://www.nidm.cz)).

### **The role of school psychologists in inclusive efforts**

In Czech primary and secondary schools so-called *school guidance centres* are being established and the latest school legislation enables the employment of school psychologists. However, not all schools can afford school psychologists (they have to find resources for their financing), about 200 schools receive financial means from the above mentioned project RAMPS – VIP III.

Nevertheless, the legislation defines the role and activities of school psychologists. As far as inclusion is concerned, there are two types of psychologists' activities. The first one is *individual work with pupils* with special educational needs, their parents and case consultations with teachers (diagnostics, counselling, re-education, monitoring the situation, assistance in the design of individual educational plan, etc.). An advantage of school psychologists is the possibility of cooperation in the implementation of the mentioned compensatory and supportive measures and evaluation of their effectiveness. School psychologists are also agents communicating with school and external guidance subjects or school guidance centres (most often they are child guidance centres, centres for pupils with special needs or correction centres).

The second area of work, which seems to be increasingly more preferred, is *dealing with classes of pupils and the whole school as a system*. School psychologists focus on prevention and facilitate the creation of inclusive environment – they help to create a climate in a class (e.g. team-building courses for new classes) and in a school they can participate in self-evaluation of a school. It is particularly the issue of school climate and cooperation with the school management on it that remains a challenge for many school psychologists. In the systematic screening psychologists often identify potential risks, take part in preparation of various measures, organise team-building courses for pupils, organise preparatory years for pupils with a social disadvantage, cooperate with families, non-profit organisations, etc.

### **Barriers to inclusion**

The factors hindering inclusive education were identified within the already mentioned project of the Centre for inclusive education and published in the reports on the state of inclusive education in the Czech Republic in 2010 and 2011 (available only in Czech at <http://issuu.com/cpiv/docs/>).

It concerns primarily the following barriers to inclusion – we present them in a shortened version, although the topic undoubtedly deserves more detailed interpretations and discussion:

- **Rejection of the idea of inclusion and negative experience.** In some schools it is rather difficult to create real inclusive climate. Not all teachers are ready to accept and share the idea as it often brings about a lot of work and difficulties for people in schools and often there are not suitable conditions for such work. This previous negative experience then generates cognitive stereotypes, negative attitudes and defence mechanisms.
- **Insufficient material and financial situation in schools.** In many schools there is a lack of money to spend on special aids, they can not afford to finance school psychologists, SEN teachers or teacher assistants from their own budget.

- **Not taking advantage of the possibilities of the school curriculum.** Only some schools take advantage of the possibility to support the concept of inclusion within the design of their school educational programme, and they are not always given encouragement to do so (with the exception of the project for inclusive education).
- **Services and support are not available.** There are many non-profit organisations (and projects) in the Czech Republic, which can be useful to schools as far as inclusion is concerned. However, the information about potential support is sometimes unavailable (especially to rural schools).
- **Ambiguity of the role of teacher assistants.** Teacher assistants are financed on the basis of reference from school guidance institution always only for one year. Typically, basic schools have 1-2 teacher assistants on average, schools in risk regions or with a higher number of pupils with a disability have more assistants. Some people point to the ambiguity surrounding the assistants' competences, as teachers might have different expectations and requirements.
- **Legislative barriers.** Legislative barriers involve mainly the ambiguity about the term "social disadvantage" (if there are problems with diagnostics, there is a problem with financing special measures for such pupils, too), so far it has not been possible to employ school speech therapists or social workers. As a consequence of normative
- financing of schools there is a growing demand on the highest possible number of pupils in a class. Experts suggest that compulsory school education for children with a social disadvantage should be legitimised from 5 years of age (parents do not send their children to preparatory classes facilitating their entrance into school).
- **Administrative barriers.** School guidance centres (Child guidance centres and Centres for pupils with special needs) are often overburdened, cooperation with them is time-consuming and for some pupils (especially those from villages) the service is not very convenient due to commuting. Schools complain about unavailable information, if they cooperate with the Department of social-legal child protection or the police, they would appreciate "networking" of all the subjects involved and easier flow of information about proposed measures for families at risk, etc. Schools often do not have information about whether a family is registered by the organs of child protection, whether a child is in the custody of a guidance centre, schools are not automatically informed of any psychological examinations. There is insufficient information service and education for parents particularly about guidance centres, preparatory classes, etc.
- **Insufficient methodological teacher training.** If teachers are to cope increasingly often with children with special educational needs in their classes, then they need more support in their work, which can be achieved by education e.g. in the field of methodology, but also by following support such as supervision, practice reflection, etc. Goal-directed preparation for inclusion will be needed at the level of university.

It seems that the greatest barrier to inclusion is the often prevailing **negative attitudes of the public** as well as of some teachers towards the idea of inclusion. These disapproving tendencies are then intensified by negative experience. The following situation is typical:

Schools that opened up and promoted inclusive education were consequently considered by parents as schools unable to provide quality education to children without a disability. These schools were therefore forced to accept more pupils with disabilities because parents of children without disabilities decided to seek schools that (perhaps immorally) did not allow inclusion. Thus inclusive schools in the course of time became resort for difficult pupils. The gap between the two types of schools was widening- inclusion efforts were counterproductive. The result of this is that there are two schools in one street, one of them for difficult pupils, and near there is another one, which never opened to inclusion. The remaining challenge is education of parents, motivation of teachers and support for schools who really aim to become inclusive schools.

### **Examples of good practice**

Several examples of good practice supporting inclusion in education are presented above as efforts to promote inclusion by projects. In this section I mention only three examples of good practice at various stages of education that I encountered. However, it is obvious that there are many similar examples in the whole Czech Republic. Other examples of good practice are listed in the Report on inclusive education in the CR from 2010 (<http://issuu.com/cpiv/docs/>).

### Inclusive basic school in Brno

An example of success in inclusive education is a basic school which in recent years presents itself as a school with classes for gifted children. The school gradually opened to pupils who needed help and support in other aspects – pupils with learning and behaviour disorders, pupils with a social disability as well as to pupils with autism etc. Thus the teachers, who were used to deal with gifted children, had to cope with an increasing number of pupils with a disability and had to accept the idea of an inclusive school. The school is now able to create suitable conditions for both groups: gifted pupils and pupils with a disability.

A school psychologist is employed in this school half-time, financed from the school budget. She participates in a wide range of activities and measures aimed at assistance for pupils at risk, their parents and also teachers. She takes part in organisation of team-building preparatory courses for pupils, registration into first year, performs psychological examinations of pupils with problems, communicates with parents, provides methodological consultations to teachers. She monitors and builds climate in teams of classmates in cooperation with student teachers (the school closely cooperates with the Faculty of Education). (<http://www.zskridlovicka.cz/phprs/view.php?cisloclanku=2010081501>).

### Grammar school in Boskovice – a chance for gifted students

This is a grammar school in a small town (500 pupils), with a well-functioning school guidance centre (psychologist financed from the project RAMPS – VIP III). It is an easy-access school, there is a lift, so the school is ready for pupils with a physical disability.

Thanks to the project School full of opportunities, which is supported by the ESF and the state budget of the CR, the school has financial means for the period 3/2012 - 3/2013 to offer space for pupils' development of talents. The aim of the project is to offer activities where pupils with particular interests can develop their knowledge, abilities and also the skills to conduct independent investigations. Several types of activities are offered: seminars for pupils, investigation projects in humanities and science, e-learning education and further education of teachers. Students from various years meet in small groups with a teacher work on assigned tasks which are beyond the scope of common subject matter. Teachers create tasks for these pupils in accordance with their individual plans and the idea of inclusion. The project is supported by the school psychologist, whose task is to detect gifted pupils, provide methodological assistance to teachers and assist in designing individual study plans. ([www.gymbos.cz](http://www.gymbos.cz)).

### Masaryk University – Teiresias centre

The trend of inclusion is apparent at universities too. A good example is Masaryk University in Brno, which runs the Teiresias centre. The Centre is a special-purpose institution of MU with public activities. Its aim is to provide suitable conditions which would ensure that studies at MU are open to the most students and participants of lifelong learning with disabilities of various kinds. Since 2000, Masaryk University has been organizing entrance examination for students with a disability in a different way – it makes use of information technologies and alternative communication and perception methods so that the students can take standard written entrance examination.

The representation of students with a visual disability of MU corresponds with the number of students with a visual disability in the population. 37 semester courses of individual teaching and personal assistance were arranged for these students. Furthermore, 650 publications of academic literature were made available to them. The capacity of the university's study room for the blind was enlarged and the activities of Lifelong learning for visually handicapped students were also elaborated.

The number of students with a hearing disability at MU increased, too. Assistant services for these students were extended, including the university dispatching of sign language interpreting. In addition, language education for deaf students was increased.

The university dispatching of personal assistance for students with a motor disability was established and other precautions were taken in order to improve the conditions for them. (<http://www.muni.cz/teiresias/general/about?lang=en>).

## 2.4. DENMARK 2012 Education in an inclusive context by Poul Skaarup Jensen

### State of the Art

- Denmark signed the Salamanca declaration in 1994
- 19.500 children were segregated into special education in 2001
- In 2010 the figure were 29.500 children
- Only 17,5% of children in special education (segregated) went into further education
- The government launched a goal: Maximum 3% of all children have to be segregated by 2020 and 95 % of all students are expected to go into further education by 2015

### New Legislation

- 89.000 pupils received special education in 2008/9
- 30% of the expenses to the school system were dedicated to special education
- Special education was defined as all sorts of supported education from few to many hours per week
- New legislation 2012: Special education is defined as supported education in 9 (or more) hours per week.
- This new legislation removed 49.000 pupils from the statistics (pupils in ordinary school settings)
- Special education is mostly education in special schools – an excluding solution
- The legislation also demanded a new role for the psychologists in the educational system (PPR)

### Psychologists in the educational system in Denmark

- Society will expect less psychological assessments
- Society will expect more advice and supervision to teachers in compulsory schools concerning inclusive learning environment
- Two possible scenarios: less psychologists in the educational system or psychologists find new roles in guidance concerning inclusive school settings

### Inclusion In Silkeborg

- The role of the psychologists in the educational systems are changing. The demand for consultation is increasing and so is the demand for new competencies of the psychologists.
  - Do we need more diagnostic work or do we need more consultation and advising?
  - The Danish answer is clear: we have to support the learning environment – and we try to avoid the diagnostic way.
  - In Denmark Silkeborg has made some impressive moves to meet the future demands.
  - By a change in the economic logic we have more or less managed to make it an economical neutral matter to include or exclude a child. (More or less.)
  - All teachers in the schools of Silkeborg (1500 people) are facing a 1 week course during the year (2012) – preparing the teachers to include more pupils.
  - 150 teachers are facing a 6 week course to make them inclusion agents
- 
- The child policy of Silkeborg are translated into a mindset –a way of working and meeting the child and the parents – and presented to all employees in the week courses in all 2012
  - In Silkeborg 96,6 % of all schoolchildren are in ordinary schools – no matter their special needs. This means that 3,4% of the school children are in special classes` today. The goal is to minimize this in 2013 – letting 97% of all school children join classes in ordinary schools.
  - In Silkeborg we`re changing the structures and organisation of special classes to ensure more inclusion. This means a reformation of the economic structures as to the organisational structures.

- We are working with new ways of special education – moving the experts out from the special-schools into the ordinary classes to help organize the education to pupils with special needs.
- Two ordinary schools and two special class-schools are the hosts for this visit. The schools would like to present their work/their effort to realise the political goals for Silkeborg.. The Schools will present the main goals, the way of working within this framework and the results so far.
- Almost all schools and special classes are part of Silkeborg Municipality to day.

### **Good Practice Example**

**The School Psychologist in the Inclusive School** *by the school psychologist (retired) Lone Gregersen. University College Capital, Denmark, email:post@loneregelsen.dk*

#### **A project concerning The Special Needs Resource Centre in the Inclusive School takes its start**

As director of a knowledge centre for special needs education at University College Capital, I directed a school development project running over 4 years comprising 20 schools within and around Copenhagen in Denmark. The title of the project was The Special Needs Resource Centre in the Inclusive School. The project was a combined in-service teacher training and development plan for the resource centres in public mainstreamed schools with pupils 6 – 17 years old.

The resource centres, one in each school, support pupils, who have special educational needs - however the needs are labelled; eg. speech, vision, hearing or reading impairment, neuro-psychiatric disorders as ADHD or autism, intellectual disability, or emotional and behaviour difficulties.

Employed at or connected to the centres are usually special teachers with different competences, speech therapists, school psychologists, and social workers.

The centres have resources of their own – or can apply for extra resources to solve their tasks. The resources are mostly used within the ordinary classroom, but it depends upon the individual educational plan for each child.

The project aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

1. How can the school as such and the resource center share common developmental processes in ways that ensure that special education remains an integrated part of the school?
2. What should be the role of the resource center in the inclusive school?
3. Which competences should be further developed to ensure that the center can cope with its new functions, and how is that to be achieved?
4. How can school evaluation inspire school development?

#### **1. How can the school as such and the resource center share common developmental processes in ways that ensure, that special education remains an integrated part of the school?**

Very often pupils with special needs are looked upon as a special group of children unlike normal children, and their support is seen as special, being given by special teachers and in special rooms or schools.

Contrary to this perspective we saw all pupils as dependent of their learning conditions and milieu, the quality of their teachers' knowledge and competences, and the pupils' quality of knowledge and competences – in that order.

The higher the qualities of these three conditions – the better the starting point.

Most pupils are supported well enough if their basic learning needs are fulfilled.

Some of the programs and strategies we have found useful are:

- “The Handbook for Inclusion”, edited by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow in Manchester. This handbook contains the necessary knowledge about good basic learning conditions concerning the school and its culture.

- Social strategies are a necessary part of the curriculum, and we found “Second Step” (SRDCE NA DLANI) very useful.
- “Cooperative Learning” (Spencer Kagan ) serves as fine structures for pupils to cooperate about learning subjects.
- Team cooperation between teachers in planning and evaluating their teaching is necessary to develop the teachers’ knowledge and tools.

### **3. What should be the role of the resource centre in the inclusive school?**

The staff of the centre assists individual pupils, as well as groups and classes. But besides these interventions we found it useful, that the school psychologist works with the school system as a whole, so that learning problems and behavior problems are seen as problems, the school might create itself by the way it is working and the way it handles problems.

The school psychologist should be a part of a development group, who could evaluate and analyze the system itself. This group can be viewed as a kind of brain trust or think-tank inside the school concerning learning. Its members should comprise representatives for the teachers, the parents, the school psychologist, the head and other important, wise people, who have connections to the individual school.

Three to four times a year, this group could meet and discuss important issues concerning the learning milieu of their school. Some of the questions which might be asked are:

- Are the goals of the school concerning the curriculum reached?
- Which pupils have learning problems, and how are these problems being handled?
- Which pupils have behavior problems, and how are these problems being handled?
- Etc...

Of course someone from the group (e.g. a special teacher and/or the school psychologist) has to prepare an overview for the development group. On basis of their discussions, the group can decide for the coming year:

- Which resources do we need and how do we use our resources best?
- What kind of guidance and counseling is this school in need of?
- What kind of in-service teacher training do we need and how do we prioritize?
- How can we as a school prevent some of these difficulties?
- Which kinds of preventive and anticipatory functions can we exercise?

