

# ***ESEC: Extending Social Educators Competences***

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## ***Intellectual Output 01 Report 02 Inclusive education policies***

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## **Premise**

The project proposal foresees a report of 25 pages carried out by partners on the inclusive education training policies and practices for behavioral disabilities in Europe.

# **Inclusive education training policies and practices for behavioral disabilities**

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## **Introduction**

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognizes the right of the child to education, spelling out obligations of States Parties to ensure an ‘inclusive education system at all levels and life-long learning’ (United Nations 2006). Publicity regarding the CRPD has created great expectations in the disability world of dramatic improvement in education of persons with disabilities.

Article 24 reveals tensions between ‘right to education’ and ‘right to inclusive education’. This tension arises because the right to education is framed as inclusion, not effective or appropriate education. In addition, there is no reference to alternative settings or services (e.g. special schools, special classes and related special services).

Moreover, in the full context of Article 24, the last part of paragraph 2e sets a ‘goal of full inclusion’, assuming fully supportive environments (United Nations 2006) and suggesting a continuum of inclusiveness. If the phrase ‘full inclusion’ is not considered in the context of the rest of the CRPD and the discussions before adoption of the Convention, then the consequences of fully inclusive special education could be misunderstood. If the contested wording ‘full inclusion’ means inclusion of all students with disabilities in general education (e.g. Kanter, Damiani, & Ferri 2014), then Italy represents the only national example of implementation of a nearly fully inclusive education system. In Italy, inclusion has a legal and policy history dating from the late 1970s (as of this writing, about 38 years). Kanter, Damiani, & Ferri (2014) explicitly recognized Italy’s precedent for attempting to achieve full inclusion and suggested that all countries should follow Italy’s lead.

Italy might provide lessons or cautions for special education policy in other countries considering full inclusion. In some contexts, the term ‘integration’ has been used to mean basically the same idea as ‘inclusion.’ In our opinion, the two terms have operated in practice interchangeably (Norwich, 2008), and debate of the differences in their real systemic impact is a matter of splitting linguistic hairs. The basic idea we discuss (and we use the term ‘inclusion,’ as it seems to us to be now the dominant term) is the extent to which students with disabilities should be educated in general education with their age peers who have no identified disabilities.

## **Policies for supporting Autism Spectrum Disorder**

In Italy, the institutional agreement among the Ministry of Health and the regions (hereinafter referred to as the Italian ASD Action Plan, IAAP; Conferenza Unificata [2012](#), [2018](#)), as well as the Italian law on ASD (Law n. 134/2015), identify strategic priorities for ASD health care, with the final aim of promoting harmonized protocols for ASD diagnosis and evidence-based intervention approaches, according to recommendations defined at national and international level (SIGN [2016](#); NICE [2013](#); SNLG [2011](#); NICE [2011](#)).

One of the priority objectives of the IAAP was to increase the knowledge on services provided in Italy to children and adolescents with ASD, in order to ensure that ASD services achieve the adequate capability to meet the needs of individuals and their families across the whole country.

In the Italian National Health System (INHS), neurodevelopmental disorders—including ASD—are in charge of the specific Child and Adolescent Mental Health units (CAMHs), which are based on local health services, public and university hospitals, and care/research institutions (see Fig. [1](#) for a more comprehensive network of national, regional, and local institutions and services involved in ASD health care). Moreover, INHS-accredited private providers (Art. 26 Law 388/78) are widely distributed across the Italian territory and offer rehabilitation services to people with ASD.

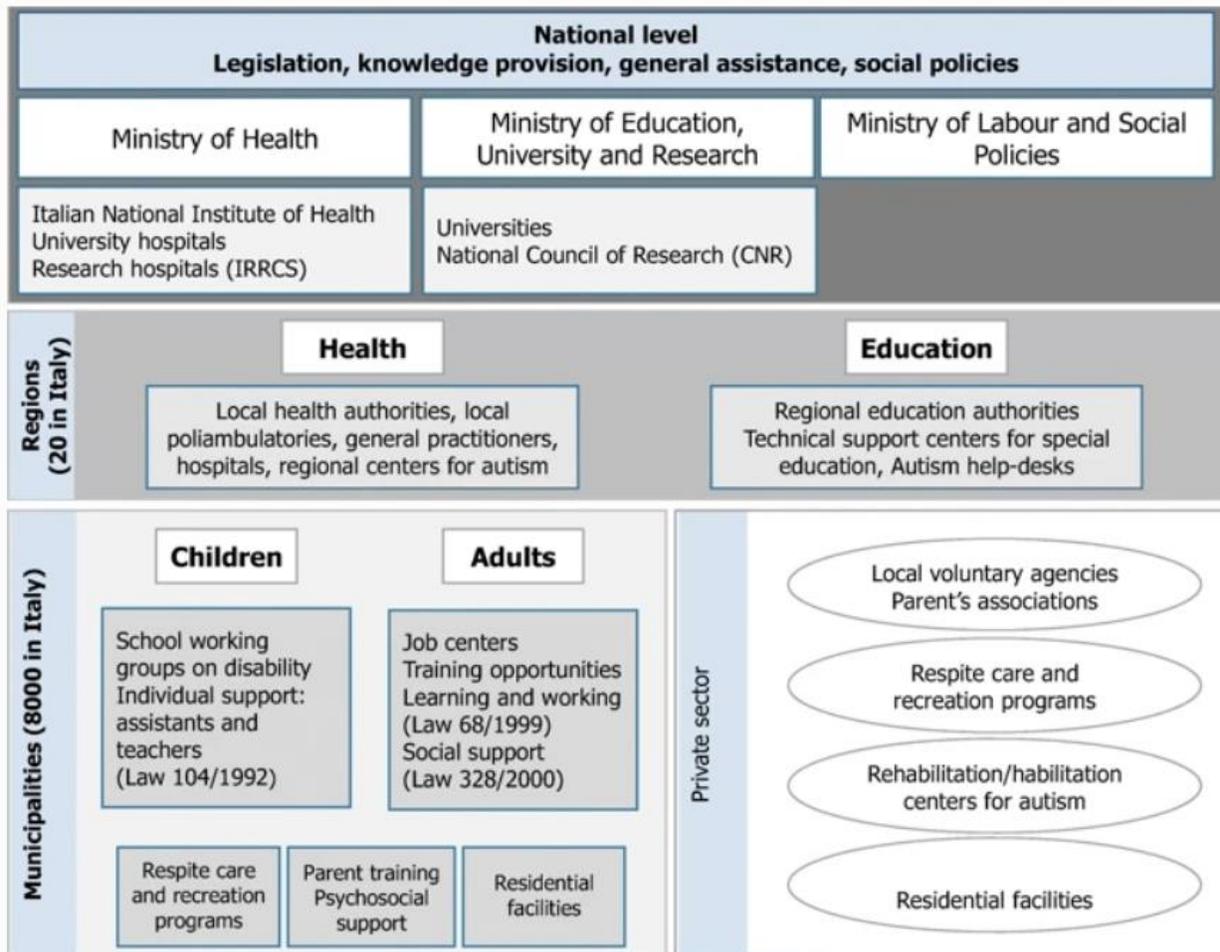


Figure 1. Network of national, regional, and local institutions and services involved in ASD health care in Italy

## CAREGIVING (CG) AND AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Commonly, the CG of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are also their parents.

The interest of research in studying this group of CG lies in the fact that this population is not contending with age-associated decline of the endocrine and immune systems.

Moreover, ASD and most developmental disabilities are present at birth and, as they last a lifetime, may cause a higher burden of care. In addition, many factors related to the care recipient, such as young age, severity of symptoms, lack of psychosocial autonomy, aggressive behaviors and emotional and communication difficulties, make these CG at higher risk of mental and physical health problems in comparison to other groups of CG (Weiss, Vicieli, Sloman, & Lunskey, 2013).

All these characteristics may generate a prolonged stress in parents, which are middle-aged and working, with serious consequences even on their social life. For what concerns the relationship between chronic stress and health outcomes in CG of people with ASD, a study by Ruiz-Robledillo et al. (Ruiz-Robledillo, & Moya-Albiol, 2015) demonstrated a higher electrodermal response to acute stressors in a laboratory setting, suggesting that worse health was related to a malfunction of the physiological adaptive response to the stress. Accordingly, the same authors found that those CG, with a higher cardiovascular response to acute stressors, presented more severe somatic symptoms.

Moreover, in parents of ASD children, it has been shown a dysregulation of the stress-induced immune and hormonal responses, i.e. immunoglobulin A and salivary cortisol respectively, which are considered predictors of health problems (De Andrés-García, Moya-Albiol, & González-Bono, 2012). Lovell (Lovell, Moss, & Wetherell, 2012) demonstrated also the presence of elevated levels of the proinflammatory biomarkers IL-6 and C-reactive protein, independently of the diurnal cortisol secretion. Thus, high inflammatory responses may generate a greater risk for diseases, even in the absence of a dysregulation of the HPA axis. The observed acute stress responses can have a positive significance in coping with stress but could also lead to negative effects on health. According to literature (Lovallo, 2011), these effects will depend on the intensity and the duration of the stressor: it is likely that the most adaptive reaction to acute stress is a fast one, that subsides rapidly. Significant predictor factors of ASD parenting stress are the severity of child impairment and parenting self-efficacy, but not gender, while the competence of parenting a child in challenging situations may reduce stress (Batool & Khurshid, 2015).

Recently, Lindsey (Lindsey & Barry, 2018) overviewed the potentially protective factors against distress that should be emphasized when working with families of a child with ASD. Noteworthy, informal social support partially mediated the negative impact of burden on the quality of life, suggesting the importance of informal support networks for the CG of persons with ASD.