The resource center is thus considered as a local facility, networking with other knowledge centers (local and national) and networks.

### **4. Which competences should be further developed to ensure that the centre can cope with its new functions?**

A medical view of a pupil’s difficulties is not a useful approach in educational settings. There is no linear connection between a pupil’s diagnosis and a response. Instead those who are part of a pupil’s learning environment must go through a process together to reach a common understanding of what the problem is, and which objectives are realistic to formulate. This means that you can share experience and observations, and that you can gain a deeper understanding of the problem and the possibilities for change through mutual reflection.

Throughout the project it was found that decisions on special educational interventions often

contained very little mutual reflection, and that there is a tendency to focus on solutions very early in a collaborative process. Sometimes the solution is already formulated at the beginning of a meeting. The time pressure on cooperation for special educational assistance often means, that administrative and practical issues will dominate the content of the meetings, and that the linear thinking in fact dominates circular and reflexive questions.

To develop a more reflective culture, meetings concerning special educational assistance must have clear goals, the individual participants’ roles must be clarified, and the agenda laid open for both parents and teachers. This requires an understanding of the nature and purpose of the meetings, and training in meeting management. The school psychologist could well be the leader of these meetings.

A dialogue model was developed as a tool in this reflexive culture of cooperation, allowing a systematic collection of information about a child and its learning environment. This model can also be used with groups and classes. The dialogue model emphasizes contextual understanding with an organic/relational perspective, where problems are seen as caused by a lack of congruence between child and context. The child is seen as a whole with its weak sides as well as its strong potentials. The model is inspired by Norwegian researchers such as Johannessen, Kokkersvold, and Vedeler as well as Thomas Nordahl.

The dialogue model is a process-oriented and dialogue-based approach with an emphasis on customization, shared effort, involvement and cooperation – not only between the grown-ups around the child – but also with the child itself. The child is not “handled” – the approach is fulfilled together with and in corporation with the child itself.

#### **5. . How can school evaluation inspire school development?**

How can knowledge about children with learning difficulties be collected, maintained, and further developed to prevent the knowledge from remaining personal issues, i.e. attached to the children and instead be seen as indicators of the system and the way to conduct school?

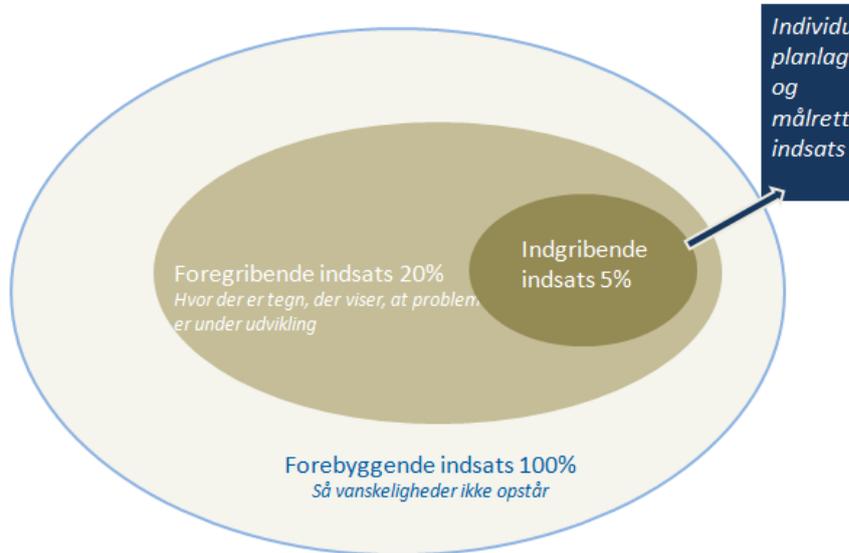
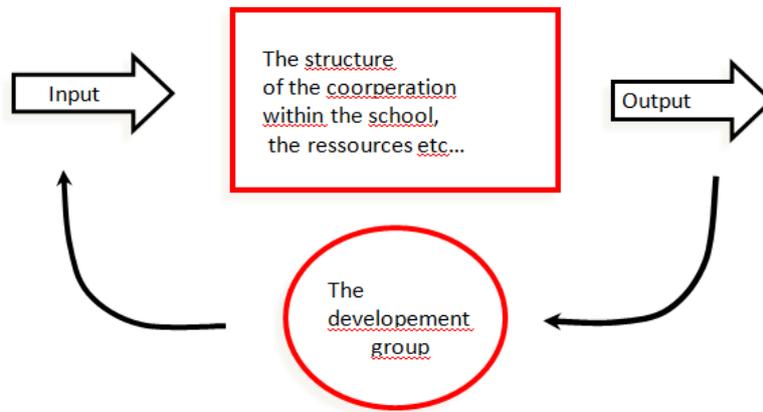
We consider the resource centre to be an essential part in developing a changed view upon special educational needs, so that our efforts can be characterized as participation, equality and inclusion. As described it is the task of the centre to collect, analyze, and systematize information about non learners, so that the development group can make decisions for relevant actions to take place in the coming school year.

It is considered essential that the special educational assistance is placed into an organization described by its responsibilities and tasks. Likewise, it is considered appropriate that this organization operates as part of the school's overall organization, so that the special educational effort is coordinated and a part of the ordinary curriculum. The resource center works towards the same goals as the rest of the school and has to be evaluated by the same objectives.

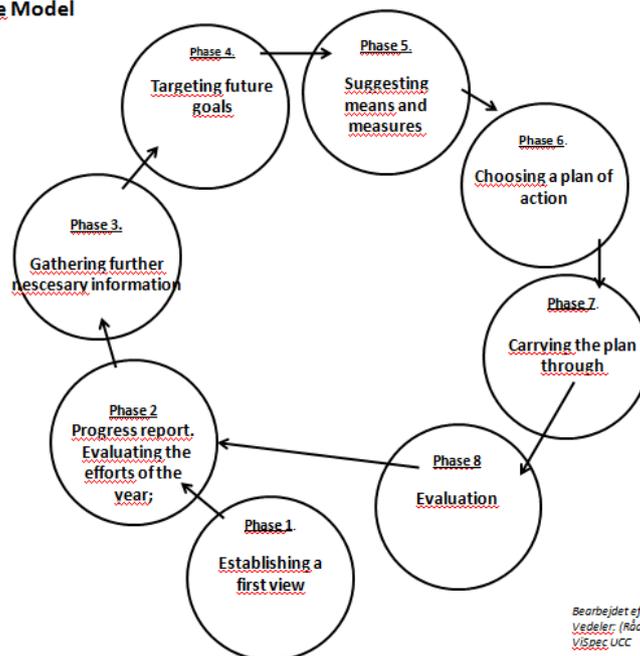
In Denmark the role of the school psychologist is changing rapidly. Partly due to changed demands from teachers who want immediate help in their often difficult work, and partly because it has been documented that the traditional school psychological report is of limited value for teachers. It often only serves as a basis for segregating pupils.

The change can be described as a movement away from the role of the expert, prescribing what should be done, towards the role of a colleague who together with the teachers search for possible ways to solve imminent problems, hereby the gathering of knowledge that is relevant at the moment. Thus the focus is upon developmental psychology, learning psychology, and social psychology. At the same time the school psychologist's competences as a process consultant and as a mediator of collaboration are extremely important.

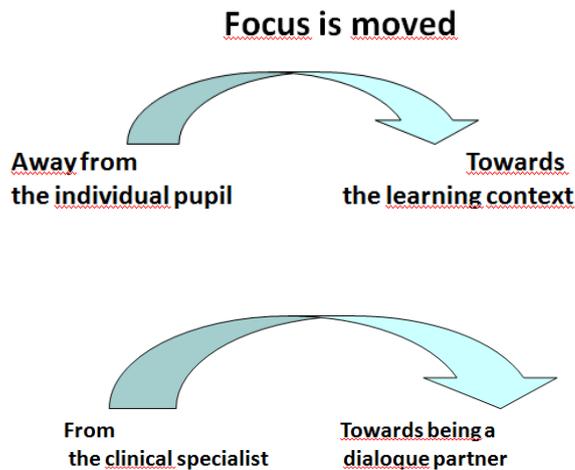
**The Ressource centre can function as a feedback-organization**



**A Dialogue Model**



Bearbejdet efter Johannesen, KøgeRUC  
Vedeler; (Rådgivning)  
VISECC UCC



7.4. **FINLAND** Special education and school psychologists in Finland, September 2012 Annarilla Ahtola [annarilla.ahtola@psyli.fi](mailto:annarilla.ahtola@psyli.fi) University of Turku, The Finnish Psychological Association

**1. School psychology in Finland**

In Finland, school psychologists operate within the *pupil welfare* (*oppilashuolto*) activities, activities that promote and maintain good learning, good psychological, physical and social health, and enhance the prerequisites of these. Pupil welfare is the concern of all persons working in the school community, but school psychologist, school nurse, school doctor, and school social worker are directly and solely engaged in promoting pupil welfare.

The central arena for pupil welfare work in contemporary Finnish basic education is the multiprofessional pupil welfare team, which meets regularly, usually weekly or biweekly. In primary school, the usual team includes the school principal, special education teacher, school nurse, school psychologist, and school social worker; in lower secondary school, the study counsellor also participates. However, this may be the case only in southern Finland and in densely populated areas. The main tasks of the pupil welfare teams are twofold, but, in practice,

the actions are mostly indicated interventions at the level of individual pupils, families, and classrooms rather than general promotion and prevention at the level of the whole school community.

In international comparison (criteria by Jimerson, Skokut, Cardenas, Malone, & Stewart, 2008), the presence of school psychology in Finland is strong. However, in contrast to some other countries, there are neither specific master's, nor doctoral, studies in school psychology. The master's studies required of all psychologists prepare them for working in any field of psychology, including school psychology.

During the 2000s, pupil welfare activities and professionals have finally been acknowledged in formal documents concerning basic education (the 2003 revision of the Basic Education Act; the 2010 revision of the core curriculum). In addition, since 2007, school psychology services are now defined as mandatory in preschool and basic education. Even though current legislation on pupil welfare still reflects the splitting of responsibilities between school and health and social services, most school psychologists and school social workers are an integral part of school communities both physically and organizationally. However, the efforts of the existing 300 school psychologists and 300 school social workers are not sufficient; about 600 psychologists and 600 social workers more are needed in preschool and basic education alone. In school psychology, quantity is closely related to quality.

Finnish school psychologists devote, on average, 59% of their working time to direct work with clients. Even though more than half of the Finnish school psychologists are interested in increasing the time engaged in indirect work, the ideal average proportion of work with clients,

as seen by school psychologists themselves, is still as high as 50%. Thus, not even the aims let alone the reality are in line with the literature-stated goals of indirect work.

## **2. Special education in Finland: Revision of Basic Education Act in 2010–2011**

This section is mostly from the document Amendments and additions to the national core curriculum for basic education (2010).

The structure of support for learning and schooling is that of *general, intensified and special support*. Pupils participating in education are entitled to receive sufficient support for growth and learning immediately when the need for support becomes apparent. The education provider must ensure that pupils' right to receive support can be implemented in practice by means such as defining the responsibilities and division of work related to determination of support needs and implementation of support measures.

Early identification of support needs requires continuous assessment of pupils' needs and provision of support must be initiated at a sufficiently early stage. This will prevent aggravation and long-term effects of problems. Support needs may be assessed making use of the results of physical examinations and any other possible pupil evaluations. Provision of the right support measures at the right time and level is key to safeguarding learning and development. The support received by pupils must be flexible, planned with a long-term view in mind and must change in keeping with support needs. Different forms of support are used both individually and in combination to complement each other. Support will be provided as long as necessary and at the appropriate level.

### **2.1 General support**

Every pupil has a right to high-quality education as well as an opportunity to receive guidance and support for learning and schooling on all school days. All pupils' abilities and needs must be taken into account in schoolwork. Schools are to develop their procedures and operational culture so as to make it possible to make use of cooperation and learning together and to deal with the diversity of pupils as well as possible. Caring, concern and a good atmosphere in a school community promote pupils' development and support good learning.

Each teacher is responsible for taking the teaching group and the different abilities and needs of each of its pupils into account in instruction. Cooperation with parents and guardians, other teachers and staff members and different experts contributes to success in this respect. The teacher's task is to guide the group to function in such a way that its internal interaction promotes learning. The teacher guides pupils to recognize their own resources, learning-related strengths and development challenges. Special attention must be focused on pupils' learning abilities and their opportunity to assume responsibility for their own learning, setting objectives for it, and its planning, implementation and assessment. Pupils' self-esteem, study motivation and learning-to-learn skills are consolidated in all learning situations and subjects.

Teaching work also involves tasks relating to guidance, counselling and pupil welfare. Assessing support needs and offering the necessary support form an integral part of a teacher's work and all teaching situations. Support is constructed in cooperation between teachers and other experts, where required, and in interaction with pupils and their parents or guardians.

Any support needs in terms of learning and schooling are met by differentiating instruction, through cooperation between teachers and by modifying teaching groups in a flexible manner. The role of these arrangements becomes pronounced in combined-class instruction. Schools may make use of remedial teaching, in particular, as well as learning plans, part-time special-needs education and assistants' contributions as means to meet the support needs of teaching groups or individual pupils even before transition to the intensified support stage.

It is also possible to influence pupils' well-being and learning motivation through morning and afternoon activities, provided that these are offered by the education provider concerned. Planning these to form part of the pupils' day also makes it possible to increase experiences of safety, security and community spirit.

### **2.2 Intensified support**

Pupils in need of regular support for their learning or schooling or in need of several forms of support at the same time must be provided with intensified support that is based on a pedagogical assessment in accordance with a learning plan prepared for them

Intensified support is provided when general support is not sufficient.

Intensified support is planned as a whole for each individual pupil. It is by nature more intense and persistent than general support. Intensified support is used to support the pupil's learning

and schooling systematically and is designed to prevent problems from escalating, diversifying and accumulating.

It is possible to make use of all forms of support available in basic education during intensified support, with the exception of special-needs education provided on the basis of a decision on special support, which is described below (3.3).

Subject syllabi cannot be individualized at the intensified support stage. Conversely, a more prominent role is played by part-time special-needs education, individual guidance counselling and use of flexible teaching groups, as well as home-school cooperation. In addition, pupil welfare services play a more substantial role in promoting and maintaining pupils' well-being. Support must be organized according to each pupil's developmental phase and individual needs in terms of quality and quantity. It is important to ensure pupils' opportunities to gain experiences of success in learning and as group members and to support their positive perception of themselves and schoolwork.

During a period of intensified support, each pupil's learning and schooling must be monitored and assessed regularly. In the event that a pupil's situation changes, the learning plan will be revised to match his or her need for support.

- Intensified support measures are initiated on the basis of a *pedagogical assessment*, which describes
  - the status of the pupil's learning and schooling as a whole
  - general support provided for the pupil and an assessment of its effects
  - the pupil's learning abilities and special needs relating to learning and schooling
  - an assessment of the types of pedagogical, learning environment, pupil welfare or other arrangements to be made in order to support the pupil.

The written pedagogical assessment is drawn up by the pupil's teacher or teachers together. Where necessary, and especially in cases concerning problems relating to the pupil's well-being and overall development, other experts will also get involved to help draw up the assessment. Cooperation with the pupil and his or her parents or guardians is important in terms of both determining needs and planning and successful implementation of support measures. Any learning plan already in place for the pupil as part of general support will be utilized when drawing up the pedagogical assessment. If the pupil has a rehabilitation plan, this may also be utilized with permission from the parents or guardians.

Initiating and organizing intensified support and, where necessary, the pupil's transition back to general support will be dealt with on the basis of the pedagogical assessment in a multidisciplinary pupil welfare team or in some other form of multidisciplinary pupil welfare work in accordance with provisions on dealing with the case of an individual pupil. After this process, intensified support measures to be provided for the pupil will be recorded in the pupil's personal learning plan.

### **2.3 Special support**

Special support is provided for pupils who cannot adequately achieve their growth, development or learning objectives through other support measures. Special support may be provided as part of either general or extended compulsory education. Special support consists of special-needs education based on a decision on special support and of other forms of support available in

basic education. The whole range of support measures available in basic education can be used.

The purpose of special support is to provide pupils with holistic and systematic support that enables them to complete their compulsory education and build a foundation for continuing their studies when they leave comprehensive school. Pupils' self-esteem and study motivation are reinforced and they are encouraged to assume responsibility for their studies within the limits of their own abilities.

Provision of special support requires education providers to make a decision in writing, which will be revised at least after the second grade and prior to moving on to the seventh grade. The decision is to be made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. Any matters that are significant in terms of the pupil's legal protection and provision of instruction are determined in the decision on special support. The decision on special support must determine the pupil's primary teaching group, any possible interpretation and assistance services and other necessary services and, where necessary, divergent teaching arrangements for the pupil. Individualization of a syllabus requires a decision on special support.

A decision on special support may be made prior to or during pre-primary or basic education without a prior pedagogical statement and provision of intensified support for learning, if a psychological or medical evaluation indicates that the pupil in question cannot otherwise be

provided with education due to disability, illness, developmental delay or an emotional disorder, or for some other equivalent special reason. If a decision on special support is made during

basic education without providing intensified support, it must be based on a reassessment of the pupil's situation as a result of an accident or serious illness, for example.

- *Pedagogical statement* for special support

Prior to making a decision on special support, the education provider must consult the pupil and his or her parents, guardians or legal representatives and prepare a pedagogical statement on the pupil. For the purposes of drawing up a pedagogical statement, a body, an official or an employee appointed by the education provider will obtain

- a statement on the pupil's progress with their learning from the teachers responsible for teaching the pupil
- a statement on the intensified support measures provided for the pupil and the pupil's overall situation prepared in multidisciplinary pupil welfare cooperation, such as by the pupil welfare team.

Based on the statements, the education provider makes an assessment of the pupil's special support needs. The combination of these two statements and the subsequent assessment is known as a "pedagogical statement".

A written pedagogical statement outlines

- the status of the pupil's learning and schooling as a whole
- intensified support provided for the pupil and an assessment of its effects
- the pupil's learning abilities and special needs relating to learning and schooling
- an assessment of the types of pedagogical, learning environment, pupil welfare or other arrangements to be made in order to support the pupil
- a justified assessment of whether the pupil needs an individualized syllabus in one or more subjects.

Support measures may include factors relating to teaching and counselling staff, pupil welfare services, assistants and other necessary services, teaching methods and working approaches, learning methods, as well as materials and equipment. *In addition to the pedagogical statement, other statements, such as a psychological or medical statement or an equivalent social statement, must also be obtained, where necessary, in order to prepare a decision on special support.* The pedagogical assessment previously drawn up for a pupil and the pupil's learning plan will be utilized when drawing up the pedagogical statement. If the pupil has a rehabilitation plan, this may also be utilized with permission from the parents or guardians.

The necessity of special support must be reviewed at the points required by law and whenever the pupil's support needs change. For this purpose, a new pedagogical statement will be prepared for the pupil. If the need for ongoing support is confirmed, a decision to continue special support will be taken. If the pupil is considered not to need further special support, a decision must be taken to terminate support measures. In the latter case, the pupil starts to receive intensified support.

### **3. The role of the psychologist in the special education process**

The position of expert statements in the process for special education status has also been revised. Earlier, the psychological (or, sometimes, medical or social) statement was required for the special education status when *possible*; now, the statement must be obtained when *necessary* (see above). Some possible practical reasons and arguments for this were as follows:

- Earlier, there was some frustration with the quality of expert statements needed for special education status. In case the expert (physician, psychologist) was not familiar with the actual realities of the school, the recommendations in the statement were sometimes unrealistic and not helpful in practice. Of course, in case of a school psychologist with a reasonable workload this was not an issue.
- The lack of psychologists in some (rural) areas led to the prolonged processes and long waiting lists to the psychological assessment and statement. Now the process is supposed to be more straightforward and faster. Of course, this aspect highlights the technical need of a psychological statement and assessment, rather than the insight it usually provides to the pupil, family, and school professionals.
  - ➔ It must be emphasized that the lack of school psychologists is a problem that must be addressed as such in every school and municipality. According to legislation every school children is entitled to the services of a school psychologist.

- Moreover, some psychologists themselves may have been frustrated because of an enormous workload and too many assessments, and because of several routine assessments completed for the bureaucratic needs of the school system (see below, point 6, Funding). Naturally, there are several other useful ways to utilize psychologists' expertise in educational settings than assessments alone.

At the moment, the new procedures are only forming up in municipalities and in schools. No-one knows to which extent the statements of psychologists will still be needed in the future. At this point, it seems that no major change has taken (or is going to take) place, although there is huge variation between the municipalities and schools.

The revision of Basic Education Act raises the question whether the psychological assessment and statement are only seen as bureaucratic necessities—they have to be completed because somebody said so—by school professionals and even by psychologists themselves. Or is it the psychologist's expertise on learning, development and well-being of children that should make him or her necessary and valuable participant when the support systems for pupils are being planned?

Of course, every school psychologist must have done an assessment or two that were not so necessary in the first place. But how often is involvement of psychologists only a technical necessity, when the pupil may be in the need of special education? The new situation in Finland makes one wonder whether the school psychologists have not always been able to show what their contribution to the teachers, pupils and families really is. Very often it may be possible to use consultative method in a way that the psychologist does not know the pupil personally, but usually the more severe the problems are the more important it often is to have also assessed the pupil.

If an individual pupil is not able to achieve even the objectives of core contents to an acceptable standard despite support, it is possible to individualize one or more subject syllabi. In this case at least most psychologists feel that a psychological assessment should be completed to make sure that the difficulties are not due to, for instance, motivation problems or very narrow learning problems that should be attended to in other ways than by individualized syllabus.

#### **4. The number of special education students in Finland**

The average proportion of special education students is now 8% (2011). The number doubled from 1999 (4%) till 2008 (slightly more than 8%), but it seems that now it is coming slightly back down, most likely because of the revision of the Basic Education Act (see above).

The proportion of special education students varies considerably between municipalities (from 0% to 18%) and counties (from 4% to 11%). This variation was, in fact, one of the reasons to revise the legislation concerning special education; more systematic procedures were pursued.

#### **5. Where do Finnish special education students study?**

The basic alternatives:

- Special education schools, usually specialized into some area of difficulties; also state special education schools do exist
- Schools with both regular education classes and specialized special education classes (say, autistic, disabled)
- Schools with both regular education classes and "hybrid" special education classes (that is, all/most of the special education students from the feeding area, regardless of the nature of the problem)
- Schools with no permanent special education classes but small group teaching in some subjects, students usually are not placed in this small group for the whole term but only for a few weeks or months

On average, the proportion of those special education students who are placed in a special education class or special school is 42%. Thirty-seven percent of the special education students are integrated in regular education classes on a part-time basis, and the remaining 21% are totally integrated in regular education classes.

However, there is a huge variation between municipalities concerning the placements of special education students. In some towns, more than half of them go to a special school and there still are many special schools, whereas in some towns the proportion of special school students is only about 10–15% and separate special schools are mostly closed down.

Several special education schools have been closed down or merged into regular education schools during the 2000s. At the moment, there are about 120 special education schools in

Finland, whereas at the beginning of the 2000s, the number was double. At the same time, also several regular education schools have been closed down or the administration of two schools has been combined.

In terms of special education students, this is a time of change in Finland. Not always there are explicit plans and arguments available. Sometimes practical things go before principles and planning, e.g., whether there are physical classrooms available.

## **6. Funding of special education in Finland**

Earlier, part of the government money was allocated due to the number special education students. As in some municipalities some of this money was straight transferred to the schools (to use for resources for special education, teachers, assistants, etc.), school psychologists really became gatekeepers and money makers. Thus, in some municipalities they may have made kind of routine assessments and statements to obtain resources for the school. However, this was not the case everywhere, because not in all municipalities was the money given to the school on the basis of the number of special education schools. What is more, in some municipalities, until lately, almost all special education students were placed in special education schools.

However, concurrently with the revised legislation on special education, also the money policy has changed. The number of special education students does no more matter for the government money. These changes may reduce the number of psychological assessments especially in those municipalities where the need for statements was more technical than that of a real need for psychological expertise.

## **7. Summary**

- A major revision of Basic Education Act in terms of special education has recently taken place in Finland
- As was the case before the revision, there are huge variation between municipalities and schools in the practices and policies of special education and school psychologist's role in the process
- Finnish school psychologists should show even more than before what the practical contribution of psychological expertise in the school contexts and special education processes is—both to school professionals, families, and also to themselves

## **MODELS OF GOOD PRACTICE**

Information source: <http://pathwaystoinclude.eu/knowledge-centre/country-specific-information/models-of-good-practice>

### **Group integration in Aurora school [www.aurorankoulu.net](http://www.aurorankoulu.net)**

Since 2005 children with intellectual disabilities have been taught in the same class with not disabled children in Aurora school, Espoo. This new type of group integration was started from the initiative of parents. Integration that starts from the 1st grade is natural. All children of different level learn skills needed as a pupil and they are able to participate into joint classes every day. During the 6 years in primary school the differences between disabled and abled pupils will increase all the time and the importance of separate classes will grow along with that. In 2005 integration was started in one class of 16 children, two classroom teachers and two assistants with 4 pupils with intellectual disabilities. Later they had 5 disabled children and 3 assistants. In the 3rd grade the class was combined with another class, and during grades 3-6 there has been about 30 pupils under the guidance of two teachers and two assistants. In 2007 another group integration class was formed. After that also the same kind of new groups were established in Mikkelä, Topperlund and Tähtitarha schools. Pupils in group integration classes have an opportunity for special education up to 4 hours a week. From time to time children from two classes have been taught together when necessary. Special education teacher follows progress of the pupils and at the same time, supports the classroom teacher. Additionally, assistants are taking care of daily routines of integrated children: dressing, meals, hygiene, after school clubs and visits of the therapists at school. After school clubs have offered opportunities to practice daily life skills, like how to behave in public transport or how to go shopping. Disabled children have been welcomed to school as everybody else and they are supported in learning the same ways as other children. Every disabled pupil has his or her own individual

learning plan every year. Classroom teacher is mainly responsible for the plan of disabled child. The plan is based on the common syllabus that is modified together with special education teacher. Assistants have a key role in implementation of the individual plan. In the city of Espoo group integration was started as a result of parents active lobbying. Parents are important in the process of child's adaptation to regular class environment. Daily communication between school and home is intensive especially in the beginning. Parents take a remarkable responsibility as supervisors of homework. They also take part in the constant development of group integration model together with school staff and authorities.

#### **Tikas** [www.tikas.fi](http://www.tikas.fi)

Tikas is a pedagogical ICT and education training model for students with special needs. All citizens require the basic ICT skills to enjoy the same quality of life as others in the information society. These ICT skills help people with special needs participate in societal activities and increase their employment opportunities, making the society more accessible and inclusive. Many students still need special support in learning the basic ICT skills. Tikas aims to assist educational establishments, associations and other organisations to organise their teaching methods that students can be climbed one step at a time in the world of information and communication technology. Tikas will benefit people with intellectual disabilities, the autistic, those studying according to an individual syllabus and people with reading and learning difficulties. Tikas is also ideal for elderly people, immigrants and people with multilingual backgrounds who have insufficient knowledge of the official languages of their country of residence. The Tikas training model involves the following themes: Tikas education for teaching personnel: nearly 500 Tikas ICT instructors have been trained by autumn 2010, Tikas training is being given in about 130 Finnish educational establishments. Tools to teachers to plan and teach basic ICT skills, Tikas Teaching Plan (describes the ICT skills the students should possess), skill assessment forms, ICT words, plain language ICT textbooks, web-based learning environment (including e.g. exercises), Tikas ICT Certificate (have given over 5500 by autumn 2010).

More Info:

National Board of Education [www.oph.fi](http://www.oph.fi)

Finnish Disability Policy [www.stm.fi/julkaisut](http://www.stm.fi/julkaisut)

Finnish Design for All [www.dfasuomi.fi](http://www.dfasuomi.fi) The Finnish Design for All Network is part of European Dfa eAccessibility Network

Questions about inclusive education [www.edu.fi](http://www.edu.fi)

Articles on inclusive education at users.jyu.fi <https://www.jyu.fi/>

Projects about inclusive education [www.kehitysvammaliitto.fi](http://www.kehitysvammaliitto.fi)

## 7.5. France- Inclusive Education by Francine Corman

The education of children and adolescents with serious difficulties, either through disability or illness, is based on an infrastructure, which has slowly grown into a very dense network.

This network includes four sectors: the public education system under the authority of the Ministry of Education, the medico-educational sector, under the authority of the Ministry of Health, Youth and Sports, the socio-educational sector, under the authority either of the Ministry of Employment, Social Relations and Solidarity or the Ministry of Justice, and the health sector.

### **A. THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR**

This sector of adapted schooling comprises the infrastructures and facilities provided by the Ministry of Education and were created together with the first special classes for mentally disabled children in 1909. The sector has evolved following the school integration policy laid down in framework Law no. 75-534 (30/06/1975) in favour of disabled persons and was reinforced by framework Law no. 89-486 (10/07/1989) on education. **The actions in favour of schooling of disabled children undertaken by the Ministry of Education were reinforced by the Law of February 11, 2005 on the equality of rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of disabled people. The law affirms disabled children's right to education and the responsibility of the educational system to guarantee the continuity of individual schooling careers.** This law, which took effect of January 1, 2006, institutes the obligation to:

- provide the student, whenever possible, with ordinary school access as close as possible to his home;
- closely associate parents in the decision process of orienting their child and in all phases of the definition of his personal schooling project (PPS);
- guarantee the continuity of the schooling career, adapted to the capacities and needs of the student;
- guarantee the equality of opportunities for disabled and other candidates, by ensuring a legal basis for the adjustment of examination conditions.

The Law of February 11, 2005 created a number of new authorities:

The Departmental House of Disabled Persons (MDPH): placed under the authority of the Chairman of the General Council, this is a one-stop office which improves efficiency of reception, information and assistance to disabled students and their families (see Decree no. 2005-1587 of December 19, 2005).