However, formal support is important too, in that the non-supported CG presented higher somatic symptoms and a lower cortisol awakening response than the supported ones. Moreover, as social support may influence blood pressure responses, it may be considered a key determinant of cardiovascular health. For what concern parenting needs, ASD parents are more likely to report adverse family impact and difficulty in using services as compared to CG of children with others developmental disabilities (Vohra, Madhavan, Sambamoorthi, & St Peter, 2014). Most of them need respite care services, which result associated with decreased stress

(Whitmore, 2016). Very interestingly, a recent editorial, published in the *Journal of Autism Spectrum Disorder*, has focused on parenting and caregiving for people with ASD (Nordahl-Hansen, Hart, & Øien, 2018). The key themes, addressed over a hundred of manuscripts, include: intervention and training, mental health issues related to parent and family stress, measurement and assessment and parent-child transactional processes. There are research areas that need to be further explored in the future. Among them, we can enlist: gender specific health outcomes in the presence of ASD-associated parental distress, understanding caregiving cultural differences in a world with increasing mobility and migration, more studies on fathers of ASD children, since most published studies have been targeting mothers, more investigations on females with ASD, focusing on differences in their behavioral phenotypes compared to males, caregiving extended to siblings of ASD persons and resilience stress-protective factors

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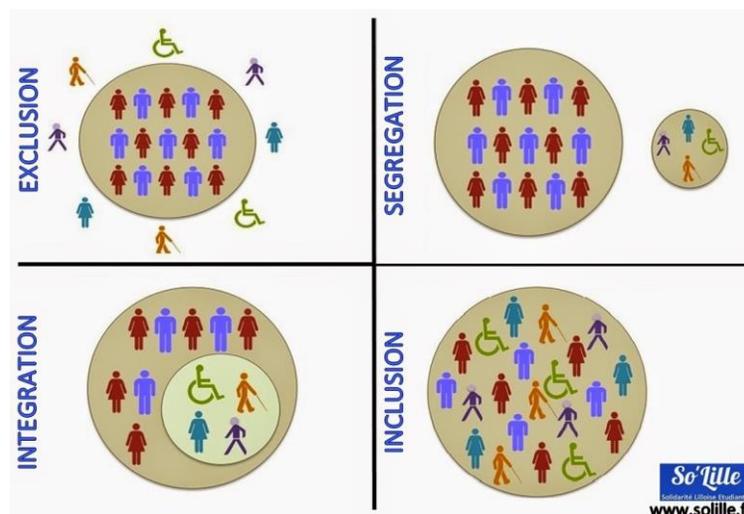
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## Inclusive education policies

By Andromachi Nanou<sup>1</sup> - INCLUDE (Greece)

### Introduction

Inclusive policy is on the opposite side of exclusion where people with disabilities used to be social isolated and educated segregated from typical peers in special schools. These two policies, segregation and inclusion policy are the two ends of a continuum that goes through many stations and historical phases and leads from exclusive to more inclusive practices. The way that these policies had been applied across European countries is different (Nanou, 2013)<sup>2</sup>



Segregated or Inclusive policies are the reflection of specific philosophical and ideological approaches that affect the way that people understand the living, the concepts and their relationships. The concept of Disability, as other concepts also, takes different meanings and is being connected with other concepts with different ways depending on different philosophical theories or approaches.

Segregated policy comes from the medical model of disability. According to this model, ‘disability’ is a health condition dealt with by medical professionals. People with disability are

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<sup>2</sup> Nanou, 2013, Differentiating teaching in one school for all. *From special to inclusive education From the school to a community for all.* Nanou et al (EDS) Grafima Thessaloniki

thought to be different to 'what is norm or abnormal. 'Disability' is seen as a problem of the individual. From the medical model, a person with disability is in need of being fixed or cured. From this point of view, disability is a tragedy and people with disability are to be pitied<sup>3</sup>.

The medical model of disability comes from deterministic philosophical tradition approaches. "**Determinism**, in philosophy, theory that all events, including moral choices, are completely determined by previously existing causes. According to deterministic approaches a specific cause or complete knowledge of any given situation assures that unerring knowledge of its future<sup>4</sup> although the theory comes from Laplace who was a Physician, has been affected social theories and humanities. Under this model, impairment is the cause of disability and medical help can lead into the therapy or lifting of disability.

Approaching the concept of disability by the medical model means that disability is oriented as a personal problem and the specific outcome of a medical situation. The medical problem may reduce the individual's quality of life and the aim is, through intervention the person to recover. By medical intervention and therapy the disability will be diminished or corrected.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the medical model focuses on curing or managing illness or disability. By extension, the medical model supposes a "compassionate" or just society invests resources in health care and related services in an attempt to cure or manage disabilities medically. This is in an aim to expand functionality and/or improve functioning, and to allow disabled persons a more "normal" life. The medical profession's responsibility and potential in this area is seen as central.

Consequence of approaching disability through the medical model is that disabled children because of their personal impairments cannot follow the education system of typical children and have to participate in special schools. This idea strengthened by the tradition of using the IQ tests as a mean of children's mental ability assessment. The results of this assessment addressed the decisions concerning which children can follow typical and which special education (Whinter & O'Raw, 2010, Eystathiou,2015)<sup>6</sup> Thus children categorized and their needs are predetermined through assessments systems with the participation of their parents to be in question.

**The social model, on the other point of view, confronts 'disability' not as the cause of impairment but as the result of the interaction between people living with impairments**

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<sup>3</sup> <https://pwd.org.au/resources/social-model-of-disability/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/determinism>

<sup>5</sup> The model supposes that this disability may reduce the individual's [quality of life](#) and the aim is, with medical intervention, this disability will be diminished or corrected.

<sup>6</sup> Literature review of the principals and practices relating to inclusive education for children with special educational needs.Co-Meath National Council of special education.

**and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It therefore carries the implication that the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others. Thus it approaches disability through indeterministic philosophical context taking into consideration holistic, ecological and systemic ways of thinking.**

Social model of disability was developed by the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS). The Union established the principles of impairment and disability and the sharp distinction that was made between these concepts. A social model perspective does not deny the reality of impairment nor its impact on the individual. However, it does challenge the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment to accommodate impairment as an expected incident of human diversity. According to the social model of disability :

- **Impairment** is a medical condition that leads to disability; while
- **Disability** is the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and barriers in the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment. It is not the inability to walk that keeps a person from entering a building by themselves but the stairs that are inaccessible that keeps a wheelchair-user from entering that building.

The social model seeks to change society in order to accommodate people living with impairment; it does not seek to change persons with impairment to accommodate society. It supports the view that people with disability have a right to be fully participating citizens on an equal basis with others. As a consequence Inclusive theory and policy developed.

## **1. Inclusive education policies**

The term "inclusion" in Education is stated in the education of all children together, in the same school environment, regardless of race, gender, religion or physical and mental state, and is most often found in its context special education and training. The transition to "One School for All" is not just a technical or organizational change. It is a movement with a clear philosophical direction (UNESCO, 2001)<sup>7</sup> to a world of authentic, rather than divided communities. Thus, common education for all students in "one school for all" without discrimination, in their neighborhoods, is not an aim but the way to an inclusive community. In such community acceptance or understating are notions

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<sup>7</sup> UNESCO (2001). *The Open File on Inclusive Education*. Support Materials for Managers and Administrators. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/2tyjS6>

that are being cultivated and are non-negotiable so as the feeling of belonging is being developed to every person without any notion of exclusion.

The field remains confused as to what exactly "inclusion" means. Thus, the bibliography states such as 'integration', 'inclusion', 'inclusion', 'inclusive education' "Inclusive education", "single education". The confusion that exists internationally arises from the fact that the idea of inclusion can be defined in several ways (Ainscow & Miles, 2009). Historically, there is a progressive use of the terms, starting with mainstreaming, then integration and inclusion (inclusion) (Bricker, 1995).

Inclusion differs from Integration and mainstreaming<sup>8</sup>.

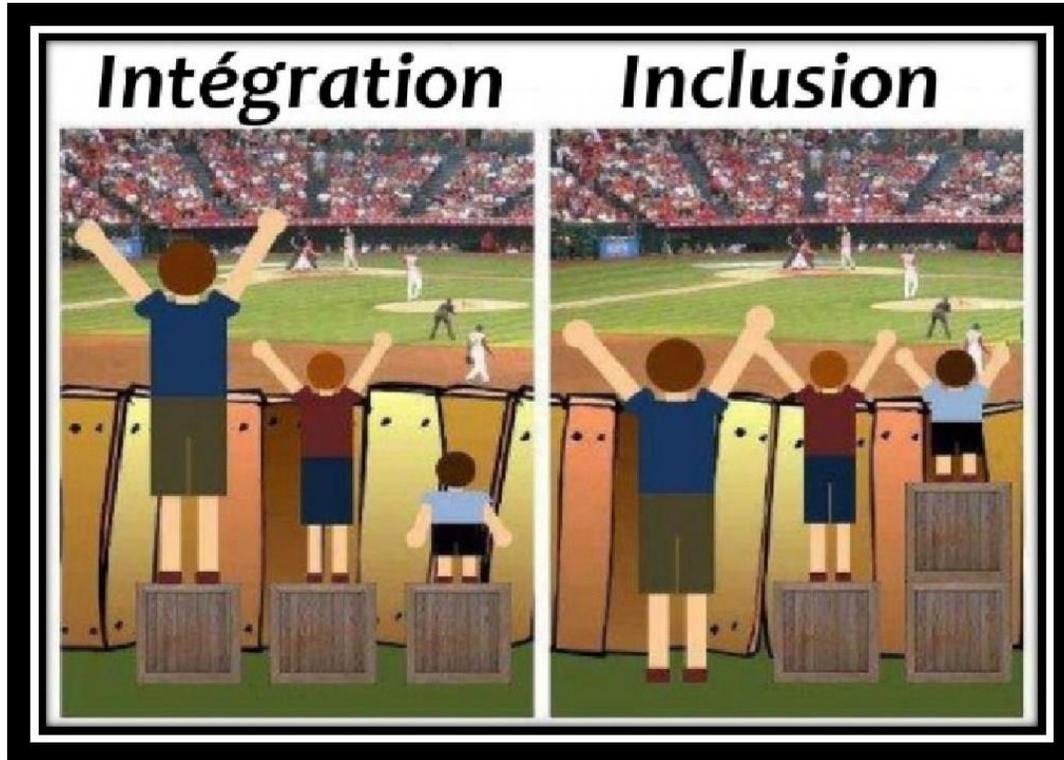
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*With inclusion, everyone benefits from what he or she needs.*

Picture of Collective for inclusive schooling : <http://collectif-inclusion.blogspot.ch><sup>9</sup>



*With inclusion, everyone benefits from what he or she needs.*

Picture of Collective for inclusive schooling : <http://collectif-inclusion.blogspot.ch><sup>10</sup>

Integration movement, historically, is one phase between segregation and inclusion, more close to segregation. Confronts and supports the child separately from the hall educational program. Integration movement doesn't focused on the school system and the changes that has to be done in order to the school to be effective for all students but focuses on the child and supports the chilled to be "integrated" in the specific school and the inelastic curriculum. Integration doesn't recognize that the school has to change and it is responsible to educate effectively all students bus the disable children is the "problem" and has to change independently form the curriculum. This kind of Integration doesn't prevent stigmatization and exclusion and

<sup>9</sup> Commission consultative transitoire de l'Ecole Inclusive (2015), « Séance introductive du lundi 5 octobre 2015). Genève, DIP. <http://www.ge.ch/dip/doc/ecole-inclusive/presentation-commission-consultative.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Commission consultative transitoire de l'Ecole Inclusive (2015), « Séance introductive du lundi 5 octobre 2015). Genève, DIP. <http://www.ge.ch/dip/doc/ecole-inclusive/presentation-commission-consultative.pdf>

does not withdraw the segregate characteristic of the school (UNESCO, 2008)<sup>11</sup> In contrary permits the penetration and introduction of segregated concept in the education. The first of These concepts is the separation of pupils at an early age among different paths (academic and professional, for example) and the second is the separation inside the schools of each level of the student body into different groups based on the pupils' abilities and previous performance. The principle of inclusive education consists of adapting the learning processes to each individual so that it is possible to achieve maximum performance from them all, with their different characteristics and abilities. As such, inclusive education is opposed to the segregation of pupils with disabilities in special needs educational institutions. Inclusive education entails active effort in favour of social cohesion and integration, an effort that often results in significant investment in terms of training teachers and support teachers, facilities and material.<sup>12</sup>

In 2005, UNESCO developed its Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All. It has been intended to be a tool for revising and formulating plans for inclusive processes. In this document we find a good definition of inclusive education: "Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children." (Guidelines for Inclusion, UNESCO, p. 14, 2005)<sup>13</sup> Ingrid Körner, President of Inclusion Europe<sup>14</sup>

## 2. Methodological issues on Inclusive education

According to (Nanou 2017<sup>15</sup>, Ballard 2018<sup>16</sup>). inclusion is an holistic and ongoing process that depends on social-cultural parameters. In this process, aspects of social and cultural environment functions as intermediations and contribute to the maximum extend to child's and family's inclusion Crucial notions, settings, methods and tools act as Inclusion intermediations that prepare educational environment to accept and welcome the child at risk for exclusion.

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<sup>11</sup> unesco 2008 inclusive education the way of the future. Genova UNESCO

<sup>12</sup>INCLUDE-ED 2015,

[https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/918b/9e2348281139f932240aaed7b2f621523e4.pdf?\\_ga=2.20312945.819701512.1556533814-836841065.1556533814](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/918b/9e2348281139f932240aaed7b2f621523e4.pdf?_ga=2.20312945.819701512.1556533814-836841065.1556533814)

<sup>13</sup> UNESCO (2005) Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All, [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/cops/workshops/China/UNESCO\\_Guideline\\_2006.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/cops/workshops/China/UNESCO_Guideline_2006.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> [https://inclusion-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Best-Practice-Education\\_EN-FINALWEB.pdf](https://inclusion-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Best-Practice-Education_EN-FINALWEB.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Nanou A., Patsidou M. (2017) Issues on Special Education . Quarterly magazine for education Issue 76, August - September

<sup>16</sup> Ballard 2018 [Inclusion, Paradigms, Power and Participation](#) in (Catherine Clark, Alan Dyson, Alan Millward eds) Towards Inclusive Schools?

Inclusive education supports the right of equal access to education, rejecting any type of segregation or exclusion of learners, and fosters the integration of children and young people with disabilities into mainstream forms of education. Inclusive education is a mean for implementing the right to education that enables learners to become active citizens and provide equal citizenship opportunities. The right to education was multifaceted and therefore required inclusive education to combine four interrelated dimensions: the need to provide equal access opportunities, equal learning opportunities, equal citizenship opportunities, and equal achievement opportunities.

So Inclusion prerequisites the reformulate all the school- curricula, values, buildings beliefs, attitudes, parents, peers-. This reformulate has the meaning of lifting all the obstacles that prevent the associability, the participation, and learning of all students in every grade of schools So all levels of education in the human life-course (e.g. pre-school services, vocational education and training and adult education services). Learners should be offered a complete set of inclusive learning environments, including parallel settings and post-graduate opportunities, to avoid the pitfall of being altogether excluded from education because of an overly rigid and formal education system (UNESCO, 2008)

Opposing views to the inclusive education policy and to its effectiveness have been supported. These options supports that children and young people with SEN are highly heterogeneous subgroup of the school (and preschool, college and university) population and their education needs are varied and difficult to be addressed in the same educational environment (Lindsay, 2011, 2018)<sup>17</sup> there are many voices which insists that inclusion is the major challenge educational systems facing around the world and that suitable methodologists, curriculum and school's infrastructure adaptations can lead to an effective educational policy for all (AINSCOW,2005). We therefore consider inclusion to refer to the way teachers and schools value equally the accomplishments, attitudes and wellbeing of every young person while providing a curriculum that is relevant and meaningful (Hayes and Stidder 2003 <sup>18</sup>; a pedagogy that embraces difference as a resource to enrich teaching and learning (Evans and Davies 1993

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<sup>17</sup> Lindsay, 2011 Educational psychology and the effectiveness of inclusive education/mainstreaming. *British Journal of Educational psychology* <https://doi.org/10.1348/000709906X156881>

Lindsay, 2018 Inclusive education theory and practice: What does this mean for paediatricians? *Paediatrics and Child Health* **Volume 28, Issue 8, August 2018, Pages 368-373**

<sup>18</sup> Hayes, S., and G. Stidder. 2003. "Social Inclusion in Physical Education and Sport: Themes and Perspectives for Practitioners." In *Equity and Inclusion in Physical Education and Sport: Contemporary Issues for Teachers, Trainees and Practitioners*, edited by S. Hayes, and G. Stidder, 1–14. London: Routledge. [\[Crossref\]](#) , [\[Google Scholar\]](#)

<sup>19</sup>and approaches to assessment that enable diverse abilities to be recognized and celebrated (Hay and Penney 2013 <sup>20</sup>From this perspective, the key task is ‘not to defend the need to accommodate learner differences by the provision of something “different from” or “additional to”, as defined in the legislation, but to challenge complacency about what is “generally available”’ (Florian and Rouse 2009 <sup>21</sup>. We know that most children with intellectual disabilities continue to be excluded or if they are able to go to school they are often segregated. Education is key to to a full life in the community. We cannot achieve ‘education for all’ without children with intellectual disabilities.<sup>22</sup>

Specific methodological principals have to be applied in order inclusion in education to be effective for all students. see Nanou 2013<sup>23</sup>, The reason is that 21o Century School is preparing to include all students and to support their needs Fanny Fontaine, 2019.<sup>24</sup>

One of the most important methodological principles in the “One School for All” is the Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size or disability. This includes public places in the built environment such as buildings, streets or spaces that the public have access to; products and services provided in those places; and systems that are available including information and communications technology (ICT). (Disability Act, 2005) <sup>25</sup> Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. An environment (or any building, product, or service in that environment) should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it. This is not a special requirement, for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits. By considering the diverse needs and abilities of all throughout the design process, universal design creates products, services and environments that

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<sup>19</sup> Evans, J., and B. Davies. 1993. “Equality, Equity and Physical Education.” In *Equality, Education and Physical Education*, edited by J. Evans, 11–27. London: The Falmer Press. [\[Google Scholar\]](#);

<sup>20</sup> Hay, P., and D. Penney. 2013. *Assessment in Physical Education: A Sociocultural Perspective*. London: Routledge. [\[Google Scholar\]](#)).

<sup>21</sup> Florian, L., and M. Rouse. 2009. “The Inclusive Practice Project in Scotland: Teacher Education for Inclusive Education.” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 25 (4): 594–601. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2009.02.003 [\[Crossref\]](#), [\[Web of Science®\]](#), [\[Google Scholar\]](#), 598).

<sup>22</sup> <https://inclusion-international.org/calltoaction/>

<sup>23</sup> Nanou, 2013, Differentiating teaching in one school for all. *From special to inclusive education From the school to a community for all*. Nanou et all (EDS) Grafima Thessaloniki

<sup>24</sup> <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Fontaine%2C+Fanny>

<sup>25</sup><http://universaldesign.ie/Home/>

meet peoples' needs. Simply put, universal design is good design. Especially to education Universal Design for Learning UDL concept has been developed. Universal Design for Learning is referred to by name in American legislation, such as the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008 (Public Law 110-315), the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. The emphasis being placed on equal access to curriculum by all students and the accountability required by IDEA 2004 and No Child Left Behind legislation has presented a need for a practice that will accommodate all learners.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that helps give all students an equal opportunity to succeed.

This approach offers flexibility in the ways students access material, engage with it and show what they know.

Developing lesson plans this way helps all kids, but it may be especially helpful for kids with learning and attention issues. The concept and language of Universal Design for Learning was inspired by the universal design movement in architecture and product development, originally formulated by Ronald L. Mace at North Carolina State University.[5] Universal design calls for "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design".[8] UDL applies this general idea to learning: that curriculum should, from the outset, be designed to accommodate all kinds of learners.[9] Educators have to be deliberate in the teaching and learning process in the classroom (e.g Preparing class learning profiles for each student). This will enable grouping by interest. Those students that have challenges will be given special assistance. This will enable specific multimedia to meet the needs of all students. However, recognizing that the UD principles created to guide the design of things (e.g., buildings, products) are not adequate for the design of social interactions (e.g., human learning environments), researchers at CAST looked to the neurosciences and theories of progressive education in developing the UDL principles.[10] In particular, the work of Lev Vygotsky and, less directly, Benjamin Bloom informed the three-part UDL framework.[11]

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is based on neuroscience research which has identified three primary neurological networks that impact learning:

- The recognition network deals with incoming stimuli and affects "what" students learn
- The strategic network mediates "how" students process incoming information based on past experience or background knowledge

- The affective network regulates students' attitudes and feelings about incoming information as well as their motivation to engage in specific activities — the "why" students want to learn and engage<sup>26</sup>

Successful teaching and learning involves all three networks simultaneously. Based on the three neurological networks, UDL's three principles are:

- Multiple means of representation-give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge UDL recommends offering information in more than one format. For example, textbooks are primarily visual. But providing text, audio, video and hands-on learning gives all kids a chance to access the material in whichever way is best suited to their learning strengths.
- Multiple means of expression-provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know UDL suggests giving kids more than one way to interact with the material and to show what they've learned. For example, students might get to choose between taking a pencil-and-paper test, giving an oral presentation or doing a group project.
- Multiple means of engagement-tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation UDL encourages teachers to look for multiple ways to motivate students. Letting kids make choices and giving them assignments that feel relevant to their lives are some examples of how teachers can sustain students' interest. Other common strategies include making skill building feel like a game and creating opportunities for students to get up and move around the classroom.

Inclusive schools deliver a curriculum to students through organizational arrangements that are different from those used in schools that exclude some students from their regular classrooms. Collaboration in order to solve organizational or community problems and is designed to provide 'conditions for the empowerment of participants' through a process of action-reflection-action within democratic dialogue. In order to participate, people need to be able to understand one another( Ballard) <sup>27</sup> Among the initiatives that hold great promise for building inclusive schools are outcomes-based education, multicultural education, constructivist learning, interdisciplinary curriculum, authentic assessment of student performance, multi-age grouping, peer-mediated instructional approaches, and collaborative teaming among adults. The investigation was formulated to explore the impact of reflective practice and to deconstruct

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26 Hall, E.Meyer A, Rose D H. 2012. Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom: Practical Applications

<sup>27</sup> Ballard 2018 [Inclusion, Paradigms, Power and Participation](#) in (Catherine Clark, Alan Dyson, Alan Millward eds) Towards Inclusive Schools?

teacher thinking as educators engaged in a dialogue about curriculum and instructional considerations for students with significantly different learning needs. In keeping with best practices of classroom organization, teachers must consider the use of thematic, activity-based, experiential and community-referenced lesson formats to facilitate the participation and learning of students with disabilities.<sup>28</sup>

Organization, financing, regulations, teacher training and so on can all facilitate and enable integration, but, if teachers do not actively support the effort to achieve integration, the placement of students with special needs in regular settings will remain problematic.<sup>29</sup> The quality of school-level planning seems to be an important dimension in attempts to develop more inclusive policies. Of course, where a school begins to acknowledge enquiry and reflection as forces for improvement, it is vital to ensure that there are appropriate safeguards so that confidential or sensitive information is properly handled.<sup>30</sup> Interdisciplinary collaboration between mainstream school teachers and special school teachers. The aim of the research project has been to examine the knowledge of special school teachers and how this knowledge can contribute to the development of an inclusive learning environment in mainstream schools. Not as a simple task of transferring knowledge, but as a process of transforming knowledge through interdisciplinary collaboration and co-teaching. Special attention has to be paid to the methodological support and training of teachers so that the transition of mainstream schools towards inclusion can be as smooth and competent as possible, for school staff as well as for students. The success of inclusive education requires an effort, not only of teachers and school staff, but also of peers, parents, families and volunteers. Since the inclusive school demands much more cooperation from parents and peers than special or mainstream school education, the issue of peer relations and the role of parents of children with disabilities should not be neglected. rk.<sup>31</sup>

A multi-dimensional definition of quality in inclusive education based on the interaction of different aspects linked to the culture of the school and the policies, practices and human and physical resources available (as well as its allocation processes). Figure 1, in section 2, provides

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<sup>28</sup> Alice Udvari-Solner, Jacqueline Thousand 2018 [Effective Organisational Instructional and Curricular Practices in Inclusive Schools and Classrooms](#) in (Catherine Clark, Alan Dyson, Alan Millward eds) Towards Inclusive Schools?