The Rights and Autonomy Commission (CDA, see Decree no. 2005-1589 of December 19, 2005): it decides on orientation in the fields of schooling and education and proposes conciliatory procedures in the event of disagreement. It closely associates the parents in the orientation decision process concerning their child and in all phases of defining his personal schooling project according to the permanent incapacity ratio attributed by this Commission, which sees the child regularly in order to monitor its development.

The adapted schooling sector can be divided into three large areas:

## **1- Prevention mechanisms for students with serious schooling difficulties**

### **➤ Primary level**

These specialized assistance networks (RASED) are exclusively for the primary level and were created by Circular no. 90-082 (09/04/1990) as a substitution of previously existing services. Their objective is to prevent schooling difficulties which may be encountered by certain students in ordinary educational establishments. Circular no. 2002-113 of April 30, 2002, defines the complementarities of the RASED and school inclusion class (CLIS) mechanisms, as well as the duties of educators involved.

In these teams, there are school psychologists and specialized teachers. They are most of the time the first people who help handicapped children.

### **➤ Secondary level**

In the secondary level, school doctors, nurses and vocational counsellor-psychologists look after children with learning difficulties or with handicap.

Adapted general and professional schooling programs, defined in 1990 and implemented by Circulars no. 98-129 (19/06/1998) and no. 2006-139 (29/08/2006), are available to students with serious and persisting schooling difficulties. These programs, which are designed to provide professional qualifications, are implemented in two types of institution:

- a) The adapted general and professional schooling sections (SEGPA), successors to the specialized education sections created by Circular no. IV-67-530 (27/12/1967). Integrated into ordinary colleges, the purpose of these sections was redefined after 1989, leading to significant reinforcement of schooling programs. The number of children in SEGPA is limited to 16 maximum per class.

b) The regional adapted schooling establishments (EREA) replace the national further education schools created by Law no. 51-1487 (31/12/1951). Circular no. 95-127 (17/05/1995) required the EREA to become adapted learning high schools (LEA), but was never implemented. Most of the EREA provide boarding and host adolescents who evidence serious learning and social difficulties. However, some establishments also provide tuition to sensory or motor disabled youths capable of following secondary level classes.

After finishing schooling, these students are entitled to training leading to level V qualifications (certificate of professional competence), which most of them will accomplish within the ordinary curriculum.

c) Relay classes were created by Circular no. 98-120 (12/06/1998) for intermediate students who have entered the school rejection cycle, some of whom are legally bound to accept educational assistance. The objective of this measure is to facilitate the students' re-socialization and re-entry into the school system through temporary guidance. Under the authority of the Ministry of Education, these classes can be organized in partnership with the territorial authorities, departmental directorates of legal protection for youths and various specialized associations.

## **2- Ways of schooling for disabled students**

The student's schooling takes place mainly in an ordinary educational environment. Before compensations for handicapped children are available, school psychologists and specialized teachers help those children in the primary level. Then, schooling can be complemented by the specialist team of a specialized education and home care service (SESSAD), which can combine access to care and the right to schooling within the school environment, from the primary to the secondary level.

*In June 2006, 104 500 disabled students are included at the primary level, 45 000 at the secondary level.*

*In 2011- 2012, 210 395 disabled students are included: 130 517 at the primary level, 79 878 at the secondary level (public and private). **It is 33 % more than in 2005.***

Number of handicapped children included in the secondary level increased very much particularly in professional lycees . From 2006-2007, + 41 951 élèves in secondary colleges ( from 11 to 16 years old) <-> + 170 %) The schooling inclusion period increased too and the consequence of this was that the number of students in professional lycees was multiplied by 4 (+ 6 073 <-> + 376 %).

### **a) Individual schooling at the primary and secondary levels**

**This consists of enrolling one or more disabled students in an ordinary class. Individual schooling is the primary goal at all levels. Regardless of whether it is implemented on a part-time or full-time bases, hosting conditions must be adapted within the framework of the personalized schooling project (integral part of the personalized compensation plan), thus accounting for the specific educational needs of each disabled child.**

The **personal schooling project (PPS)** provides the framework for the schooling of the disabled child. It ensures the coherence and the quality of accompanying measures and the necessary assistance, based on a global evaluation of the situation and the student's needs: therapeutic or re-educational accompaniment, assignment of a school assistant or appropriate teaching materials, assistance to the teaching team via a school assistance post.

Each schooling career should be closely monitored, especially during the transitional phases between education levels: nursery school, elementary school, intermediate, high school and vocational training school. The same applies for baccalaureate access and preparing for higher education.

All disabled students are assigned a **reference teacher** who will follow the student's progress throughout his schooling career. All of those involved in the education process (parents, teachers, and various other partners) must be able to clearly identify the reference teacher and be able to contact him.

Students can be accompanied by a school assistant (AVS-I), one of the compensation tools provided for by the Rights and Autonomy Commission (Circular no. 2003-093 of June 11, 2003, on the accompaniment by a school assistant for children or adolescents evidencing a disability or disabling health problem).

*The number of students taking advantage of accompaniment by a school assistant has increased from 18,589 in 2006 (15,132 at the primary level, 3457 at the secondary level), compared to 7400 at the end of the 2002–2003 school year.*

During the 2006 school year, there were 6078 active school assistants (AVS-I) in all schools. Of these, 4640 operated individually with more than 13,500 students.

Even there are more and more recruitments of school assistants, there is not enough, today, to cover the increasing demands. Another problem is the fact, they have not enough access to a special education and their status is very bad.

To improve handicapped children schooling conditions, new measures decided by the Ministry of Education :

- Creation of 1500 new AVS-i
- Training of all professionals
- New ways of accompanying
- Report on the attribution of AVS-i.

## **b) Group schooling**

Group facilities were created for students (in general 10 to 12) who cannot follow – full-time – ordinary schooling.

### ➤ **Primary level**

In elementary schools, the school inclusion classes (CLIS) created by Circular no. 91-304 (18/11/1991) regroup children with a mental, hearing, visual or motor disability who are not capable to follow – full-time – ordinary schooling and who can benefit from **inclusion into an ordinary school environment**. Students in the CLIS are dispensed adapted schooling and they share a number of activities with the other students. In 2005, the **majority of CLIS students were able to participate in individual periods of integration in another class in the school**. The number of children in CLIS is limited to 12 children maximum per class. In 2010, there were **4 194 CLIS**.

There are different types of CLIS:

- CLIS 1: school integration classes for children with a mental disability,
- CLIS 2: school integration classes for children with a hearing disability
- CLIS 3: school integration classes for children with a visual disability,
- CLIS 4: school integration classes for children with a motor disability.

- There are also CLIS for children with developmental disorders as autists

*In 2005–2006, at the primary level, 64,994 out of 104,824 students were following full-time or part-time individual schooling, while 39,830 were in school integration classes (CLIS).*

### ➤ **Secondary level**

At the secondary level, when the demands of individual schooling become excessively taxing, disabled students can join the integrated learning units (ULIS). This measure is designed for children aged 12 to 16, who although at the intermediate (lower secondary) level, cannot take advantage of ordinary intermediate schooling. With the assistance of a specialized teacher, they can however benefit from adapted schooling, harmonized with the objectives set by their personalized schooling project and including, whenever possible, shared time in class activities of their reference class, selected among the school's classes attended by children of the same age.

The ULIS was created by Circular no. 95-125 (17/05/1995) for the inclusion of children with mental disabilities or severe learning disorders. Circular no. 2000-009 (13/01/2000) extended the competence of ULIS to all disabilities or illnesses. Circular no. 2001-035 of February 21, 2001 on schooling of disabled students in secondary schools and the development of ULIS, replaces previous circulars and defines the framework for schooling of disabled students with serious cognitive function disorders in secondary schools, extending inclusion in the program to students with sensory or motor disabilities and advocating the development of ULIS at the secondary level, including vocational training schools.

At the beginning of the 2006 school year, 200 ULIS were created in intermediate and high schools. The implementation of these integration units was planned in such a manner as to cover the entire national territory and taking into consideration transportation constraints.

*In 2005–2006, nearly 46,700 students attended the secondary level (38,914 in individual schooling and 7785 in the ULIS group format.*

*In 2011, there were 297 ULIS*

*Some of them, who have important learning difficulties are integrated in SEGPA or EREA in the secondary level, which are not specialized classes.*

### **c) Distance learning**

*The National Centre for Distance Learning (CNED) is a public institution which proposes school and vocational curricula for all students who are not able to physically attend an educational establishment. The centre proposes school curricula adapted to part-time learning. Students can register at any time throughout the year. Home learning assistance by a CNED-employed teacher is part of the offer.*

In 1997, a "Handicap Platform" was created in the centre of Toulouse in order to provide adapted solutions for children and adolescents whose disability or illness prevents them from attending ordinary school facilities.

## **B. THE MEDICO-EDUCATIONAL SECTOR**

When school attendance in the ordinary school environment is not possible, disabled students (generally between the ages of 6 and 20) are oriented toward medico-social facilities which offer balanced schooling, educational and therapeutic care.

This sector, which is under the authority of the Ministry of Employment, Social Relations and Solidarity, plays an important role in the specialized education network. It was largely developed in the period from 1950 to 1975, in order to respond to the urgent demands of disabled children's parents' associations.

Thanks to the initiative of non-profit associations and to a lesser extent of public authorities (10 %), an impressive tool was created. The schooling dispensed within this framework remains under the control of the Ministry of Education.

The sector is characterized by two types of facilities, ruled by modified Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956):

#### Care facilities

Care facilities, known as medico-educational centers, are regulated by appendix XXIV of the above decree and they are intended for children, adolescents and sometimes young adults, for whom attendance of an ordinary school is impossible or counter-indicated by the special education committee, authorize to recommend their orientation.

These facilities are generally organized around a particular disability:

- Medico-educational institutes (IME), regulated by Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), modified by Decree no. 89-798 (27/10/1989), include the medico-pedagogic institutes (IMP) and the medico-professional institutes (IMPRO). They represent the vast majority of specialised educational facilities. They take care of children or adolescents with intellectual disabilities.

- Institutes for re-education (IR), regulated by appendix XXIV bis of Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), modified by Decree no. 89-798 (27/10/1989), take care of children or adolescents who evidence behavioural disorders. Decree no. 2005-11 of January 6, 2005, defines the conditions for the technical organisation and operation of therapeutic, educational and pedagogic institutes (ITEP). The text defines the targeted clientele of these institutes, who are to replace the institutes for re-education: children, adolescents or young adults who evidence psychological difficulties, whose expression, namely the intensity of behavioural disorders, seriously impedes their socialisation and access to training and/or apprenticeship. This text lays out the duties of these institutes in detail, their organisation and operation, as well as the composition of their multi-disciplinary teams. The institutes for re-education have until September 1, 2008, to comply with these regulations.

- Establishments which take care of children or adolescents with a motor disability, regulated by appendix XXIV bis of Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), modified by Decree no. 89-798 (27/10/1989), are divided into motor education institutes (IEM) and re-education institutes.

- Establishments which take care of poly-handicapped children or adolescents are regulated by appendix XXIV ter of Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), modified by Decree no. 89-798 (27/10/1989).

- Establishments which take care of children with a serious hearing disability, are regulated by appendix XXIV quater of Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), modified by Decree no. 88-423 (22/04/1988).

- Establishments which take care of children or adolescents with serious visual disabilities or suffering from blindness, are regulated by appendix XXIV quater of Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), modified by Decree no. 88-423 (22/04/1988).

The medico-social facilities currently care for 104,268 disabled youths. Of these, 70,249 attend school full-time, 1494 attend school part-time and 10,061 receive their schooling outside these institutions (data for 2006).

### **C. PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND HOME CARE SERVICES**

- Specialised education and home care services, regulated by each section of appendix XXIV of modified Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), are generally attached to the medico-educational establishments and target the same population as the latter. Their activities address the child's

entire environment, namely the family, and in particular the school environment, in such a manner as to guide the schooling experience.

- Medico-psycho-pedagogic centres (CMPP), regulated by Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), added to Decree no. 63-146 (18/02/1963), ensure diagnosis and treatment of children with neuro-psychic or behavioural disorders.

- Preventive medico-social action centres (CAMPS), regulated by appendix XXIV bis of Decree no. 56-284 (09/03/1956), added to Decree no. 76-389 (15/04/1976), handle testing, day therapy and re-education of disabled children from birth to the age of six.

#### **D. ROLE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

The law about inclusive education of 2005

- Had direct effects on schools psychologists work in schools. Before this law, they were more involved in assessments and the orientation of handicapped children towards specialized schools or classes.
- Now those children are more included in the ordinary school system and SP have to help teachers and partners to adapt themselves to the special needs of those pupils.
- For that, School Psychologists take part to numerous and regular meetings and see those children more often. They are part of a team with partners involved with the children and this is very efficient.
- School Psychologists help school team to develop inclusive education for all children at risk of exclusion or learning failure by
  - Actions of professional continuous development
  - Participations in school meetings on these subjects

**E. SCHOOLING OF THE NON FRENCH SPEAKING AND RECENTLY ARRIVED IN FRANCE CHILDREN OR ITINERANT CHILDREN** organized by the "CASNAV" (*Centres Académiques pour la Scolarisation des enfants allophones Nouvellement arrivés et des enfants issus de familles itinérantes et de Voyageurs*)

The CASNAV is a centre of resources and training:

- It facilitates the school inclusion of the pupils newcomers and young travelers by bringing an educational support for the teachers (linguistic and school evaluation, elaboration of individualized programs according to pupils' needs, allocation of specific means for teaching French language, following up the pupils)
- It participates in the initial and continuous training of the primary and secondary teachers welcoming these pupils.
- It assures training at the regional level and creates networks of exchange between the teachers of specific classes and of ordinary classes.
- It helps in the elaboration, in the mutualization and in the networking of the educational tools in the field of the learning of French as a second language.
- 

The CASNAV is a pole of expertise for the local responsables for the educational system:

- It capitalizes the information necessary for the elaboration and for the application of the academic for these pupils inclusion.
- It updates the data, the workforce and their geographic localization to put in evidence needs in terms of specific means and their distribution on the territory.
- It analyzes needs in training and in educational tools of the teachers of the specific devices and the common classes.
- It coordinates the welcome of groups and contributes to the evaluation of responses.

The CASNAV is a cooperation and mediation structure with the institutional and associative partners of the school:

- It informs the partners and cooperates with all the actors operating in the field of the school inclusion of these pupils (regional authorities, social workers, school psychologists and teachers, members of associations).

- According to the means it has and to academic priorities, it elaborates and organizes trainings in partnership with these various actors.
- **Schooling of the non French speaking and recently arrived recently in France** ([http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid25535/bulletin\\_officiel.html?cid\\_bo=61536](http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid25535/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=61536))

By detailing the field of intervention of the CASNAV and all the responsibilities which are entrusted to it, the circular of October 2nd, 2012 reaffirms the missions conferred by the state on this academic structure which appears henceforth as the authority of piloting susceptible to impulse and to coordinate all the actions of ground aiming at a common objective: the school integration of the non French speaking newcomers.