<sup>29</sup> Lise Vislie, 2018 [Integration Policies, School Reforms and the Organisation of Schooling for Handicapped Pupils in Western Societies](#)

<sup>30</sup> Ainscow M. 2018 [Special Needs through School Improvement; School Improvement through Special Needs](#) in (Catherine Clark, Alan Dyson, Alan Millward eds) Towards Inclusive Schools? Chapter 6

<sup>31</sup> [https://inclusion-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Best-Practice-Education\\_EN-FINALWEB.pdf](https://inclusion-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Best-Practice-Education_EN-FINALWEB.pdf)

a graphic approach to this definition, which is based in turn on a more general theoretical framework<sup>32</sup>

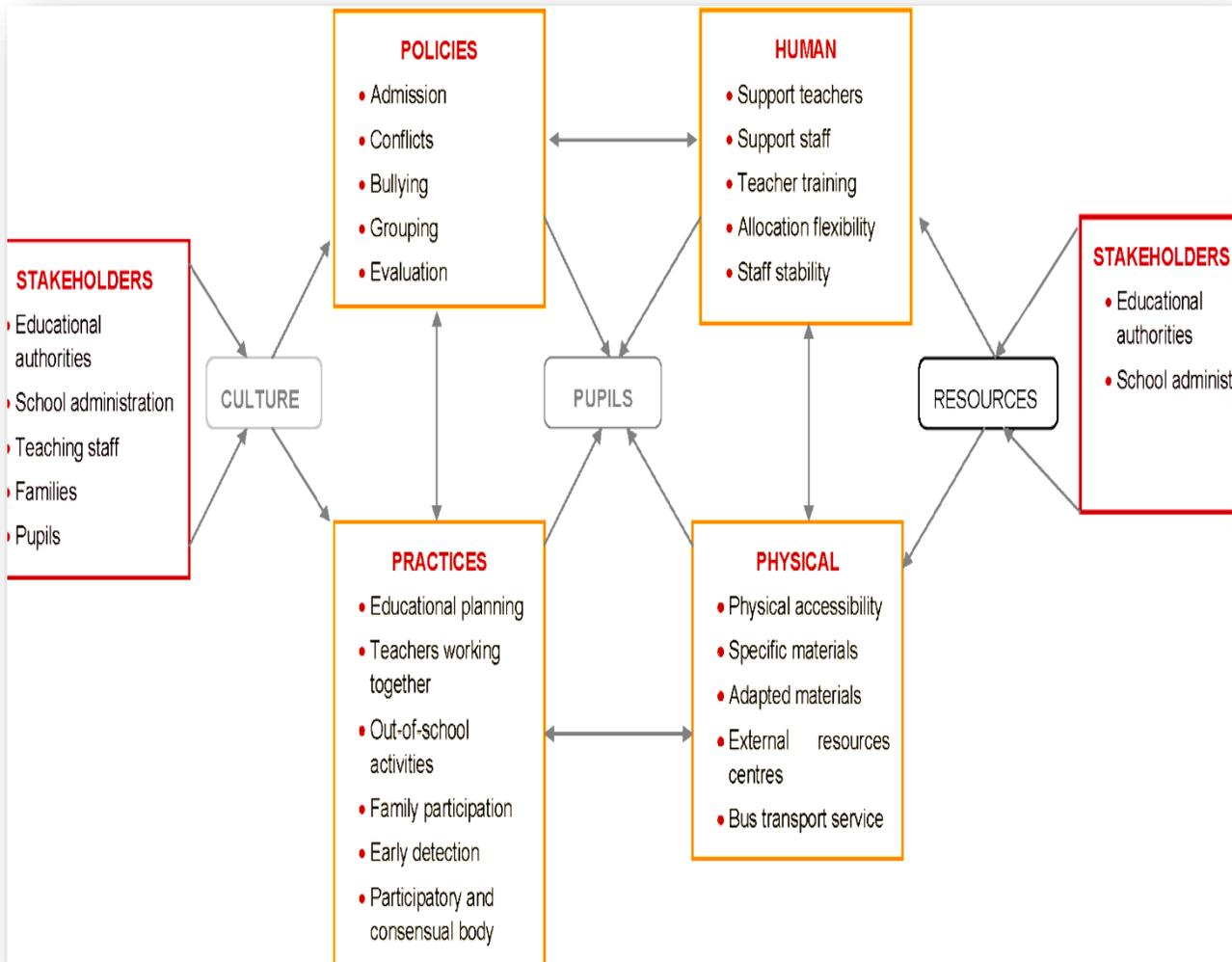


Figure 1. Quality in inclusive education. Conceptual framework for analysing its determining factors

<sup>32</sup> 2 Quality factors of inclusive education in Europe : an exploration WORK TEAM Ximena Pérez Benasco, Published 2016

### 3. Including Children in their diversity

All Students have the right to be included in mainstream education. The inclusion movement is not only a school demand; it is a societal one with the ultimate goal being to have individuals with all types of disabilities live, work and be educated in their own communities. For typical students is important to be educated together with disabled ones so they are being prepared to cooperate with everybody and develop the necessary skills for how to effectively live and work with everyone included disabled persons. Inclusionary programs provide all students with an increased awareness and understanding of individual differences. (Nanou 2017) .

Using UDL principals specific environmental and curriculum transformations makes the school accessible to children with specific kinds of disability. The inclusive school proposes individualized teaching strategies, carried out in the normal class setting in order to respond to the needs of all children « be they normal, gifted, part of an athletic elite, artists or in some way handicapped. » (DIP, 2015)<sup>3</sup>. This makes it, over and above being a pedagogical strategy, a new way to look at life in our society. This model aims to include each individual, with whatever makes him or her special, in what is truly **a school for everyone**.

#### **Including children with Sensory and Physical disabilities**

Students with visible, physical impairments like visually impaired, hearing impaired need reasonable adaptations if they are expected to be included in the mainstream program:

- School Environment: Handicapped entrances, Bathrooms etc.
- Modes of Communication and learning: Books on tape, signage in Braille were just some of the modifications made in the physical plant structure.
- Curriculum : closed-captioned TV, video programs were modifications made in instructional materials assisted technology
- Staff : Specially trained staff members were hired to act as interpreters.
- Peers: Specific programs for sensitizing and inform peers has to be developed. Typical Students needs the opportunity to learn about the various handicapping conditions and the opportunity to ask questions. "Puppet show which came around to the various schools, provided a forum for students and staff to learn about the handicaps and ask questions. Students also participated in empathy building activities by simulating visual impairments, hearing impairments.

## Including children with Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities<sup>33</sup>, such as Autism Spectrum Disorders and Intellectual Disabilities or language and learning disabilities are conditions which begin during childhood, but tend to persist. Developmental disabilities can hinder children from achieving their developmental potential, through adverse effects on learning, participation and access to information and services. Special strategies are needed for inclusion of children with developmental disabilities.

- Teacher training: Pre-service and in-service courses were developed and offered to help staff develop a better understanding of learning styles
- Open curriculum
- Alternative instructional strategies

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in order to be included in mainstream schools, special strategies can be used. Best practices of mainstream teaching are not always suitable for students with ASD. <sup>34</sup> However, there are many ways in which students with ASD can effectively be included<sup>35</sup>.

First and foremost, teachers need to be adequately trained in educating students with developmental disabilities, specifically students with ASD.

Training areas:

- Collaboration: there is a “real need within the Including students with ASD also involves strong collaboration between everyone involved in the education of the student. This includes the principals, general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, families, specialists ,and any other party involved in the success of the students with ASD.
- Teacher-child Relationship : relationship is also an important factor in including students with ASD.

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<sup>33</sup> <https://www.who.int/topics/early-child-development/disability-developmental-delay/en/>

<sup>34</sup> Effective Inclusion of Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders must be done next” (Goodman&Williams 2007, p. 56).

<sup>35</sup> Bronwyn M Sutton, Amanda A Webster, Marleen F Westerveld 2018 A systematic review of school-based interventions targeting social communication behaviors for students with autism First Published January 31,2018 Review Article <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362361317753564>

- Structuring school environment and curriculum: Children with autism need that sense of routine and predictability as to what is coming up later in the day in order to decrease anxiety
  - ✓ Visual schedules can be used in the classroom using photographs, drawings, or words. Visual schedules are particularly helpful to students with autism because “they clearly indicate what has been completed and what
  - ✓ Social Stories could need for teaching social skills
  - ✓ Structuring learning material, digital technologies

Children with both physical, cognitive and developmental disabilities needs to be provided with adaptive devices, access to specially trained staff, environmental, instructional and materials modifications that enabled them to have a chance to be successful in an inclusionary setting. There was general consensus that these individuals did not choose to have their disability and required modifications to function successfully in the mainstream.

Similar environmental modifications has to be made in our communities. In addition, public service announcements, posters, sporting events and television shows all showed individuals with disabilities as being part of our daily lives. Many of these changes had already become reality in many but not all European countries.

### **Including children with Behavioral Problems**

A child could manifest behavioral problems with or independent of the existence of a physical, sensory or developmental disability. These problems has to do with difficulties in emotional management or social communication and interactions. There are children, also, that exhibit behavioral difficulties without the existence of these kind of disability. These students may exhibit behaviors such as insulting, provoking, threatening, bullying, cursing, and fighting along with other forms of aggression or noncompliance with and disrespect towards teachers and other authority figures is also common. Often have difficulty inhibiting emotional responses resulting from anger, frustration, and disappointment. Such difficulties could be refer to as Emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD; also known as behavioral and emotional disorders or BD (ICD-10);[1][2]

- The IDEA requires that a student must exhibit one or more of the following characteristics over a long duration, and to a marked degree that adversely affects their educational performance, to receive an EBD classification:[3]
- Difficulty to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
- Difficulty to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
- Inappropriate types of behavior (acting out against self or others) or feelings (expresses the need to harm self or others, low self-worth, etc.) under normal circumstances.
- A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- Behavioral disability (BD) is a term that can be used to refer to behavioral problems independently of them without the existence of any kind of disability or psychiatric disorder. These difficulties could be manifested in conduct which is disruptive to classroom functioning and/or harmful to themselves and others. To be diagnosed as a behavioral disability, the behaviors must not be attributable to one of the aforementioned psychiatric disorders. Oppositional defiant disorder and conduct disorder are two basic kinds of behavioral disabilities.
- Oppositional defiant disorder is characterized by extreme non-compliance, negativity, and an unwillingness to cooperate or follow directions. Children with this condition are not violent or aggressive; they simply refuse to cooperate with adults or peers.
- Conduct disorder is much more severe. This disorder is characterized by aggression, violence, and harm inflicted on self and others. Students with conduct disorder typically need to be taught in special education classrooms until their behavior has improved enough to allow contact with the general education population.
- Inclusion of children with BD or ED did not receive the same interest as the other kinds of disabilities. Unfortunately, since students with emotional disabilities have an "invisible" handicap and look normal, there are some real myths surrounding the etiology of their disability and level of control they possess over their handicap. Many people believe that they could control their "problem". Since students with emotional disabilities frequently do not appear physically different, it was difficult to view them as requiring the same level of specialized care as those students with visible handicapping conditions. Little, The preparation for their inclusion was not given the same level of attention as it was for other disabled populations. If any, attention was given to proactively preparing the environment to understand and accommodate the needs of this group. There were no puppet shows, no empathy building activities, no opportunities for voicing concerns, questions and answers.
- Whenever there is a change from the status quo, there are questions, concerns and opinions from all parties. Unfortunately, the standard way of handling these things with

emotional and behavioral issues is to avoid discussing them. It is almost like believing that if we don't talk about problems, there won't be any problems. Out of all of the disabilities, mental illness is the last to come out of the disability "closet." You don't see poster children for ED or BD. Although rough estimates indicate that one in five individuals will have some form of emotional illness in their lifetime, it is still the disability that very few talk about. Unfortunately, the head in the sand philosophy does not work. Questions, concerns and opinions do not go away. They may go underground, but they do not go away. Fear and uncertainty build, and, without education and training, the environment is "ripe" for continued intolerance, misunderstanding and the perpetuation of myths. 36

**Successful integration programs for students with emotional disabilities include:**

**Training Programs For teachers and parents**

- Assessing and discussing the questions, beliefs and concerns of all parties involved before the students arrive
- Providing basic level training for all members of the school community in what Behavioral or emotional disabilities are and strategies to deal with these
- Hiring trained staff & providing in-service training and support
- Providing advance level training for those most responsible for helping students with BD or ED learn how to compensate for their disability;

**Appropriate services in schools**

- Hiring full time professional staff;
- Proactively examining policies and procedures and discussing what reasonable adaptations may be required;
- Consideration of environmental factors
- Encouragement of continual open discussion to talk about successes, problems, concerns and questions.

**Environmental Modifications**

As with other conditions, students with emotional and behavioral disorders need a

- positive, structured environment which supports growth, Students with emotional and behavioral disorders tend to struggle with transitions and unexpected change.. Going over a visual schedule of the day's activities is an effective way to start the day, and helps the students feel grounded.

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Mary Beth Hewett's CHOICES volumes 1 and 2 of (each volume contains 25-30 of her articles) from the web site at [www.edutech.org/choices/choicesf.htm](http://www.edutech.org/choices/choicesf.htm) , by call 315/332-7255, or faxing 315/332-2117.

- Routines are very important for classroom management fosters self-esteem, and rewards desirable behavior

## Teaching Strategies

- **Rules and Routines** Rules need to be established at the beginning of the school year, and must be written in such a way as to be simple and understandable. The wording of rules should be positive: "Respect yourself and others" is a better rule than "Don't hurt anyone." Keep it simple: 6 rules or less.
- **Consequences for breaking rules** should also be established at the beginning of the school year, and applied consistently and firmly whenever the rules are broken. The consequences must be consistent and predictable. When administering consequences, provide feedback to the student in a calm, clear manner. That way, the student understands why the consequence is necessary. Try to avoid becoming emotionally reactive when rules are broken. Emotional reactivity gives the student negative attention, which many children find very rewarding. Remain calm and detached, be firm yet kind. It's a difficult balance to achieve, but crucially important for positive results.
- **Techniques for Supporting Positive Behavior** Here are a few ideas to guide and support growth towards more positive, adaptive behavior:
- **Token Economy** - Students earn points, or tokens, for every instance of positive behavior. These tokens can then be used to purchase rewards at the token store. In order for a token economy to be effective, positive behavior must be rewarded consistently, and items in the token store must be genuinely motivating for the student. This takes a fair amount of preparation and organization, but has proven to be quite effective.
- **Classroom Behavior Chart** - A chart which visually plots the level of behavior of every student in the classroom. Students who are behaving positively progress upwards on the chart; those who are behaving negatively fall downwards. This makes every student accountable, and helps you monitor and reward progress. This won't work if difficult students perpetually stay on the bottom of the chart. Focus on the positive to the fullest degree possible, and keep them motivated.
- **Lottery System** - Similar to the token economy, students who behave in positive ways are given a ticket with their name on it. These tickets are placed in a jar, and once or twice a week you draw one out. The winner of the lottery is rewarded with a prize.
- **Positive Peer Review** - Students are asked to watch their peers, and identify positive behavior. Both the student who is behaving positively and the student who does the identifying are rewarded. This is the exact opposite of "tattle-telling," and fosters a sense of teamwork and social support in the classroom.

## Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)

The use of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) in schools is widespread (Sugai & Horner, 2002)[2] in part because it is a professional skill in early special education programs (as opposed to Rogerian counseling). The program offers a primary, secondary, and tertiary level of intervention.[3] A basic tenet of the PBIS approach includes identifying students in one of three categories based on risk for behavior problems. Once identified, students receive services in one of three categories: primary, secondary, or tertiary. To help practitioners with differences in interventions used at each of the levels the professional literature refers to a three-tiered (levels) model (Stewart, Martella, Marchand-Martella, & Benner, 2005; Sugai, Sprague, Horner & Walker, 2000;[4] Tobin & Sugai, 2005; Walker et al., 1996.)[5] Interventions are specifically developed for each of these levels with the goal of reducing the risk for academic or social failure. These interventions may be behavioral and or academic interventions incorporating scientifically proven forms of instruction such as direct instruction.[6] The interventions become more focused and complex as one examines the strategies used at each level.[7] Primary prevention strategies include, but are not limited to, using effective teaching practices and curricula, explicitly teaching behavior that is acceptable within the school environment, focusing on ecological arrangement and systems within the school, consistent use of precorrection procedures, using active supervision of common areas, and creating reinforcement systems that are used on a school-wide basis (Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, 1998;[9] Martella & Nelson, 2003;[10] Nelson, Crabtree, Marchand-Martella & Martella, 1998;[11] Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002).[12]

Interventions at the secondary level often are delivered in small groups to maximize time and effort and should be developed with the unique needs of the students within the group. Examples of these interventions include social support such as social skills training (e.g., explicit instruction in skill-deficit areas, friendship clubs, check in/check out, role playing) or academic support (i.e., use of research-validated intervention programs and tutoring). Additionally, secondary programs could include behavioral support approaches (e.g., simple Functional Behavioral Assessments [FBA], precorrection, self-management training). Even with the heightened support within secondary level interventions, some students (1–7%) will need the additional assistance at the tertiary level (Walker et al., 1996).[5]

Students with BD or ED do belong in regular schools. Teaching BD or ED children can be extremely challenging. Remember: fostering and rewarding positive behavior has proven to be vastly more effective than attempting to eliminate negative behavior. Punishment and negative consequences tend to lead to power struggles, which only make the problem behaviors worse. It is not easy to remain positive in the face of such emotionally trying behaviors, but don't give up. Your influence could mean a world of difference to these students who are struggling with an incredibly difficult condition.

If we are to prepare our children for living and working together as adults, we must create an environment that teaches them how to live and work together when they are children. However, we are doing everybody an even greater disservice if we don't give staff and students the knowledge, skills, materials and personnel necessary to be able to address the needs of students with disabilities.

#### **4. Inclusive education in Greece**

Inclusive education has become the dominant educational approach for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, internationally to support and welcome the diversity among students (Kaimara & Oikonomou, 2017).<sup>37</sup> Inclusive education has been a global movement for at least 30 years. In Greece after a long period of segregation and exclusion for disabled students, on the grounds of offering enhanced provision and protection from the harsh realities of mainstream schooling, integration of disabled students in mainstream schools started to be institutionalized in the mid to late eighties.

At the 1985 Education Act (Law 1566/1985) was putted in question the segregated educational system for students with disabilities established only four years earlier (Law 1143/1981), and attempted to formulate the legal and institutional framework for the Integration of disabled students in mainstream schools Drawing mainly upon the vocabulary and theoretical constructs of the Warnock Report (DES 1978) and other contemporary English policy documents. Finally, the Education Act of 2000 was the first legislative document to state Explicitly the government's political will to promote more inclusive educational Policies within the national education system (see Law 2817/2000), echoing to a high degree the resolutions of the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994) on disability and education (Eysathiou, 2015)<sup>38</sup>.

The development of special needs education and the subsequent emergence of integrationist and inclusive educational discourses in Greece resemble similar advances in other industrial countries in the west and appear to be particularly influenced by English socio-political debates on exclusion and the rights of marginalised social groups. The objectives of inclusive programs are, in particular, the promotion of inclusion and equal opportunities in education, the development of cognitive, learning, emotional and social skills of pupils with SEN and / or disability, as well as sensitization of pupils in general education schools on human rights, respect for diversity and security of human dignity (Kaimara & Oikonomou, 2017).

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<sup>37</sup> <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dmnc.13966>

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/596807/IPOL\\_STU\(2017\)596807\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/596807/IPOL_STU(2017)596807_EN.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Eysathiou 2015, The fight for the inclusive education Grafima Thessaloniki

However, educational researchers in Greece argue that, even though the political rhetoric of each new administration asserts the right of 'unprivileged' children to high-quality education, the Greek education system has not yet arrived at a phase where this can be implemented. On the contrary, according to Soulis (2013)<sup>39</sup>, there is consistent evidence that Greek education still retains to a great extent an integrationist agenda, and that disability rights continue to be sidelined in educational and socio-cultural public discourses.<sup>40</sup>

Based on the figures of myschool, ELSTAT and the RENE / GSEE Report on Special Education and Training, in 2016 <sup>41</sup> In General Education (Integration and Parallel Schools), 67.7% of pupils attend and 32.3% of pupils attend Special Schools . The total student population with disabilities in Greece in 2016 was 31,071 (2.1% of the total student population). Overall, among these students 37.1% have mental retardation, 28.9% are in the autism spectrum and 14.1% face multiple disabilities. On 02-07-16 the Ministry announced the establishment of hundreds of new special education structures and Education highlighting the key priority for teacher coverage each student's needs, in the most appropriate learning environment, for that, and proceeded in the process of setting up special education and training structures, including of the Accession Departments. Under conditions of crisis and fiscal pressures, the Ministry of Public Finance. increases by 20% the Integration Departments and by 8% the Special Schools. At the same time, the Departments of Secondary Education (PED) of the Regional Units have issued Press Releases informing citizens about the Establishment of the Unified. Of the Specialized High School - Lyceum (FEK 2155/2017), which upgrades 5 <https://goo.gl/eMvhKU6> <https://goo.gl/YMnYGv> Volume A— 90 —the education provided to students with SEN, since it is the most suitable for these educational outlets, offering them both professionally and professionally rights (Kaimara & Oikonomou, 2017).