- They are from different parts of the world. Most of them are European
- They are issued from different social backgrounds
- They had, or had partially, or had not attended school before.
- They will stay in France for different times or definitively
- They come in France accompanying their parents for different reasons: professional, political (refugees), economic, personal or familial etc.
- Sometimes, teenagers come "alone"
- **Schooling of children of itinerant families** (*mostly fairground entertainers*)  
[http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid25535/bulletin\\_officiel.html?cid\\_bo=61529](http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid25535/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=61529)

The schooling of the children of itinerant families sharply progressed, in particular to the primary schools, in the last ten years. The law of July 5th, 2000 as well as the circular n°2002-101 of 25-04-2002 on the schooling of the children of itinerant families, create a new context which allows gradually to manage the questions of welcoming and schooling in schools with more efficiency and in partnership with municipal teams, henceforth responsible for the management of affording grounds for them.

However, a certain number of difficulties it persists. They are of cultural order or due to the itinerant way of life of these families, so the pupils are occasionally at school, while CASNAV works on long term learning projects. For the school institution, it is essential to follow-up all the young travelers with more regularity.

## 7.6. GERMANY Development of inclusion by Walter Kowalczyk

Since 1960, the situation of special education has been harmonised by several decisions adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, the KMK. Within the process of discussion about SEN, this Conference has drawn up a consequent direction of educational development (1988). The

system of special educational provision should be more flexible. It is no longer necessary to stipulate the place for special provision – the arguments are no longer 'institution orientated'. The way and the place of special support now depend upon categories with regard to personal conditions. In this case, the terminology of 'Needs for Special School' (*Sonderschulbedürftigkeit*) has changed to 'Special Educational Needs' (SEN) (*sonderpädagogischer Förderbedarf*).

Since the 1980s, disabled pupils have been increasingly included in general schools under school pilot projects, some of which have assumed the status of a standard type of schooling since 1990. Also, various forms of co-operation between general schools and special schools have emerged and approaches to inclusive teaching have been developed in educational science.

The recent development of special education towards SEN is a process which involves the whole network of education. It is a process with increasing and ever-changing factors, which demands a lot of all the involved parties and is more than anything a huge challenge. Of course this process is accompanied by obstacles, lack of certainty and fear. New situations and conditions, in relation to co-operation, heterogeneity, classroom management, changing demands according to assessment and diagnosis, and so on, require great care and therefore facilitation, motivation, advice and training for all involved. In the Federal Republic of Germany

the process of inclusion has developed with different intensity and with different basic goals; however, this process is an on-going one.

Recent years have seen a growing number of different assistance measures which have pursued the common aim of integration, not just as an end but as a means. Consequently, various methods are used to provide opportunities for disabled children to receive instruction together with non-disabled children (see also Special needs education within the education system).

A focus on institutions has given way to a focus on the needs of the individual. Formerly, the prevailing concept when making choices for a child's school career (i.e. the decision in favour of a mainstream school or a special school) was the need for education at a special school. This has since been superseded by the concept of *Sonderpädagogischer Förderbedarf* (special educational needs), meaning education, instruction, therapy and care requirements depending on an individual's physical disabilities and social disadvantages as far as the institutional setting allows. This development has been influenced by a new understanding of disabilities and educational needs, improved diagnostic techniques, more effective early detection and prevention as well as better overall conditions at mainstream schools (e.g. improved pupil-teacher ratios), more open approaches to instruction and education and, finally, a greater appreciation of the benefits to children attending a school close to their home. Offers of integration into mainstream schools for pupils with special educational needs are currently being extended in the *Länder*.

### **Teaching in inclusive settings with heterogeneous learning groups**

Within the increasing process of inclusion the conditions for learning have changed. Schools and teachers increasingly agree upon concepts of more open forms of teaching and learning. The curricula for schools explicitly grant a lot of freedom to teachers and encourage them to orientate towards the different individual development and special needs of students rather than formal teaching objectives.

Consequences and changes evident in methods are, for example:

- operation-orientated learning;
- learning in groups of different levels;
- teaching with differentiated objectives;
- avoiding of marks in connection with recognition of individual process in learning;
- curricula as a direction and educational freedom;
- general compulsory requirements in accordance with individual requirements;
- weekly schedules;
- training time for consistent practice;
- organising individual/group activities;
- learning by doing, learning with all the senses

In relation to curricula:

- adaptation of teaching/learning to the students' interests;
- school as an area of living;
- environment as a place of learning;
- requirements of spelling books, calligraphy and text layout as motivation and aid to reading;
- importance of curricula in relation to questions and ideas of the students

Concerning institutions:

- strengthening the principle of a classroom teacher – ascription of teachers based on the number of pupils;
- global demands cannot be fulfilled by teachers;
- creation of an organisational framework which encourages the teacher to make small steps towards change: 'reform from below';
- regional further education for teachers as a means of exchanging experiences and promoting joint planning;
- introductory level, transition from playing to learning;
- testing of remedial classes.

This list of subjects will serve as a guideline for the on-going topical discussions as it focuses on the main subjects concerned with the process of movement towards inclusion.

The Ministers agreed that children and adolescents with SEN could be admitted to mainstream schools, provided the latter were able to offer the necessary educational support, equipment and facilities. If this was not the case and satisfactory conditions could not be offered, disabled pupils would have to be taught in special (general or vocational) schools. In any case, there is a need for very close co-operation between school and parents, among teachers, between schools and other agencies concerned, e.g. public health agencies, medical services, youth welfare services.

## **MODELS OF GOOD PRACTICE**

<http://pathwaystoinclude.eu/knowledge-centre/country-specific-information/models-of-good-practice>



### **Family in Schools (FiSch)**

#### **Concept of Family Class Teaching in the region of Schleswig-Flensburg/ Germany.**

The project Family in Schools (FiSch) is a support offer for children at primary school age, who are at risk of developmental difficulties due to recurrent behavioral problems. The active participation of parents in the development of their children at school plays a central role. FiSch seeks to support parents to care about and to participate in the development of their children at school and how to support the development in a positive way. Students have the chance to build competences by determining common goals, giving continuous and systematic feedback and by parent's support. These competences facilitate their participation in class.

#### **Selection procedure**

The primary school introduces a child to the FiSCH Team, which will then debate the case and decide whether accept the child. There is no special assessment.

#### **FiSch Program**

Before measures are taken, parents will be informed by the form teacher about the project and will receive a project flyer. The form teacher invited the parents, the child and the FiSCH Team, which consists of a coach and a FiSch teacher, for a common meeting. Interests, motivation and availability of the participants will be discussed. A common decision will be taken on:

- if the child will participate in the FiSch project
- which goals the child will be trying to achieve in the FiSch class. The goals need to be formulated in a positive way and need to, include examples of concrete behavior in order to give a clear perspective for children and parents. The goals also need to be presented in single steps, which can be achieved by the child. Complex behavior goals will be divided in doable developmental steps.

At the start two or three goals will set, which will be monitored during the FiSch Program and modified if they prove to be too difficult. The lifetime of a FiSch Program is 12 weeks. Exceptionally it can be shortened or prolonged. A start of the program is possible at any time of the year. Thus new as well as experienced parents are part of the program. The child participates together with his parents once a week in a FiSch class. A FiSch class consists of max. 6 students, their parents, a coach and a teacher. The other days of the week the child participates in his usual school class. All teachers of the child are familiar with an evaluation form. The form needs to be completed after each lesson and the child has the right to read the form. The day before the FiSch class the teacher of the usual school class sends the collected data to the FiSch coach for further evaluation. Teachers of usual classes provide teaching material for the FiSch class. After 6 weeks there will be a meeting with form teacher, parents, child and FiSch team celebrating „half term“. The participants share their point of view about the development of the program and the achievement of goals and focus on the contribution of each participant to success.

After 12 weeks there is a final and transitional meeting in the usual school of the child with the same participants in order to plan further steps. If needed the usual form teacher will continue to fill in the evaluation form evaluated by the FiSch team. A pre-condition for this continuation is a binding agreement to talk about the evaluation results on a weekly basis among the usual school, the parents and the child in a positive acknowledging way.

#### **Schedule of a FiSch Day**

1. Lesson reflection: The parent and the coach meet (ca. 25 Min). During this time students are taught by the FiSch teacher. The first aim is to explain the parents the schedule of a FiSch day. All parents receive the „FiSch-Maps“, which contain the minutes of the meeting “setting the goals” as well as all evaluation forms of students.

Parents shortly summarize how last week was. Then parents tell about their aims for the next two hours and talk among themselves, eventually with support of the coach, how they can support their children. .

The shared time of parents and children starts with a ritual. Then parents talk with their children about the results of last week and make sure that the child knows the goals. Afterwards the goals are named again and the achieved goals of children are presented, eventually with support of parents.

If a child has achieved all set goals, all participants applause.

2. and 3. Hour is teaching lesson

During lessons students work on the brought material from their usual school. The parents accompany their child if need or sit in sight in a room next door. They are supported by a coach.

4. hour is an evaluation round

The evaluation starts with an interview of the children. Each child is interviewed by parents of another child about his behaviour in regard to the set goals and about helpful support of parents. Parents present the notes taken of the interview. The parents, students and the FiSch teacher evaluate the day, whereby the teacher's evaluation is relevant for the notes. The children are asked about what has helped them to achieve the goals. Particularly good results are acknowledged by hand clapping.

### **TASKS OF PARTICIPANTS**

All participants take part in the preparatory meeting, in the half term meeting and in the final meeting.

#### **Tasks of the child**

The child takes part in the goal setting and tries in each lesson to achieve the goals. During the FiSch day the child reflects about how far the goals are achieved and what has helped to achieve them.

The child has the responsibility for the map with goals and evaluation forms.

#### **Tasks of the parents**

The parents take part in the common formulation of goals during the preparatory meeting. They accompany their child to school during the FiSch day. There they participate in the parent's round. During lessons they support their child to achieve the goals. Parents support each other by sharing their experience and success in helping their children. In the final round they interview one student following a questionnaire and report about this talk. The parents tell in which way their own child has achieved the set goals during the past lesson.

The parents are responsible for the behavior of their child during the FiSch day.

#### **Tasks of the coach**

Coach and FiSch-teacher evaluate together the notes. The coach takes the lead of the parent's round during the first meeting and in the final meeting. He/she accompanies the parents as a person of reference during lessons and moderates if necessary the conversation among parents. He/she is counseling parents in regard to the support of their children and enriches their range of responses.

Coaching parents concerns five levels:

- naming actual behavior
- definition of the situation
- making actions concret
- moderate with a focus on goals
- acknowledge positive behavior of the child

#### **Tasks of the FiSch-teacher**

Coach and FiSch-teacher evaluate together the notes.

The FiSch-teacher is responsible for the organisation of lessons including the ritual at the start as well as for professional teaching aspects. He/she is responsible for the evaluation of goals for each student during a FiSch day. The FiSch teacher is contact person for the usual school.

#### **Tasks of the usual school**

The form teacher of the usual school provides material for the FiSch day. All teachers of the child fill in their evaluation form, which is sent by the form teacher to the FiSch team one day before.

### **Quality Standards**

Pre-condition for the work of a coach is a training in the area of systemic outcome oriented pedagogy. This is also wished for the teacher. Furtheron there is a regular sharing among the FiSch team in working groups and supervision groups. It is highly appreciated if FiSch teams participate in job shadowing activities among FiSch teams.

This concept is a binding foundation for applying "Family in Schools" in the area of Schleswig/Flensburg.

### **Scientific Monitoring**

In the region Schleswig-Flensburg the project is monitored scientifically by the University of Flensburg. This includes in-process as well as evaluative aspects.

### **Contact persons**

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**The Fläming School Berlin** was the first primary school in Germany to start inclusive education in 1975

<http://www.deutscher-verein.de/03-events/2010/gruppe4/pdf/dokumentation-f-432-10-inklusive-bildung-in-kitas-und-schulen-2013-moeglichkeiten-zur-verbesserten-teilhabe-behinderter-kinder/F%20432-10%20Vortrag%20Fred%20Ziebarth.pdf#>

<http://www.vds-in-berlin.de/Heft%202010/Beitrag%20inklusive%20P%C3%A4dagogik.pdf>

**The "Sophie-Scholl-Schule"** [www.sophie-scholl-schule-giessen.de](http://www.sophie-scholl-schule-giessen.de), [wikis.zum.de/vielfalt-lernen/Sophie-Scholl-Schule\\_in\\_Gießen](http://wikis.zum.de/vielfalt-lernen/Sophie-Scholl-Schule_in_Gießen)

The "Sophie-Scholl-Schule" in Gießen, Germany is a private primary and secondary school. It is a good example for a successful process of transformation of a former special school for intellectually disabled children into an ordinary school with an inclusive profile. The school is run by "Lebenshilfe Gießen", a parents association and service provider in the district of Gießen (Hessia). Following the philosophy of a "school for all", the school welcomes all children, disability is no criteria for denial of access. The school started on a small scale in 1998, now 270 pupils visit the school. Classes have no more than 22 students, up to 5 of them are pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The teaching concept is based on differentiation and individually adapted curricula. For pupils with SEN a specific individual support plan is provided, which is the basis for their yearly reports. The school offers afternoon activities where all children can participate. Children can do their homework together. There is a practice of team-teaching including teachers with qualifications in special education. In addition the teaching team and the students are supported by 'integration assistants' paid by local government. The "Sophie-Scholl-Schule" is well interlinked with the local community, and participates in many public events.

Very obviously the pedagogical concept, the educational results of all pupils and the new barrier free school building make the school attractive. In 2010 there were three times for applicants than available places in the starting form.

**Inclusion of Students with visual impairment at Regular schools (ISaR )** [www.isar-international.com](http://www.isar-international.com)

ISaR is a large database and resource centre in the field of inclusive education and rehabilitation of children and young people with visual impairment. It was originally only in German and had a German focus, since 2009 it is conceptualized as an international data-base. ISaR also has the possibility to function as a virtual workspace, i.e. a pedagogical laboratory online. It supports all persons involved in inclusion of children and young people with visual impairments. The ISaR project was initiated by the department of Rehabilitation and Education of visual impairment at the Technical University Dortmund, Germany.

The need for a centralized 'resource centre' in the form of a database became evident as more and more children and young people with visual impairments in Germany were being integrated into the regular school system and the decentralization of the educational system made spreading the knowledge and know-how outside the special school system crucial. Counseling and support for children with visual impairments in regular schools and in special schools require special knowledge and raise many questions and challenges. On the other hand, many problems have already been solved by teachers, parents and other people involved in practice of inclusive education, many good learning materials have been developed, methods tested, organizational forms established etc. The data base in combination with a counseling service wants to make use of this knowledge and provide individualized support for teachers and ordinary schools that practice inclusive education of pupils with visual impairments.