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<sup>39</sup> Soulis S. 2013 One school for all. Applying policy for disability In. <sup>39</sup> *From special to inclusive education From the school to a community for all.* Nanou et al (EDS) Grafima Thessaloniki

<sup>40</sup> Lianeri J 2013 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GREECE: OFFICIAL POLICIES, ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSES & THE ANTI-NOMIES OF INCLUSION

<http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/10020749/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.ipaideia.gr/paideia/i-ekpaideusi-stin-ellada-pano-apo-33-900-apoxoriseis-ekpaideutikon-ta-teleutaia-10-xronia>

## **Inclusive education policies for children and young people with disabilities**

By Mancomunitat De La Ribera Alta (Manra, Spain)

### **Premise**

The World Health Organization defines disability in a broad sense as encompassing impairments, activity limitations and restrictions on participation in life situations. Therefore, it understands that it is a complex phenomenon that reflects an interaction between the characteristics of the human organism and the characteristics of the society in which it lives (WHO, n. d.).

The World Disability Report (WHO, 2011) includes among the obstacles to be addressed those related to education. It thus makes clear that the success of inclusive education systems depends to a large extent on the country's commitment to adopt both appropriate legislation and clear policy guidance, to develop a plan of action, to build infrastructure and to secure long-term funding (p. 17).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) is also one of the basic frameworks for much educational inclusion policy.

### **Towards inclusive education**

In Spain there has been an evolution on educational inclusion in the last fifty years. The **1970 General Education Law**, in its chapter VII, dedicated to special education, established the coexistence of two models, one of a segregated nature and the other more integrative: training in special schools, "when the depth of the anomalies they suffer makes it absolutely necessary" and in special education units in ordinary schools "for the slightly deficient when possible" (General Law 14/1970, p. 12532).

**Organic Law 1/1990, of 3 October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System (LOGSE)** is committed to the integrative model. In its preamble it states the need to develop a policy both for adults and for people requiring special education, in order to avoid discrimination (Organic Law 1/1990, p. 28929). In its chapter V, dedicated to special education, it states that this will be governed by the principles of "normalization and school integration". The text also specifies that schools must have the necessary school organization and "make the necessary curricular adaptations and diversifications to facilitate the achievement of the indicated purposes by the students". It also stresses that schooling in special education units or centres "will only be carried out when the needs of the pupil cannot be met in an ordinary centre".

Moreover, it defends that this situation "will be reviewed periodically, so that, whenever possible, students' access to a system of greater integration can be favoured" (ibid., p. 28934).

**Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education** dedicated Chapter I of Title II to students with a specific need for educational support. It specifies that students with special educational needs are understood to be "those who require, for a period of their schooling or throughout it, certain specific educational support and attention derived from disability or serious behavioural disorders" (Organic Law 2/2006, p. 54).

In Spain, **Organic Law 8/2013 for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE)** takes into account the European Strategy on Disability 2010-2020, approved in 2010 by the European Commission as well as the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the United Nations in December 2006 and in force in Spain since May 2008 (Organic Law 8/2013, p. 6). Thus, it guarantees equity as a compensating element for inequalities, with special attention "to those deriving from any type of disability" (ibid., p. 11).

Similarly, it argues that the most appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure that assessments are 'tailored to the needs of pupils with special educational needs'. It also states that the teaching and assessment of foreign languages will be made more flexible for students with disabilities "especially for those who have difficulties in their oral expression" (ibid., p. 20). It also guarantees equality in the admission of disabled students to university (ib., p. 30).

The Law also urges educational administrations to ensure the necessary resources so that "students who require educational attention different from the ordinary, because they have special educational needs, because of specific learning difficulties, ADHD [...] can reach the maximum possible development of their personal abilities and, in any case, the objectives established with a general character for all students" (ib., p. 39).

The Action Plan of the Spanish Strategy on Disability 2014-2020 (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, 2014) is the one that sets out the lines of action to eliminate the causes of discrimination. The plan is structured in five areas, one of which is education. The strategic objective in this area is to reduce the school drop-out rate and increase the rate of people with disabilities with higher education.

According to data from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, cited in the same report, a total of 149,618 non-university students received care for special educational needs in the 2011-2012 academic year (ib., p. 18).

The Ministry of Education, together with the Spanish Committee of Representatives of People with Disabilities (CERMI), constituted the Forum for Educational Attention to People with Disabilities.

## **Inclusive education in the Valencian Community**

The educational attention is transferred in its application to the Autonomous Communities, territorial entities with political and financial autonomy. Spain is organized territorially in 17 Autonomous Communities and 2 cities with statute of autonomy (Ceuta and Melilla).

In almost all the Autonomous Communities, similar measures of attention to educational diversity are established, ranging from ordinary to extraordinary. The latter are implemented when ordinary measures are not sufficient to meet the specific educational needs of a student in primary or secondary school.

In the Valencian Community, the area in which the Mancomunitat de la Ribera Alta (MANRA) is located, current state legislation has been developed through various rules. Among them:

- Decree 104/2018, of 27 July, of the Consell, which develops the principles of equity and inclusion in the Valencian educational system. In its preamble it indicates that the inclusive school "requires the application of multiple resources of a different nature, functional, organizational, curricular or personal, to address a wide range of situations in which students require some form of support, temporarily or throughout their schooling" (Decree 104/2018, p. 33357). In its article 2, it specifies that although the scope of application are all schools supported by public funds from the education system, "private schools not supported by public funds must also develop inclusive education for all students in accordance with the general protocols approved by the Ministry of Education" (ibid., p. 33359).

- Order 20/2019, of 30 April, of the Regional Ministry of Education, Research, Culture and Sport, which regulates the organisation of the educational response for the inclusion of pupils in educational centres supported by public funds from the Valencian educational system.

With regard to the detection of circumstances of educational needs, article 4 establishes that prior to schooling, school psychopedagogical services and municipal psychopedagogical cabinets "must receive information from pupils who may have specific needs for educational support, provided by families, other educational services, health and social welfare services and early care centres" (Order 20/2019, p. 20858). It is also up to the centre itself to include in its educational project mechanisms for detecting specific needs for educational support, in order to initiate a response as soon as possible.

## **A path with pending improvements**

Despite the progress made in recent decades in the field of education, the United Nations Committee recently produced a comprehensive report urging Spain to review its policies related to people with disabilities. On education, the Committee was concerned that there is no clear policy and plan of action to promote education for persons with disabilities:

The Committee is particularly concerned that the State party has maintained all regulatory provisions on special education and a medical impairment-based approach. The Committee is concerned that a high number of children with disabilities, including autism, intellectual or psychosocial and multiple disabilities, are still receiving segregated special education (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2019, p. 35).

Thus, the report recommended the State:

- Accelerate legislative reform to clearly define inclusion and its specific objectives at each level of education.
- That all students with disabilities have the right of access to inclusive learning opportunities in the general education system, regardless of their personal characteristics.
- That formulates a comprehensive policy of inclusive education with strategies to promote the culture of inclusion in general education and it comprises:
  - Conducting individualized assessments and making necessary adjustments
  - Providing support to teachers

Also entities representing affected groups such as the Spanish Federation of Rare Diseases (FEDER) stated in a report the difficulty generated by a regulation that gives the right to support but does not develop how to implement it, especially in the case of children with rare diseases, due to the special characteristics of these conditions. Moreover, in a survey of

Federation associations, 68% were dissatisfied with educational inclusion in the compulsory stages (primary and secondary).

Similarly, the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities (CERMI) expressed in the document *Atención educativa a las personas con discapacidad* [Educational assistance for people with disabilities] (2004) the need to improve care in ordinary educational centres through: teacher training, the provision of specialised professionals, the rapid coverage of specialist leave, the establishment of coordination times between specialists and tutors within school hours, more technical aids (computers, etc.) and greater development of curricular diversification, among other issues.

In inclusive education, therefore, there remains a significant margin for improvement in the actions to be carried out in the coming years.

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## **Inclusive education in Latvia**

By Rezekne Academy of Technologies

The aims of education policy in Latvia have been linked mainly with an economic development and the state identity for a long time. The compliance of education content to the requirements of labour market, education quality, as well as consolidation the state language in the education system have been the cornerstones of education policy during recent decades. In comparison with these undoubtedly essential laws, which correspond to laws, spoken it was more rarely spoken about the meaning of equal opportunities and the issues of inclusive education. (Golubeva, 2018)

Inclusive education has been considered as solution to pedagogical dilemma, which teachers have already tried to solve for centuries – how to ensure the necessities of every child's education and development at normative, comprehensive school. (Nīmante, 2008)

Determining the trends of Latvia education policy in The Guidelines of Education Development for 2007 – 2013 and then for 2014 – 2020, priority trend of education policy has been emphasised: ensuring of special education needs in inclusive environment. (MK, 2006, IZM, 2013)

A lot of things have been done since 2014 in order to provide opportunity for children with different special needs to study at general schools. Liga Buceniece, Ministry of Education and Science Department of education director, explains that a variety of regulations have been worked out to support inclusive education, emphasising that at the moment out of 200 000 children in comprehensive education 2.1% or approximately 6000 are the integrated ones. (special needs' children) Unfortunately, the problem has already appeared – municipalities (particularly in the rural municipalities) do not manage to find appropriate specialists (psychologists, social teachers, speech therapy teachers) because salary at school is not competitive, comparing with a private sector.(Orupe, 2019)

The Republic of Latvia Education law envisages – every person has rights to acquire education independently of material and social background, race, nationality, gender, religious and political belief, health condition, occupation and domicile. This is exactly the essence of inclusive education – to provide observance of these rights. (Education law, 1998) The aim of inclusive education is to provide equal opportunities for education acquisition and to foster the inclusion of social exclusion’s risk groups into all kinds and levels of education system.

The tasks of inclusive education:

- To encourage the inclusion of special needs’ students into comprehensive education establishments.
- To ensure equal opportunities for students in acquisition and evaluation of studies’ content.
- To ensure working out of teaching aids, methodological materials according to the kind of disturbance in order to promote the dynamics of student’s development.
- To provide an available educational environment and to promote the improvement of environment availability for community in general.
- To ensure a qualitative and effective system of teachers’ training for implementing of inclusive education.
- To ensure a well – timed diagnostics of special needs at all stages of education.
- To advance the change and comprehension of the community attitude on inclusive education.

In order to advance inclusive education necessary normative documents are being worked out and have already been passed in Latvia, including Cabinet of Ministers’ regulations No 1510 “On the Procedure of State Tests”, which determine the support activities for special needs’ students, CB Ministers’ regulations No 591 “The Procedure of the Educated Enrolment into General Education Programmes, to Special Education Establishments and Special Pre- School Education Groups and Expelling from Them, as Well as Promotion to the Next Grade”, etc.

Inclusive education foresees that special needs' children can study at comprehensive school together with their peers. The definition of inclusive education provided by European agency of special and inclusive education is as follows: inclusive education is a process with an aim to provide that meaningful, high quality education opportunities are available to all the students at any age together with their friends and peers in local community. (Zvaigzne, Znotiņa, 2019) Specialists point out that life situations are different and not always and not all children can be included. It depends on child's diagnosis and also on the kind of support an educational establishment offers, also on how ready parents are to cooperate with an educational establishment.

It is determined in General Education Law that the basic task of educational establishment is implementation of general education programme. Simultaneously comprehensive educational establishment can implement one or several educational programmes, for example:

- General education programme that provides general mental and physical skills' development of the student, prepares him/her for continuing of education, work and life in community.
- The implementation procedure of general education is determined by general education law.
- Special education programme, which has been implemented, taking into consideration the health state of the student. According to general education law, a special needs' person can acquire special education at educational establishment because opportunities to acquire education that is appropriate to the health state and types of development disturbances are provided at this school.
- Educational programme of social correction, which is acquired by persons who have deviations of social behaviour according to article 43 of General Education Law. Educational programmes of social correction are implemented at social correction educational establishments or in social correction classes at general education establishments.

According to General Education Law, the special needs' students can be integrated at the establishments of general basic education and general secondary establishments, which have appropriate provisions. The requirements, which are put forward to general basic education and general secondary education in order to provide the integrating of special needs' students into the educational establishments mentioned are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers. Simultaneously, it is determined in the law mentioned that availability of corresponding support activities for special needs' students who have been integrated into a general educational establishment is provided by educational establishment. An educational establishment works out an individual acquisition plan of educational programme for every integrated student. "Neither a blind, deaf, a wheelchair child, nor a child who has different learning disturbances is a burden for a teacher, the most serious burden is if together with a diagnosis a child has severe behaviour disturbances. In this case, all the class suffers" I. Kalniņa points out. (Zvaigzne, Znotiņa, 2019)

Inclusive education is the most efficient in primary school classes. The problems start at teenagers' age. Children just accept those who have severe external disturbances and inadequate behaviour explains by them. But learning disturbances or slight disturbances of mental development cannot be seen from outside, that's why it is more difficult to understand them - children sometimes become the victims of mockery that in its turn additionally to learning disturbances cause also behaviour disturbances. (Klasē – skolēns..., 2015)

Difficulties in upbringing process and breaking of socially accepted norms in human relationships are usually understood by the term "behaviour disturbances". It is possible that the difficulties and norms mentioned depend on every individual person who meets them. Somebody considers that the resistance to the requirements put forward means behaviour disturbances, the other person links them to aggressive behaviour. Attention is rarely paid to passive activity and depressive conditions as behaviour disturbances, although they influence life process and successful inclusion of a person among others.

Humanism is one of the most essential principles in Latvia's pedagogy, a human is a core of such approach. The presence of inappropriate students' behaviour is one of the most serious and

usually also the most difficultly solvable problems in studies and upbringing process's procedures.

The problem created by behaviour influence both the quality of pedagogical activity and the results of children academic achievements, and not only of those whose behaviour is problematic but of all the students in the group. While solving behaviour problems, it is essential to comprehend that assistance is necessary for both – the child who has behaviour disturbances and the one against whom the negative expressions are referred to.

Teacher's work in averting of behaviour disturbances will be much more effective also child's parents engage. Cooperation of a teacher and parents is necessary with one aim – to make immediate pedagogical activities (strategies and technologies) supplement one another. When parents and teachers – the most essential adults for a children combine their efforts, put forward common tasks and use the strategies, which are based on partnership, the results in behaviour correction are achieved faster. (Bethere, Līdaka, et.al.,2013)

Contribution into inclusive education is a kind how to provide equal opportunities not only for special needs' children and learning disabilities, but also for children from low-income families and national minority children. Unfortunately, the research works, done in several countries point out that unprotected children, who should study at comprehensive schools, are often kept at special education boarding schools. It is not a secret that children from low- income families and the ones left without parents' care use to get at special education boarding schools not because they really have severe development or mental health problems but because nobody has taught them elementary skills appropriate to their age, and because they are not welcomed at ordinary schools because teachers do not manage behaviour problems of these children. Schools as well as children need support in order to manage these challenges and provide an opportunity to every child to acquire the best possible education. (Golubeva, 2018)

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## **Teaching parents emotional communication skills, Teaching parents positive parent-child interaction skills - Latvian context**

By Rezekne Academy of Technologies

Doing research on support available to the parents of disabled children, we conclude that state provided social services for the families, which bring up disabled children, are mainly oriented on rehabilitation of disabled children and are not meant for the support of disabled children's parents. Basically these services are providing of the family with assistive products and rehabilitation in the National rehabilitation center "Vaivari" once during the period of 1.5 years.

Municipalities, in their turn, offer social services, which comprise consultations of the psychologist, social worker, home care, and care for disabled children at day centers, as well as rehabilitation of children with mental disturbances. (Law on Social Services and Social Assistance, 2002).

Generally these are education and treatment programs, which are comprised for disabled children, with an aim to improve children's cognition level and the skills of self- assistance. There are few support services and programs, which are envisaged for the parents of disabled children because a huge significance of parents in rehabilitation of ill children has not been evaluated and recognized enough. It is confirmed by research works done in Latvia – "Opportunities of Single Parents Who Bring up Disabled Children to Join up Labour Market and Necessary Support for Their Social Inclusion" (Pomere, Rāta, Bariss, Grigule, & Sviklis, 2007), "On Social Services for the Families with Children Who Have Mental and Physical Disturbances in the Municipalities of Zemgale Region and Northern Lithuania", (Prikule, Rudzīte, Limanāne, Supe, Lūse, Šimkute, & Tulabiene, 2013) and doctoral thesis "Life Quality of Disabled Children's Families in Latvia". (Millere, 2012)

It was concluded in these research works that the provided support in the quality fields of disabled children families is either inappropriate to the need of families or families meet different

obstacles in receiving of the planned support. (Millere, 2012; Pomere et al., 2007, Geikina, 2016).

In order to help parents to cope with the difficulties in children upbringing, to encourage the formation of positive children - parents' interaction and to decrease the risk of children behavior problems' development parents' learning problems are worked out in different countries all over the world. Parents' studies are defined as "active, purposeful learning of specific parents' skills with the aim to influence child's behavior in a positive way (Shriver, & Allen, 2008). It is a dynamic learning process, where the parents themselves involve actively, and the aim of which is to teach parents new kinds of behavior in order to encourage a positive behavior of the child.

Training and support programs have not been worked out particularly for the parents of disabled children in Latvia yet, but such programs have been worked out in the world, for example, "3 P Program of Steps", the training program of Cognitive behavioral coping, which includes the methods of cognitive reconstruction, the acquisition of communication skills, problem solving, individual aims' achievement and groups' therapy, the program of cognitive behavioral stress coping for parents, which combines psycho-educating on stress coping skills and parents' mutual self- assistance (Skreitule-Pikše, 2010).

Exactly the social rehabilitation programs, which are developed by non- governmental organizations are the most available in Latvia. "Velku foundation" that organizes support groups for disabled children parents with an aim to provide and receive emotional support, help to cope with loss and pain, encourage belief in their own strength, development and self-respect in people has to be mentioned as one of the most active non- governmental organizations but support services for decreasing of disabled children parents' stress and encouraging of parents' competence sense are not included in these support groups. The main emphasis of other non- governmental organizations is on the rehabilitation of a disabled child. For example, psychological and functional support centre for the families with children who have movement and development disturbances "Mēs esam līdzās" (We are near you) is implementing the project, the general aim of which is decreasing of disability consequences, children are

prepared for participation at school and an innovative system of interactive games- tests for evaluation of development progress and development stimulation was worked out.(Geikina, 2016).

Comparing different parents' training programs, those where several approaches have been integrated, are recognized to be the most effective (Landy, & Menna, 2006). Using simultaneously several approaches in the study programs, it is possible to provide much broader insight on children development for parents, to analyze the factors, which are linked with it in more details, as well as parents have greater opportunities to find more appropriate approach for themselves during studies. Parents' learning program "Encouraging Children's Healthy Emotional Development" also is developed, integrating different approaches and discussing emotional development of children from the position of different development theories.

Parents' learning program "Encouraging Children's Healthy Emotional Development" (Landy, 1995; Landy, 2002; Landy & Thompson, 2006) was developed in Canada and was meant for parents who have children in the age group until seven. The programme was developed based on 2 versions of the program, which developed in Canada. The title of the first parents' learning program was Helping Encourage Affect Regulation, (HEAR), (Landy, et al., 1997), and it was meant for the parents of little children who had aggressive and disobedient behavior. During the implementing of the program it was supplemented and perfected, paying attention not only to aggressive and disobedient behavior of the children but also to different skills linked with children emotional development skills and for encouraging of their development, and the second version of the program was developed (Pathways to Competence for Young Children Parenting Program, Landy & Thompson, 2006). As the result, ECHED program is meant not only for the parents of aggressive children but for all parents who want to supplement their knowledge on child's emotional development and encourage a positive child's development.

The formation of a more positive parents' self-conception is encouraged, teaching parents more effective kinds of interaction with children, new methods of disciplining children, assisting parents to comprehend the influence of their own childhood experience on their interaction with children, as well as ensuring an accepting and supporting attitude for parents in

the group. In its turn, when the quality of parents - children interaction increase and children's skills are developed, the formation of a more positive child's concept on himself/herself and others is encouraged.

The results of research works on different parents' learning programs reveal that after participation in these programs will increase self-reliance of parents (Morawska & Sanders, 2006), parents' - children interaction becomes more positive (Bakermans-Kranenburg, van IJzendoorn, & Juffer, 2007; Matsumoto, Sofronoff, & Sanders, 2007) and children behaviour problems decrease (Matsumoto, et al., 2007; Morawska & Sanders, 2006; Rapee, Kennedy, Ingram, Edwards, & Sweeney, 2005). These changes are enduring also during a longer time period after the end of the program (Matsumoto, et al., 2007; Morawska & Sanders, 2006).

Support for the families where there are disabled children is very essential. A lot of successfully worked out support programs, which have decreased parents' stress, increase parents' self-assessment and sense of competence confirm it (Benson, 2016; Davison, Pennebaker, & Dickerson, 2000; Harbin, McWilliam, & Gallagher, 2000).