#### More info

Deutscher Bildungsserver [www.bildungsserver.de](http://www.bildungsserver.de) This Website contains information on the tradition, theory and practice of special education in Germany  
 German Disability Council [www.vdk.de](http://www.vdk.de) National Action Concept for Inclusive Education  
 Sozialverband Deutschland- Barometer of Inclusive Education in Germany  
[www.sovd.de/fileadmin/downloads/pdf/positionspapiere/SoVDBildungsbarometer\\_Inklusion.pdf](http://www.sovd.de/fileadmin/downloads/pdf/positionspapiere/SoVDBildungsbarometer_Inklusion.pdf)  
 Index for inclusion- German Versions [www.montag-stiftungen.com](http://www.montag-stiftungen.com)  
 Teaching Materials for inclusive education (Materialien der Aktion Mensch) for teachers and for students [www.respect.de](http://www.respect.de)  
 Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Gemeinsam Leben- Gemeinsam Lernen [www.gemeinsamleben-gemeinsamlernen.de](http://www.gemeinsamleben-gemeinsamlernen.de) This is the umbrella organization of German parents organizations for inclusive education  
 Bündnis für Chancengerechtigkeit – Bildungslandschaften <http://www.buendnisse-fuer-chancengerechtigkeit.de/>  
 Homepage Prof. Dr. Wocken <http://www.hans-wocken.de/>  
 Position Paper School Psychological Service NRW on inclusive education  
[http://www.duesseldorf.de/schulpsychologie/pdf/2011\\_inklusion\\_ak\\_schulpsychologie.pdf](http://www.duesseldorf.de/schulpsychologie/pdf/2011_inklusion_ak_schulpsychologie.pdf)

#### 7.7. LITHUANIA Inclusive education in Lithuania by Prof. Ala Petrulyte

In 1993 the Lithuanian Ministry of Education released the first guide enabling inclusive education. Inclusive education ensures human (child) rights and equal opportunities through e.g. adapted curricula, assistance of teachers, psychologists and specialists; specifically organized physical environment and learning material. Psychologists' work with children, their families and school staff is described in LR Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministro įsakymas Valstybės žinios, 2007-11-22, Nr. 120-4907, <http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?1322685527> The

main problems of inclusive education in Lithuania is that there is only few funding for special education.

Special education in Lithuania presents in several forms:

1. *Education in special institutions* or at home (non-integrated, segregated education);
- 1 *Integrated education by general location area* (children with disabilities are educated in the same school, but in separate rooms);
- 2 *Social integration* ( *healthy and disabled children share non-academic activities over a certain period of time*);
- 3 *Functional integration* (all children are learning together at school, but the program varies as well as the access to specialists; the provision of special measures is minimal);
- 4 *Inclusive education* (all children are learning together at school: sufficient educational expertise, facilities, offices and specialist advisors stay in school, administrative support, positive teachers and parents attitudes).

#### EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**National Centre for Special Needs Education and Psychology (SPPC** <http://www.sppc.lt/index.php?189604474>) is the responsible institution under the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science for developing the system of special pedagogical and psychological support in Lithuania. SPPC is a state budget educational institution (1996, April 25) registered in the State Enterprise Centre of Registers of Vilnius branch.

**Main functions of the Centre are:**

- to coordinate the first and the second level of the special pedagogical and psychological support system;
- to organise training programs for specialists of the municipal pedagogical psychological services;
- to provide advice on assessment or supervision on difficult or problematic cases to psychologists, speech therapists and special teachers working in the municipal services;
- to construct or adapt psychological and achievement tests and make recommendations for their use in the municipal pedagogical psychological services;
- to develop and redact the legislation acts that follow the implementation of the Law on Special Education;
- to cooperate with municipal pedagogical psychological services;
- to provide methodical support for the municipal pedagogical psychological services.

**SPPC main areas of activity:**

- develop strategies of specific educational, psychological and social pedagogical assistance;
- develop special teaching, psychological, educational and social assistance system;
- install supply of special education framework in the country.

**SPPC's EU PROJECTS**

**2008 - 2012**

- Re-integrating drop-outs from school  
[http://www.sppc.lt/get\\_file.php?file=bG1Wd3plRFRhSjdJbkd0bXlhdVgwMm5VbKp1YXozS3JabWVVeHN2Vm1OTnNsNXZOY3RkanBKeG1iS3FXcUdMVGfjZktacG5QbnF1V1o4ZIN5dHVjeUdTaNWzmmR4MmiReXA5b3E4cWxsYzl3azU2cm1kT2VwMlNibUplSzA1aVZsYU54dzNMS2xacWJvNWljbmF0cWttJTJGYnk1NOV6SjJqYVoyYTFiZVZ5Y3labilIMkZRbmNsalk1eHJtbSUyQmVabXJlY05PZW01U2VhcHRwcXBuUnIkYVYxWm1ybmrOcTEyaGZuWnRxcHBhYms1NW9uOGclM0Q=](http://www.sppc.lt/get_file.php?file=bG1Wd3plRFRhSjdJbkd0bXlhdVgwMm5VbKp1YXozS3JabWVVeHN2Vm1OTnNsNXZOY3RkanBKeG1iS3FXcUdMVGfjZktacG5QbnF1V1o4ZIN5dHVjeUdTaNWzmmR4MmiReXA5b3E4cWxsYzl3azU2cm1kT2VwMlNibUplSzA1aVZsYU54dzNMS2xacWJvNWljbmF0cWttJTJGYnk1NOV6SjJqYVoyYTFiZVZ5Y3labilIMkZRbmNsalk1eHJtbSUyQmVabXJlY05PZW01U2VhcHRwcXBuUnIkYVYxWm1ybmrOcTEyaGZuWnRxcHBhYms1NW9uOGclM0Q=)
- Efficiency of pupil's support and quality development
- Development of learning forms in special needs education

**2012 - 2014**

- Creating a safe school environment
- Efficiency of pupil's support and quality development, Phase II
- Special preparation of teaching aids, Phase II
- Development of learning forms in special needs education, Phase II

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## 7.8. THE NETHERLANDS National Report of the Netherlands. Dutch Association of Psychologists - NIP by Margreet Versteeg.

Inclusion and the Dutch educational system.

Foreword.

The Dutch educational system is subjected to change. This change has also influence on the inclusiveness of the educational system. A part of this national report will therefore describe the change to “Education that fits” – passend onderwijs -. The expectation is that “Education that fits” will make the system more inclusive and that makes the development important for this national report about inclusiveness.

Since 2004 preparations have been made to change the educational system of primary, secondary, vocational and special education into “Education that fits” - passend onderwijs - in the Netherlands. In October 2012 the legislation is accepted in the parliament and at that moment the legislative base and the frame for “Education that fits” is determined. The implementation of “Education that fits” started. In August 2014 “Education that fits” has to be implemented and has to function in the schools (De Werkmaatschappij, 2013).

The legislation “Education that fits” is not a detailed plan, but a framework, that is the basis for organizing education in a region for children with and without special needs. The region has to make a plan, which has to be implemented by the educational organizations of the region. “Education that fits” will not be the same in all the regions.

The implementation and the development of “Education that fits” will take a long time.

The government monitors the process of implementation and ordered to investigate every 6 months the progress of the implementation. The results of these investigations are used to correct the process of implementation and to complete the legislations of “Education that fits”.

This national report doesn't give the image of an educational system, which is readily available. This report partial describes the educational system of this moment, May 2013, the information of the legislation of “Education that fits” and the process to come to “Education that fits”. All these descriptions focus on the relation between the educational system and the inclusiveness of the system. It is a mixture of present and future.

Introduction.

In this national report is described in what way inclusion is part of the Dutch educational system and in what way psychologists in the educational system can have a role in this system.

Inclusive education is a basic principle of the Dutch educational system of primary, secondary, vocational and higher education, but there is no overall inclusive education for students with special educational needs.

In section 1 is described the Dutch educational system at this moment, May 2013. For the description parts are used from the site of The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012) and the book Inclusive Education in the Netherlands (Thijs, Leeuwen & Zandbergen, 2009).

In what way inclusion is part of the present educational system is described in section 2. The Dutch government is stimulating inclusive education, but what does counteract inclusion, section 3.

The legislation of “Education that fits” will have influence on inclusion in education. Section 4. describes “Education that fits”, the implementation “Education that fits” and the increase of inclusion by this legislation.

In inclusive education the personnel of a school gets other tasks and roles. The role of the psychologist, section 5, is changing to. Finally in section 6 is described what can be the outcomes for inclusive Dutch education in the future.

1. The Dutch educational system (Thijs, Leeuwen & Zandbergen, 2009).

*Compulsory Education Act.*

The obligation to attend school is laid down in the Compulsory Education Act 1969. Every child must attend school full time from the first school day of the month following its fifth birthday; in fact, however, nearly all children attend school from the age of four. Children must attend school full time for 12 full school years and, in any event, until the end of the school year in which they turn 16. Those who have a practical training contract in a particular sector of employment attend classes one day a week and work the rest of the week. Since August 2007, the obligation to continue education in order to obtain a basic qualification is applicable to youngsters under the age of 18, who have finished compulsory education but don't have yet obtained a basic qualification certificate. They have to achieve at least a certificate of pre-university education, general secondary education or vocational education level 2.

#### *Freedom of education.*

One of the key features of the Dutch education system, guaranteed under article 23 of the Constitution, is freedom of education. This refers to the freedom to found schools (freedom of establishment), to organize the teaching in schools (freedom of organization of teaching) and to determine the principles on which they are based (freedom of conviction). People have the right to found schools and to provide teaching based on religious, ideological or educational beliefs. As a result there are both public and private schools in the Netherlands.

#### *Public schools.*

The Dutch educational system includes public and denominational schools. There is also a small number of private schools without finance from the government. Public schools are open to all children, no matter what the denomination or philosophy on life may be. Public schools do not work on the basis of a denomination or philosophy on life. These schools are normally run by consortiums, foundations or by a legal person. The city council has the duty to initiate the founding of enough public schools, but is not directly involved in administering the public schools. About one third of all children attend public schools.

#### *Private, denominational schools.*

Denominational schools are run as an association, of which parents can become a member, or as a foundation. There are many different kinds of denominational schools. Most of these schools are Roman Catholic or Protestant. In addition, there are Jewish, Islamic, Hindu, humanistic schools and Waldorf schools based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. There are also schools, which organize their education according to certain pedagogical principles, such as Montessori, Jenaplan, Dalton and Freinet schools. These schools can be either public or denominational schools. There is also non-denominational private education without a special philosophy on life.

About two thirds of all children attend denominational schools.

#### *Primary education.*

Primary education in the Netherlands comprises mainstream primary education, special primary education – sbao - and special education, primary and secondary – (v)so. The primary education program lasts eight years, from the age of four until the age of twelve. Compulsory education starts at the age of five, but children can attend primary school from the age of four. Children with learning and behavioral difficulties and children with moderate learning difficulties attend a special primary school (sbao). These schools fall under the primary education legislation.

In school year 2011-2012 1.517.476 pupils attended a primary school and 51.558 pupils special primary schools. In the school year 2011-2012 the number of primary schools is 6.808 and of special primary schools is 304 (CBS, 2013).

#### *Secondary education.*

On average children are 12 years of age, when they enter secondary education.

Secondary education encompasses schools providing elementary vocational training – praktijk onderwijs, pro -, pre-vocational secondary education – voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs, vmbo -, general secondary education – hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs, havo – and pre-university education – voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs, vwo -.

Elementary vocational training is education focused on leading to a useful way of spending days, to work or to education. The students develop competences for citizenship, living and free

time.

Pre-vocational secondary education is divided into four learning pathways: the basic vocational program – de basis beroepsgerichte leerweg, BL-, the middle-management vocational program – de kader beroepsgerichte leerweg, KL-, the combined theoretical and vocational program – de gemengde leerweg, GL-, and the theoretical program – de theoretische leerweg, TL-.

Pre-vocational secondary education students can receive additional support through learning support programs – lwoo -. After pre-vocational secondary education, at an average age of 16, students may

transfer to vocational education – middelbaar beroepsonderwijs, mbo -.

Those who have completed the theoretical program can also choose to transfer to general secondary education. General secondary education is intended as preparation for professional higher education- hoger beroeps onderwijs, hbo -.

Pre-university education is intended to prepare students for academic higher education – wetenschappelijk onderwijs, wo - (Min.OCW, 2012).

In 2011-2012 948.949 students attended a secondary school. In the school year 2011-2012 the number of secondary schools was 659 (CBS, 2013).

#### *Vocational education (mbo).*

The adult and vocational education is incorporated in regional training centers – regionale opleidings centra, ROC's -. Regional training centers comprise a full-time vocational program (BOL) and a block or day release program (BBL). There are four qualification levels: assistant worker (level 1), basic vocational training (level 2), professional training (level 3) and middle management and specialized training (level 4). The programs last a maximum of 4 years.

#### *Special education: primary and secondary special schools.*

In 2003 are as a result of the introduction of the law regional expertise centers – regionale expertise centra, rec's - set up consortiums of special schools, primary and secondary, within a district.

These consortiums are divided into four clusters:

- cluster 1: education for the visually handicapped.
- cluster 2: education for pupils with hearing impediments, communicative handicaps.
- cluster 3: education for physically, mentally and multi-handicapped pupils, and for chronically sick children.
- cluster 4: education for children with behavioral disorders, with psychiatric dysfunctions and pupils in pedagogical institutes.

Within secondary special schools, pupils can attend the curriculum for elementary vocational training, pre-vocational secondary education, general secondary education or pre-university education.

In 2003 the financing mechanism, funding special schools on the basis of the number of children placed, was changed in favor of linking financing of special services to the student involved, regardless of the type of schooling. If a student meets the criteria for this so-called pupil-specific funding - leerlinggebonden financiering -, parents and pupils can choose a school, special or mainstream. They can take part in decision making on the best way to use the funds in order to meet the student's special needs. Peripatetic supervision entails the provision of extra assistance to enable pupils with special educational needs to attend a mainstream school. Teachers from special schools provide this assistance. The student can also use pupil-specific funding in vocational education, the regional training centers.

In the Netherlands, there is a growing continuum between separate education (special schools) and full inclusive schools. There are many mainstream schools with pupils with special educational needs in classes and mainstream schools with special classes within the school for children with special needs. Some mainstream schools specialize in a particular target group and some mainstream schools collaborate intensively with special schools.

In the school year 2011-2012 (CBS, 2013):

- 34.272 pupils attended a primary special school.
- 502 children attended a primary special school cluster 1.

- 6.864 children attended a primary special school cluster 2.
- 13.746 children attended a primary special school cluster 3.
- 13.160 children attended a primary special school cluster 4.

In the school year 2011-2012 (CBS, 2013):

- 35.865 students attended a secondary special school.
- 249 children attended a secondary special school cluster 1.
- 2.320 children attended a secondary special school cluster 2.
- 13.180 children attended a secondary special school cluster 3.
- 20.116 children attended a secondary special school cluster 4.

In 2010 (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2012):

- 105.800 children and parents had the possibility to choose a mainstream or special school, because the child meets the criteria of a pupil-specific funding.
- 36.800 children and parents choose a mainstream school with peripatetic supervision.

From school year 1998-1999 till 2011-2012 the number of students in special education increases from the number 41.056 to 70.137 (CBS, 2013). From 2006 till 2010 the number of students in a secondary special school cluster 3 and 4 increases very much. In this period in secondary special school cluster 3 the growth is 2800 students and in secondary special schools cluster 4 the growth is 5500 students (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2012).

The introduction of the law regional expertise centers, 2002, of the pupil-specific funding and of special primary education had the intention to integrate more pupils with special needs in mainstream schools, to diminish the number of pupils in special schools and to decrease the costs of special education (Bakker & De Vroedt, 2006). These purposes are not reached. The number of students in special schools increased and the costs a student in special education raised much more than in mainstream school (Min.OCW, 2012).

The implementation of "Education that fits" is again an attempt to achieve the purposes of 2002. In "Education that fits" the biggest changes will be in primary, secondary and special education. August 2014 the changes of the organization and the changes in the financing of education have to be ready. A wide description of "Education that fits" is given in paragraph 4.