Parents' support groups mutually differ according to the aims and the expected results, a form, a topic and work methods, a target audience, the leader's functions, time and place. Parents' support groups are divided in the following ways:

- Self-assistance groups are oriented on the parents who have been united by a common problem, situation or experience. In these groups parents come together in order to help each other.
- Support groups, which can function as a motivator, an evaluator, and the activities' sequence of knowledge, skills and abilities' acquisition. Their aim is an emotional support and information providing.
- Therapy groups are oriented at the parent who have severe emotional, personality and social problems. The aim of the group is to help parents to comprehend, accept and find

solutions for topical problems, using a collective experience and the available resources of the group.

- Informative and educating groups are equated to seminars and lectures, assuming that parents have enough of inner resources on order to self-educate themselves – parents will be able to "multiply and synergies" the information acquired.
- The study programs, which are oriented and directed in order to help the parents to cope with the difficulties in children upbringing, decrease the problems of children behavior, encourage the formation of positive parents' – children interaction.(Geikina, 2016).

The research done on the effectiveness of parents' support programs testify that the programs, which are oriented only on one field, for example, the expression of emotions, are not as efficient as those, which commonly use social, emotional and cognitive processes. The programs, which have been developed, basing on cognitively behavioral theory, in which it is considered that the stress is not caused by the events but by the kind of their perception are considered to be the most efficient all over the world.

Taking into consideration specific needs of the target group, a planned, particular and exclusive support for the disabled children's families would be necessary also in Latvia, attracting additional financing for the development of social services, developing the support system for the families with disabled children, including the development of new instruments (intervention programs) (Geikina, 2016).

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## **Inclusive education policies - integrated education in Poland**

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### **1. Historical context**

Since the late nineties of the XXth century, the importance of special education in terms of inclusive policies has increased in Poland and over Europe due to cultural changes. The approach towards open societies, embedded in pluralism and diversity of social groups and individuals, raised the significance of the disabled who used to be previously marginalized and underestimated. Innovative attitudes are reflected in the sphere of education. Especially, in the light of the Salamanca Declaration (1994) on special needs education - it has been commonly admitted that school systems and relevant educational projects need to give particular attention to diverse students' characters, interests, demands and abilities. That is why the education of students with special needs is recognized within the perspective of new actions aimed at the achievement of the following objectives:

- " ● a broader right and access to education that includes students with serious disabilities (in countries where this has not yet been accomplished);
- the inclusion of students who used to be segregated in the system of generally accessible schools and the insurance of a high-quality education;
- a broader range of diverse forms of special pedagogical assistance in schools that are open to all; this assistance needs to include all students with special needs and not only an exclusive or narrow group of disabled students." (Szumski, 2000, p. 115).

In Poland, special attention has been given to the above objectives after the collapse of communism and the direction towards a democratic political, economic and social orders. The education reform which was launched in 1999 and which was addressed to the entire school system, in spite of serious inadequacies brings visible improvements to the physically and mentally handicapped students.

It is worth mentioning that educational institutions for the disabled have operated in Poland for a long time. The Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, founded in Warsaw in 1917 and still in existence, opens the list as a pioneer counterpart of the first American school for the deaf opened in Connecticut by H. Gallaudet. In 1918, when Poland regained independence after 122 years of occupation, the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education was created with its Department for Special Schools responsible for the coordination of legislative and administrative work in the sector of special education. In 1922, the same Ministry formed the State Institute of Special Education assigned to provide theoretical and methodological

foundations for special education and to train qualified teachers. The Director of the Institute was Maria Grzegorzewska (1888-1967), educated in Cracow, Brussels and Paris, a crucial protagonist and the creator of the Polish special education. She strongly believed that a human being is a psychophysical unity, so that there should be a global approach towards any aberration from the norm. Grzegorzewska put forward a famous claim that:

"There is no such thing as a cripple - there is a man" (*The system of education in Poland, 2012, p. 84*).

Her dynamic structural system theory advocated the principle of compensation in the revalidation of the disabled.

In 1939, by the time World War II broke out, the insufficient network of special schools and special classes within regular schools shows no more than 104 special schools for physically and mentally disabled in the whole country, providing instruction for just only 11.5% of children with special education needs (SEN). The postwar history does not depict visible improvements until early 1960s when the special schools network and special classes within regular schools expanded. The idea of integrated education, originally controversial, has been given a new quality since the 1990s. The discussion about inclusive education has substantially changed its flavour, as it stopped being considered wrong or right, but it started to be considered in terms of the best ways of implementing it (Szumski, 2000).

## **2. Special education within mainstream education - integrated provision. Present developments**

Poland has adopted three basic models for integration which can be described, as follows:

● Full integration - All children with disabilities are to be taught in mainstream settings. Full integration in this sense can be perceived as inclusion. Segregated schools for students with disabilities do not exist in this model.

● Incomplete integration - Only students with mild disabilities should be included in the mainstream educational setting. Children with severe disabilities are still taught in special schools.

● Partial integration - Children with disabilities can be taught in special schools or mainstream schools but the decision about the school setting is made by taking into account the needs, well-being, and welfare of the child." (Ober, Twardowski, Pierson, 2019, p. 320).

Children with special educational needs in Poland are provided with psychological and educational support, services offered in outpatient settings, care and support inside the school,

and education and care in kindergartens and schools. Counselling services are free of charge. In general, the support is aimed at stimulation of pupils' psychological and physical development,

as well as the enhancement of the effectiveness of learning. A proper recognition of special educational needs is particularly important and it embraces children with:

- specific learning difficulties,
- mild, moderate and severe mental disabilities,
- the Asperger's syndrome and autism,
- physical disabilities, including aphasia,
- multiple disabilities,
- speech disorders.

A full list of special educational needs includes children who are:

- blind, deaf and with hearing and vision impairment,
- socially maladjusted and at risk of addiction,
- chronically ill,
- in vulnerable and traumatic conditions,
- experiencing repetitive educational failures,
- experiencing community negligence due to family welfare, quality of spare time activities and socialization,
- affected with adaptation difficulties resulting from cultural differences or a different educational background,
- exceptionally talented.

Data from the school year 2010/2011 report that, usually, children with special educational needs learn together with other peers either in integration schools/kindergartens - where all classes are integration ones - or they attend integration classes in mainstream schools/kindergartens - where classes are integration or mainstream ones. The statistics for the school year 2010/2011 show that approx. 60% - equivalent of 36.5 thousand and approx. 45% -

equivalent of 24 thousand of all pupils with special educational needs were under instruction in primary and lower secondary schools, respectively, in school settings within mainstream education (*The system of education in Poland, 2012*).

The integrated provision for the school year 2013/2014 gives evidence of similar values and it reaches approx. 58% of pupils with special educational needs attending mainstream primary schools and approx. 47% of them attending mainstream lower secondary schools. It means that 66.3 thousand children with SEN were under instruction in mainstream primary schools and they accounted for 3% of all pupils in primary schools. At the same time, 49.3 thousand students with SEN attended lower secondary schools and they accounted for 4.4% of all their peers in lower secondary schools. Improving the quality of inclusive education was one of the principal policies of the state for the school year 2013/2014 and the years to come (*The system of education in Poland, 2014*).

Decisions regarding best forms of education for a child with special educational needs belongs to the parents. Neither mainstream schools nor nursery schools can refuse to enroll a child with SEN. On the contrary, they are obliged to give support in compliance with individuals needs and expectations. It is worth mentioning that the national legislation does not clearly define the term of special educational needs. The semantics of the notion is relatively broad and flexible, as well as individually driven. Necessary support may result, for example, from a particular disability, specific learning difficulties, social maladjustment, behavioural or emotional disorders, chronic disease, traumatic experiences that may have long-lasting effects, to mention just a few.

Recent available data for the school year 2016/2017 report, in total, that children and youngsters with special educational needs represent approx. 1.5% of the preschool population and approx. 3% of the school population. However, the proportion of pupils and students enrolled in special schools, as opposed to mainstream schools, varies and it strongly depends on the level of education and type of institution. A comparative evidence shows that direct relation:

### Number of pupils/students in education for children and youth with SEN in mainstream and special schools , 2016/2017

Education level	Total	Mainstream schools	Special schools
Primary schools	73,311	49,013 (67%)	24,298 (33%)
Lower secondary schools	47,440	24,250 (51%)	23,190 (49%)
Special schools preparing for employment	10,707	-----	10,707 (100%)
Basic vocational schools	14,507	3,582 (25%)	10,925 (75%)
Technical upper secondary schools	3,912	3,060 (78%)	852 (22%)
General upper secondary schools	5,329	4,147 (78%)	1,182 (22%)
Post-secondary schools	377	30 (8%)	347 (92%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>155,583</b>	<b>84,082 (54%)</b>	<b>71,501 (46%)</b>

Source: *The system of education in Poland 2018*, Ewa Kolanowska, Foundation for the Development of the Education System, Warsaw 2018, p. 89).

Specific arrangements referring to the teaching process in integration classes that are organized in integration or mainstream schools determine the acceptable number of pupils from 15 to maximum 20, including from 3 to maximum 5 disabled children. The size of a class in a special school and a special class in a mainstream school, depending on the type of disability, also has to follow the limit rules of up to 4 students with autism or Asperger's syndrome, up to 8 pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, and up to 16 students with a mild intellectual disability, and, finally, up to 16 socially maladjusted peers or those at risk of maladjustment. Schools with integration classes are obliged to employ additional supporting teachers qualified in special education. It often happens that supporting teachers are also involved in individual work with pupils who need specific skills, for example how to use the Braille alphabet or to communicate in sign language.

The curricula in mainstream schools are based on the common core curriculum for particular stages of education. Pupils with SEN have individual therapy programmes and rehabilitation activities. The minimum duration of rehabilitation classes/activities in mainstream and integration classes of mainstream schools is 2 clock hours a week per pupil at every stage of education.

## The minimum number of therapy and support classes in different type of schools

### Mainstream or integration classes

Primary schools	190 hours per pupil/2 hours per pupil weekly
Lower secondary schools	190 hours per pupil/2 hours per pupil weekly
General upper secondary schools	180 hours per pupil/2 hours per pupil weekly
Technical upper secondary schools	240 hours per pupil/2 hours per pupil weekly
Basic vocational schools	190 hours per pupil/2 hours per pupil weekly

Source: *The system of education in Poland, 2014, 2018*, p. 80 and p. 91, respectively.

### 3. Conclusions

Since the beginning of the 1990s, when institutions of integrated education started to be founded in Poland, the process in favour of inclusiveness has been continuously accelerated by the parents of disabled children. Their involvement must be explained by an intense desire to look for opportunities of educating their children with SEN in the company of peers and within the least restrictive environment.

Present development trends for integrated education in Poland can be expressed by the following statements:

" [...] (1) the number of children with low-incidence disabilities attending mainstream schools is increasing (this change is more visible at the primary stage of education); (2) the number of special education classes in mainstream schools is decreasing; (3) the number of children with low-incidence disabilities in special classes is decreasing and (4) students attending special schools are mostly children with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities" (Ober, Twardowski, Pierson, 2019, p. 328).

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