#### *Higher education*

Higher education comprises professional higher education and academic higher education. These two types of education are provided by respectively hbo institutes and universities. There are 36 hbo institutes and 13 universities.

One institute is providing higher distance education, the Open University of the Netherlands.

In addition there are a number of approved private institutes and institutes for international education. The private institutes are including several theological colleges, the University for Humanist Studies, Nijenrode University etc.

For higher education is no act, like in primary and secondary education, that regulates the support for students with special educational needs. The legislation of higher education, the Adult and Vocational Education Act –WEB- and the Higher Education and Research Act –WHO- and the Act Equal Treatment give the possibility to get access and support in higher education.

In higher education are no special schools or universities.

Every higher vocational school and university has study-advisors, who support the students with information, accessibility, appliances, adjustments and special support. Expertise Centre Handicap and Study (2012) writes in her monitor 2010, that there are 60.000 students with special educational needs in higher education. Of these students 43% have a learning disorder dyslexia or dyscalculia.

## 2. Inclusion in the Dutch educational system.

In the position paper "European Psychologists support inclusive education" (NEPES, 2013) are mentioned in paragraph 2. main groups as at risks of discrimination and social exclusion. Initiatives to combat discrimination and exclusion in education are mentioned in the position paper paragraph 2.2.2. In this paragraph of the national report is described in what way the

Dutch educational system combats discrimination and social exclusion and promotes inclusive education.

*Inclusion by legislation and policy initiatives.*

*Access to education and enrolment.*

In the Netherlands, everyone has a right to education. The obligation to attend school is laid down in the Compulsory Education Act 1969. Each child must attend school full time from the first school day of the month following its fifth birthday. The participation in education of 5 to 14-year-olds in the Netherlands is 99 per cent. The participation in education of the 15 to 19-year-olds is 86 per cent. Compulsory education is free of charge. Youngsters under the age of 18 have the obligation to continue education in order to obtain a basic qualification, if they do not have obtained a basic qualification certificate in compulsory education (Thijs, Leeuwen & Zandbergen, 2009).

Education is seen as an important tool to combat poverty, social exclusion and marginalization.

*Early childhood intervention*

Early childhood education - Voor- en Vroegschoolse Educatie, VVE -, detection of potential disadvantages among young children and increased enrolment in pre-schools of children from underprivileged backgrounds, who are at risk of educational or language disadvantages, is an important priority area in educational policy in the Netherlands (Thijs e.a., 2009)

By offering early childhood education, language and/or educational disadvantages among children are addressed at an early stage.

The policy objective is for 100 per cent of the target group children to attend a minimum of four days of VVE per week by 2011. In 2007 50 percent of the target group children 2 and 3 year old attended VVE and in 2011 80 percent. In 2007 67 percent of the target group children 4 and 5 year old attended VVE and in 2011 73 percent (Beekhoven, Iepma & Kooiman, 2011).

*Results in education.*

International studies show that the overall scores of Dutch students are well (PISA, 2010, in Min.OCW, 2011c). Looking more specifically at the results of individual students the studies show, that in secondary school the results in Dutch language and arithmetic diminishes. The results in 2009 are less well than in 2003. The gifted talented students achieve less than students abroad.

Several policy initiatives are being taken to stretch pupils potential to the full. In primary and secondary schools the policy has to be, that the school is benefit focused working – opbrengst gericht werken -. Benefit focused working implies that the goals of learning are determined, information is collected, the progress of the student is registered and the progress is interpreted. School is systematically evaluating the benefits of the school and adapts the program or way of teaching if necessary. The students of schools, who are benefit focused working, have better results in reading, arithmetic and science (Min.OCW, 2011b, 2011c)

Other initiatives that enlarge the achievements are: importing the basic and the advanced standards - de referentiekaders – for language and arithmetic, higher requirements for a diploma in secondary education and enlarging the achievements of gifted, talented students.

Currently, several policy initiatives are being undertaken to develop rich learning environments, that stretch pupils' potential to the full, especially in the domains of literacy and numeracy in primary education (Min. OCW, 2011b, 2011c).

The development of community schools – brede scholen - is stimulated. These schools collaborate with other social services like the police, health and welfare services, and sports and cultural institutes in order to enhance pupils' opportunities for development.

*Social-cultural Inclusion.*

Overall, the enrolment of ethnic minority pupils in primary education is satisfactory. At the start of compulsory education at the age of 5, all children are enrolled in primary education. All pupils complete primary education, though, on average, their achievements in language and mathematics are lower than those of native Dutch pupils. Because of these lower accomplishments, more immigrant pupils enroll at lower levels of secondary education compared to native Dutch pupils. Pupils from non-Western origin more often enroll in a pre-vocational secondary education program and also qualify more often for learning support, than native Dutch pupils and non-Dutch pupils of Western origin (Thijs e.a., 2009).

*Early school-leavers.*

The aim of Dutch education policy is to prepare as many young people as possible for participation in a modern knowledge society. The award of basic qualifications is a major policy priority. The national

objective is to reduce the annual number of new early school-leavers by 50 per cent between 2002 and 2012, i.e., a reduction to a maximum of 35.000 new drop-outs by 2012. The policy of the new government, January 2013, is the new goal a maximum of 25.000 new school leavers in 2016 (Min.OCW, 2013a).

In secondary education there is a reduction of new early school leavers from school year 2005/2006 1,7% to 2011/2012 0,9%.

In vocational education there is a reduction of new early school leavers from school year 2005/2006 9,3% to 2009/2010 6,9%.

The number of students, who leave education without basic qualification - 18-25 year old - in 2005-2006 34.728 8,5% decreased to 29.796 6,9 % in 2011-2012 (Min.OCW, 2013a).

The registration of the early school leavers is done in a national registration system DUO. The decrease of early school leaving is a responsibility of the municipality.

#### *Financing.*

In primary and secondary education the schools are funded by a block grant funding system by the government. The schools are free how to spend the budget.

In primary education funding raises for the school, when in school a group of pupils is enrolled of which the parents have no more than pre-vocational secondary training or one parent with only primary education and one parent with no more than pre-vocational secondary training.

In pre-vocational secondary education funding raises for the school with students, who have learning deficits, the additional learning support.

Schools have to spend the funding within criteria of the government (Thijs e.a., 2009). But schools can choose to make the school more inclusive with all these funds. The school can finance with the additional funding additional staff to support children, make classes with less students or offer special programs.

#### *Pupil-specific funding.*

In 2003 the law of the Expertise Centers came in effect and at that moment a new finance mechanism for pupils with special educational needs was introduced, the pupil-specific funding system. If a student meets the criteria for this so-called pupil-specific funding, parents and pupils can choose a school, special or mainstream, and take part in decision making on the best way to use the funds in order to meet the student's special needs.

The number of pupils using a pupil-specific funding in a mainstream school increased enormously. From the year 2006 to 2010 their number increased with 8500 pupils in mainstream schools. In 2010 the number is stabilized (Min.OCW, 2011a).

In the year 2010 (Min.OCW, 2011a):

- The number of pupils with a pupil-specific funding in a mainstream primary school is 17.800.
- The number of pupils with a pupil-specific funding in a mainstream special primary school is 3100.
- The number of students with a pupil-specific funding in a mainstream secondary school is 15.800.
- The number of students with a pupil-specific funding in a mainstream vocational school is 6.000.

#### *Inclusion in school and class.*

##### *Access.*

The policy of access of a school can be a preventive action. The key feature of the Dutch Educational System is the freedom of education. This is the reason, why not every school has the same program, the same way of organizing the teaching or the same bases of educational ideas for teaching. Pupils can profit better from the one school system than the other.

The most important way to be inclusive in a school is to prevent pupils to develop special educational needs or the special educational needs get more or more severe.

Prevention in school is possible for example by flexible programs, good class management, using group educational plans and using the protocols reading. The teacher makes the inclusion in the class and the school.

#### *The Program.*

In primary and secondary education the common educational content is prescribed in a set of core objectives by the government. They form the learning targets. School themselves can choose which pedagogical approach they use and which materials.

School can develop an own educational program.

The school can add to the educational program a training for social skills or for reducing negative achievement anxiety, but also more vocational or language lessons or a flexible program for early education leavers. In the program the school can use protocols for literacy and numeracy to stimulate and to follow the achievements of the pupils. By using these protocols the school can prevent learning deficits.

The access is more positive, when the program and the organization of teaching fit the pupil.

When a school has a big bandwidth in dealing with diversity more pupils and students, also children with a pupil-specific funding, can get education in a mainstream school (Thijs e.a., 2009).

#### *Classroom management.*

Positive classroom management can be very preventive for the development of special educational needs. The teacher gives an instruction, which adds to the differences of the pupils.

He gives more exercise for

the weaker pupils. Or he gives more time for exercising. 50% of primary and 40% secondary education teachers adapt on the differences of pupils (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2012).

A school can also use a classroom management system like the direct instruction model - het directe instructie model -, of which is proved that the achievements of the pupils rise. The use of the direct instruction model asks from the teacher to work in a planned way. He has to use group and individual educational plans (Leenders, Naafs & Oord, 2005).

#### *Parents.*

Parents have influence on learning achievement and on early school leaving. The school and the teacher can support the parents in a way the parents can give their child the positive social support it needs (Hill & Taylor, 2004). The school stimulates the parental social support with activities in the school. In primary education most of the schools have a policy for parental involvement (Amse, Wassink de Wit, 2008).

#### *Prevention of developing more or more severe special educational needs.*

Most of the measures mentioned in the paragraph about preventing the development of special educational needs, can also be used to prevent more needs or exacerbate the needs. But in schools there are also possibilities to support children, who have already educational needs that can increase or become more serious.

In primary schools the needs based working method – het handelingsgericht werken - is often used (Van Beukering & De Lange, 2009). This method gives a way to deal with educational, social and behavioral needs of pupils in the class. The internal support team of the school makes an individual education plan. Most of the time the teacher carries out the actions of the individual educational plan in the class.

When children with special educational needs are in school, it is important that school has a staff with specialists. This additional staff becomes possible by the additional funding for schools. These specialists can coach the teacher to give the educational support or support themselves the child. The specialist of the school can be member of the Special Needs Advisory Team.

The Special Needs Advisory Team – het Zorg Advies Team, ZAT - is a multi disciplinary team in primary, secondary or vocational schools. Member of this team can be: a school doctor, a school social worker, a community officer for obligatory education, a psychologist, the coordinator special educational needs and the principal of the school. The problems of the pupil or student are discussed in the team. The team gives advice to the workers in the school or one of the members of the team gives support to the child or parents. In primary education 74%, in secondary education 96% and in vocational education 98% of the schools have a Special Needs Advisory Team (NJI, 2011).

### 3. Negative influences on inclusion in schools.

#### *Inclusion is troubled in different ways.*

The education inspectorate (2010) wants to schools, that pupils achieve at a higher level in primary education or that they get better diplomas in secondary education. This can be a reason not to admit children with special educational needs in a school, because they can be a risk for the mean achievements of the school and for the increase of the support, more work. The introduction of the basic and the advanced standards - de referentiekaders - and the European Investigations of the achievement of a national educational system can have a same influence.

The same problem occurs with the early school leavers. When a school has too much early school leavers, the evaluation by the education inspectorate of the school organization will be negative at this point. Some schools will not admit students, who do not attend school regularly (Thijs e.a., 2009). The evaluation of the education inspectorate, the vertical accountability of the functioning of a school, can trouble inclusion. Schools have the opinion that students with special educational needs can influence the assessment negative and give them much more work. Noordegraaf and De Wit (2011, in Bekkers, Noordegraaf, Waslander & De Wit, 2011) call this way of handling of schools creaming or cherry picking. They conclude that these are the perverse effects of strategic way of acting by schools.

Schools have to publish on the Internet sites Windows – Vensters – of primary education and Windows of accountability - Vensters van Verantwoording - of secondary education, what is the composition of the school population, what kind of diplomas students achieve etc. This is the horizontal accountability. In these publications schools want to give a positive picture of their organization. This means for schools, that they sometimes do not admit children, who can have a negative influence on the organization of the school and the information of school, that has to be published (Thijs e.a., 2009). This is also a way of cherry picking.

A pupil access in a special primary school leads to no more funding for the consortium of primary schools. It is beneficial for mainstream schools to relegate the pupil to a special school, because access to a special school leads to more funding. The way of funding special schools in which more learners leads to more funding leads to less inclusion. This is one of the reasons why the number of pupils in special schools increases and not the number of pupils in special primary schools (Thijs e.a., 2009).

In the Dutch educational system the number of children with special educational needs and the number of pupils in special schools is increasing. It is important to stabilize or reduce the number of children in special schools. The factor of evaluation and the way of financing have to be changed. The evaluation and the financing have to facilitate the process of inclusion and not frustrate this process (Noordegraaf & De Wit 2011, in Bekkers e.a. 2011).

### 4. “Education that fits”- Passend Onderwijs.

At this moment May 2013 the Dutch educational system has one exception on the inclusive line of the whole educational system: pupils with special educational needs. A large number of these pupils have to go to special schools to get education. This exception makes, that children have been fallen between two stools, not all children get the education and the support they need, the parents have no choice in the education they want for their child, the quality of education and the competences of a number of teachers are insufficient and the most expensive facilities are used intensively (Sectororganisaties, 2013). These problems are the motive to change the educational system in “Education that fits”.

#### *The legislation.*

The law “Education that fits” has a function for children and young people up to the age of 23 year. This legislation changes primary education, secondary education, vocational education and special education.

Under this policy, every school board has the responsibility to provide “Education that fits” for every pupil that enrolls regardless of his specific educational needs and the kind of support. By collaborating with other school administrations at a regional level, schools are required to arrange educational provisions in such a way, that every child can be educated taking into account their special educational needs. Schools are free to decide how arrangements are offered. However in education the right “parity of treatment of students with a handicap or

chronic disease” has to be produced by the school administration (Min.VWS, 2009).

The law “Education that fits” is implemented at the same time as three other laws: the law Youth Care – Jeugdwet- is implemented 2016, the change in the law Societal Support – Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning, WMO- is implemented 2014 and the law Work According to Ability – Wet Werken naar Vermogen – is implemented 2013. All these laws ask from the workers in education, youth care and health care, that they have an integral approach for young people and cooperate. Education, youth care and health care have to be offered to young people in their environment. The municipality is responsible for organizing education, youth care and health care for young people with special needs.

The law “Education that fits” is not a totally worked out regulation. It is a frame of organizational and financial requirements and purposes. The administrations of the schools have to fulfill these requirements and purposes. The purpose is to develop and to implement “Education that fits” bottom up (ECPO, 2011). Regions are formed in primary and secondary education. These regions have to make the policy for “Education that fits” of the region.

#### *The purpose of “Education that fits”.*

“Education that fits” has the ambition to offer every child the education, which is suitable for the child.

The purpose of the policy of the implementation of “Education that fits” is: the support for children with special needs is initiated from an one door principle, the quality from special support improves, the

complex regulations get more simple and the increase of the number of pupils in special education diminishes (ECPO, 2009b).

This educational system has the objectives: more young persons have a basic qualification, more young persons have an income by work and more young persons are participating actively in the society on the long term. To attain this ambition it is necessary to have less bureaucracy, no necessity to make diagnoses for children, more competent teachers, more consistency between education, youth health care and labor support (Sectororganisaties, 2013).

#### *Organization of “Education that fits”.*

The implementation of “Education that fits” is focused on three basics: forming the consortiums “Education that fits”, the innovation develops bottom up and the introduction of block financing for

special support in education with responsibility for distribution and spending by the consortium “Education that fits” (ECPO 2009).

In primary education and secondary education respectively 76 and 74 new regions are formed. The regions of primary and secondary education are not the same. The regional expertise centers of special education cluster 3 and 4 are liquidated and are part of the consortium primary or secondary education. Mainstream primary schools, primary special schools, special schools and the regional expertise centers cluster 3 and 4 in a region have to collaborate in a consortium. Mainstream secondary schools, secondary special schools and the regional expertise centers cluster 3 and 4 in a region have also to collaborate in a consortium “Education that fits” (Min.OCW.2013b).

In Vocational Education no regions are formed, because the regional training centers are very big educational organizations. The regional training centers have to be equipped to implement “Education that fits” by the own organization.

Regional expertise centers of special education cluster 1 and 2 become nationwide organizations (Min.OCW.2013b).

The consortiums primary education and secondary education have to determine a support plan – ondersteuningsplan - for the region primary education or secondary education. In the support plan is described the basic support every school from the consortium has to offer to pupils or students. The extra education support a school wants to offer is described in the school support plan – schoolondersteuningsplan - (Sectororganisaties, 2013).

In the support plan of the consortium is also described the procedure and criterions access to the special primary education and the primary and secondary special schools of the consortium “Education that fits” and the division and spending of the finances of the consortium. The content of the support plan of the consortium depends of the accords the school administrations of the consortiums make. Schools and school administrations have influence on the support

plan. Therefore the plan will be not the same in every region. Every consortium has a support plan board, a representation of parents and personnel of the region, who has to consent the support plan. The municipalities of a region have the responsibility to take care for working together “Education that fits”, youth care, youth health and labor support. The municipality has to consent the support plan also (Sectororganisaties, 2013).

When parents do not agree with a decision of the consortium regarding their child, they have the possibility to complain to the Dissension Commission – geschillencommissie - (Min.OCW.2013c). Or they can involve the Education Advisor – onderwijsconsulent – for support (Sectororganisaties, 2013).

February 2013 most regions have established a consortium and the board of the consortium. The draft support plan of 5% of the consortiums secondary education and 0% of the consortiums primary education are ready (Min.OCW, 2013b). The implementation of “Education that fits” started but there are many steps to go.

### *Financing*

May 2013 education, special support and special schools are financed on the base of the pupil-specific funding system, learning support programs and practical training programs. The financing depends of the number of pupils and students, who use this additional support. In “Education that fits” block financing is introduced (ECPO, 2009).

All the special funds of the mainstream schools and the funds of the special schools cluster 3 and 4 are the funding of the consortium primary education or secondary education of a region. The government makes on this fund a saving. The consortium is liable for the distribution and the spending of the fund. The way of distribution and spending is regulated in the support plan of the consortiums. The support plan of the consortium of regions can be different, so the distribution and the spending of the funds to (Infinite Financieel, 2012a).

The consortium has to finance preventive support, this is basic support, and extra education support: extra education support of a mainstream school, special primary education, amidst provisions of the consortium – tussenvoorzieningen van het samenwerkingsverband - and special education. The extra education support consists of different arrangements. Every consortium can qualify what arrangement is extra education support and what funding they want to spend for it (Infinite Financieel, 2012b).

This means, that a child with special needs in one region can get different support than in the other. The consortium can spend a different funding for same extra education support in one region than the other.

The law “Education that fits” has the purpose to streamline the provisions for special needs education. May 2013 primary education, secondary education and special education each have their own funding and procedures. In the new educational system probably many consortiums will have their own funding and procedures.

February 2013 in 9 % of the consortiums primary education and 5 % of the consortiums secondary education is determined in what way the funds will be distributed and spend (Min.OCW.2013b).

### *Evaluating and monitoring the implementation of “Education that fits”.*

The preparations for “Education that fits” started in 2004. From 2004 till 2012, the acceptance of the law “Education that fits”, old consortiums primary education, consortiums secondary education and schools have done pilot studies, the experiments and the field initiatives. These pioneers – de koplopers - got funds from the government to do try outs “Education that fits”. These pioneers had to make available information from the pilot for monitoring “Education that fits” and adapting legislation.

The evaluation and monitoring of the implementation can be divided in three parts and three institutions. The evaluation and advice commission “Education that fits” – ECPO – is initiated by the minister of education and started in 2008 and answers questions of the minister. The Office of Government Commerce - OGC De Werkmaatschappij – started in 2012 and makes every 6 months a review of the implementation process of “Education that fits”. The education inspectorate judges the quality of education in the Netherlands. They will judge the results of the implementation “Education that fits” with a new supervisory context – het nieuwe toezichtskader - (De Werkmaatschappij, 2013).

In the Netherlands educational innovations are made regularly. The Commission Parliamentary Investigation Educational Innovations - Commission Dijsselbloem – has investigated what is necessary to implement in education effectual. The commission has made a review framework

for educational innovations. Elements from the review framework are: needed is a large majority of the society that agrees with the innovation, the effectiveness of the innovation has to be proved evidence based or practice based and the policy has to be directed on the pupil or student in education (Commission Dijsselbloem, 2008). These recommendations have to be practiced during the implementation of "Education that fits".

#### ECPO

ECPO has investigated the pilots of "Education that fits" and the questions of the minister of OCW. A few conclusions and advises of the investigators are:

-The teacher is not enough involved in the implementation. Teachers need more abilities to handle the changes in their class, more children with special needs and better achievements of the pupils. Teachers do not know how finances are distributed and spent. They do not know what will be their task in "Education that fits". Teachers need more information and education to be partner in the implementation (ECPO, 2010 & 2011).

-The implementation process controls not enough and isn't given enough auspices. The attention of the implementation is focused on the implemented organization and not focused on the implemented quality. "Education that fits" is treated as a technical dossier. Missing is providing a visionary direction. Cohesion is needed between policy, politics and auspices. The concrete purposes of the standpoints of "Education that fits" to verify the effect are not formulated (ECPO, 2009b & 2010). It is not clear what the effects have to be for the pupils with special needs (ECPO, 2010).

- The new policies "Education that fits" and raising achievements, the quality agenda – de kwaliteitsagenda – are not treated as one implementation. Both policies are implemented on themselves and that is why they do not influence each other positively. The implementation of "Education that fits" should be a part of the implementation of the quality agenda (ECPO, 2011).

-The problems of the educational system are transferred to the consortiums of "Education that fits": the block financing, the saving and the grow of the number of pupils with special needs. The possibility to handle these problems needs more investigation before the implementation. Who is the owner of these problems? "Education that fits" can lead again to cherry picking, because schools can't handle the problems. The schools and teachers in the school are over-demanded (Noordegraaf & De Wit, 2011, in Bekkers e.a. 2011)?

#### OGC De Werkmaatschappij.

Every 6 months the OGC makes a review rapport of the outcome of the implementation of "Education that fits". The first progress report is presented February 2013. The OGC investigates the progress of the implementation. The question of the investigation is: Is "Education that fits" functioning August 2014? What is the situation of the implementation? Functions the implementation program effective? Is enough auspices offered (De Werkmaatschappij, 2013)?

Conclusions of OGC are: The work to implement is not sufficient structured and systematic. The guidance in working in connection is to little in administrative and in relating to the content aspects. The implementation program needs adaptations. In the implementation program a process is needed in which relating to the content purposes are clear and uniform. The program needs to facilitate the experiments and the use of the expertise and the experience of the pilots. The program has to make a difference between the guidance on the administrative, organizational and financial milestones and the guidance on the relating to the content purpose. The process needs account managers. They have to facilitate the administration of the consortiums "Education that fits". The account managers can take in account to relating to the content purposes (De Werkmaatschappij, 2013).

OGC leads the theme networks of consortiums, that try out themes like cooperation between education and youth care, integral support adjudication, new support arrangements from education and mental health. The theme networks invent what factors are successful in the theme (De Werkmaatschappij, 2013).

#### The education inspectorate.

The education inspectorate will judge the realization of "Education that fits" of the consortiums "Education that fits" with a new supervisory context – het nieuwe toezichtskader – in the future (De Werkmaatschappij, 2013). In the beginning the supervision will be intensive. The education inspectorate will supervise on the indicators: the number of young people not studying, the career of young people in education, the inspectorate judgment of the education of schools in the consortium, signals of parents, schools and care organizations, the Support Plan, the

annual report and the distribution of the funds, and the expertise of special support from the teachers and in the school (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2012b).

5. The role of the psychologist in the educational system “Education that fits”.

*The role of the psychologist in the educational system up to “Education that fits”.*

The role of the psychologist in the educational system has been changing the last decades. Nowadays psychologists are working for example in all kinds of schools, consortiums, school advisory services, regional expertise centers and private practices. Not only in special schools. The psychologist can work on different levels: the level of the individual child, the parents, the teacher and the group, the school and above school level. Not only on the individual level. The psychologist has tasks focused at different activities: preventive, diagnostic, advisory, consultative, planning, supporting, and evaluative activities. Not only diagnostic activities (Bakker & Van Doorn, 2007). The kind of tasks the psychologist concrete performs depends of the educational organization and the job description.

The start of a post master training School Psychologist in 2009 is a big chance for the education of the psychologist in the educational system. This post master training gives the psychologist the possibility to get educated on the level of and registered by the Dutch Association of Psychologists – NIP - as Child and Adolescent Psychologist NIP. The registration is of the same level as a registration Health Care Psychologist NIP and Orthopedagogue Generalist NVO. The post master training School Psychologist is a specialized training focused on skills and knowledge psychologists need on the full width of the educational system. The curriculum in the training is anticipating on the changes in the Dutch educational system “Education that fits”. The psychologist in the educational system in the Netherlands is called schoolpsychologist.

A standing committee NIP/NVO has made “Practice directives for orthopedagogues and psychologists active in the educational system” (Werkgoep NIP/NVO, 2013). In these directives are described the competences, the tasks and the activities of the psychologist in the “Education that fits” system. The standing committee gives a direction at the tasks of the psychologist on system level, what tasks in the key point qualitative good education, on the level of basic support and on the level of extra education support.

In the transformation of the role of the psychologist in the educational system, in the training of school psychologists and in the practice directives are already made conscious steps in the direction of “Education that fits”.

*Legislation and the role of the psychologist in the educational system.*

In special schools, in regional expertise centers and in pre-vocational secondary education with learning support one of the tasks of the psychologist is proving the special needs of the child. This role is registered in legislation and regulations. The psychologist is the expert who has to investigate the problems of the child and to do needs based assessment. The task of psychologists in mainstream schools is not regulated in legislation and regulations. The activities of psychologists depend of the policy of the management of the school.

In “Education that fits” the role of the psychologist is not yet, May 2013, determined. In the General Arrangements of Administration – AMvB – ( Min. OCW, 2013) is prescribed what kind of experts are

imperative for the activity of admitting pupils in special schools. The consortium “Education that fits” has to take advises of a psychologist among other experts. The psychologist can also be one of the experts of a Dissension Commission. In other legislation or regulations the role of the psychologist is not described.

The role of the psychologist is also not described for products, that have to be developed in “Education that fits”. In developing these products tasks of the psychologist described by the standing committee can be: an advising role in editing the developmental perspective – het ontwikkelingsperspectief -, to be the expert in a ortho pedagogical and didactic centre – opdc - , producing and performing the basic and special education support, to be the expert who edits an integral representation from the result of an investigation, developing support arrangements, keeping in touch with youth care, making the Support Plan.

The role of the psychologist depends on the regulations from the consortium of the region. The consortium can make its own regulations for the special education support and the admission to special education.

*The purposes of “Education that fits” an opportunity for the psychologist in the educational system.*

“Education that fits” has purposes, which need experts like school psychologists to achieve them.

Purposes of “Education that fits” are:

- More children with special needs in mainstream schools.
- Less early school leavers.
- To raise the achievements of pupils with special needs.
- To raise the capability of teachers to handle the growing diversity in a class by needs based working or the method positive behavior support.
- Working with methods, which are proved effective, evidence based.
- The support has to be directed on the possibilities of the child.
- The mainstream school has the duty to arrange education, when the child is enrolled in a school.

The school psychologist is an expert in this educational field, who has the competences to support the change to “Education that fits”. The role the psychologist takes in this change depends on the consortium, but also from the psychologists themselves. Do they take the expert role in the consortium? Do they take the expert role in the support, which is based on the interaction of the pedagogical-didactical action of the teacher and the educational needs of the child? The psychologist has to focus on this interaction (Werkgroep NIP/NVO, 2013). If they take the expert role in support, is it more preventive and less curative? Does the priority lie on what this child needs in this educational situation and is not the diagnosis purpose? Is the support more integral oriented and fewer sectors based (Sectororganisaties, 2013)? Do they take the expert role in more needs based support and less individual oriented. Support has to be systematic and a cyclical process. A part of this cyclical process is based on evidence, evidence based

The Dutch educational system changes to “Education that fits”. The more inclusive the educational system, the more it demands a different role from the psychologist in the educational organization. It is an opportunity for the psychologist in the educational system.

## 6. Inclusiveness and “Education that fits”.

The purpose of “Education that fits” is to make the educational system more inclusive. Will this purpose be achieved? It depends of the quality of the implementation in a region.

The implementation of “Education that fits” is now a system transformation, not a transformation of the content of education. The responsibilities are decentralized from the government to the consortiums. The consortiums of the regions get less funding for arranging all the support, because of the saving on the present budgets. It will be difficult to arrange more inclusive education with more benefits and increasing achievements and less money. What will be the influence of the decentralization on the distribution and the spending of the money and the realization of the special support? The quality of this implementation will be evaluated by ECPO (ECPO, 2013).

To get a content transformation the competences of the teacher in the class have to change. But the teacher is not involved in the implementation of “Education that fits”. The teacher has to be the central point of the whole transformation. To equip teachers better, it is important to transform the professional training of teachers in a more inclusive oriented training. Without a more equipped teacher education will not get more inclusive (ECPO, 2011).

The starting point for the implementation of “Education that fits” is bottom up and a learning approximation. This approximation makes, that the benefits of the implementation are not determined beforehand. Reliable and comparable data are needed to investigate. ECPO (2013) has the task to develop a plan to evaluate “Education that fits”. The purpose of the evaluation is to establish what the effects are of “Education that fits”. ECPO has three ways of evaluating: 1. Are the purposes achieved and in what grade. 2. What works and what doesn't work and why.

3. What kind of problems and policy contents are in the process and which factors have influence. Do these factors have influence on the evaluation?

The planned investigations of ECPO show that the results of "Education that fits" will be proved over years. In the meanwhile it is possible for ECPO to give advises, that will change the policy for example the involvement of the teacher in the implementation process and in focusing more on the content of the implementation instead of the organization. The way "Education that fits" contributes to the inclusiveness of education is a question, that can't be answered at this moment. It is a question that can be answered when the last milestones are reached.

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