



EUROPEAN AGENCY
for Special Needs and Inclusive Education



RAISING THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF ALL LEARNERS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Country Report: Hungary



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HUNGARY COUNTRY REPORT

1. What reference is made to raising achievement in national policies? How is raising achievement defined?

In order to develop quality education for learners with special educational needs (SEN), Act CXC of 2011 on public education contains the following obligations:

- The regulation of the structure and tasks of the pedagogical services must be revised and developed to offer access to quality provisions.
- Development of a network of travelling special education teachers and travelling conductors who support inclusive, mainstream education for learners with SEN.

National Disability Programme:

- To establish a system for learners with special educational needs that is capable of identifying individual needs and characteristics and, in the light of them, offer extra services.
- To strengthen the role of institutions of unified special education and conductive education methodology as supporters of inclusive education.
- To support measures that help successfully develop learners with severe and multiple disabilities to the best of their abilities.
- To develop pedagogical assistance services that fall in line with differentiated needs.
- To train and prepare a large number of professionals in order to extend high-quality early childhood services and to meet the demands that may arise in the institutional welfare system.
- To offer career development; to operate educational and career guidance at an institutional level; to disseminate individual transition programmes in practice.

References to raising achievement in general in public education:

- Mid-term strategy against drop-out without a qualification. Referring to the objective of the EU 2020 strategy to improve competitiveness and rate of employment and to reduce early school leaving (ESL), Hungary committed to cutting the national ESL rate to 10% by 2020.
- The development of early childhood services.
- The development of career guidance activities.

The Education and Training 2020 Strategic Framework has set the following benchmarks:

- By 2020, underperformance in reading, mathematics and science among 15-year-olds should be reduced to below 15%.
- By 2020, the rate of early school leavers should be under 10%.



- By 2020, at least 95% of children between the age of four and compulsory primary education age should take part in early childhood education.

2. What national policies specifically target raising achievement?

Restructuring of Pedagogical Assistance Services

Government Regulation 15/2013 (II.26), on the functioning of the pedagogical specialised service institutions have been reorganised for all pedagogical service tasks (expert committee activity, early intervention, educational counselling, speech therapy, etc.). Before the Decree entered into force, the performance of tasks by the pedagogical professional services was allocated geographically and unequally. The activities were carried out in a non-standardised institutional structure and maintained by different types of maintainers. However, on the basis of the Decree, one single (united) pedagogical professional service, the County Institution, was established in each county. This merged all pedagogical professional services operating in the county, with single management and professional control and the application of standard rules of procedure, with the exceptions specified in the Decree.

The County Institution compulsorily consists of a headquarter institution and school district member institutions in each county. In certain counties and in Budapest, it is supplemented with member institutions performing county tasks. In Budapest, member institutions perform county and national tasks to make tasks more successful. The majority of the pedagogical professional service tasks were assigned to school district member institutions. Consequently, the affected people have access to the pedagogical professional service benefits near their place of residence. The content of the scheme was defined by taking into consideration the observations of public organisations on unjustified labelling and the recommendations of the Disability Committee of the UN on inclusive education.

Of particular interest is the project part entitled 'Extension of the tools of the pedagogical service work.' Within this framework, 12 diagnostic and development procedures were standardised and developed.

Regulation of the network of travelling special education teachers and travelling conductors

The pedagogical services were regulated in 2013. A new type of pedagogical service, under a single leadership and using uniform procedures, started its operation in September 2013. The preparation of a new regulation for the network of travelling special education teachers and travelling conductors began in the autumn of 2014. The regulation came into force in Act CXC of 2011 on national public education in January 2015. A detailed regulation has been prepared by a working group of civic and governmental professionals. The detailed rules put into force are in progress.



Reforming the training system in skill-developing special schools

The skill-developing special vocational school is a secondary school which transmits practical skills and lifestyle knowledge to learners with moderate learning difficulties (IQ 50–30). Together with Ministry for National Economy, a working group was established in 2013 to reform the skill-developing special vocational school training. Within this framework, an additional 18 new practical framework curricula and the codification proposal were finished.

Learners with severe and multiple disabilities

‘Developmental teaching and education’ is the training of learners with severe multiple disabilities. Developmental teaching and education is provided individually or in groups in special educational institutions, private institution or at home. The law of public education passed structural and technical changes in connection with learners with severe and multiple disabilities. For renewal of professional care and to prepare a comprehensive picture of the situation, an inter-sectoral working group was created in January 2015. The development planning of several projects support these activities.

Mid-term strategy against drop-out without a qualification

The EU 2020 strategy to improve competitiveness and the rate of employment aims to reduce early school leaving below an average of 10% across the EU. Hungary committed to cut this rate below 10% by 2020. A national strategy on early school leaving prevention has been completed and received government approval in November 2014 (1603/2014 (XI. 4.) Government decree).

The main objective of the ESL Strategy is to promote access to inclusive, quality mainstream education for all and to increase qualification levels.

Measures involved in the ESL Strategy serve to prevent and tackle early school leaving, improve learners’ skills and competences and improve the rate of school success, fostering a smooth labour market transition and employability. The ESL Strategy has a focus on learners at risk of drop-out, especially socially disadvantaged and multiple disadvantaged – including Roma – learners.

The Strategy contains an analysis of the current situation. Based on that, specifically targeted actions and policy measures have been defined to tackle the problem of early school leaving.

The ESL Strategy introduced an ESL data-collection and early warning system in the Act on Public Education of January 2015. This aims to establish an early warning system and define those learners who are at risk of drop-out. Based on a legal mandate of the Act, database development and testing of the warning system was planned for 2016. The measure systematically promotes the goals defined by the ESL Strategy.

Young people who have not completed primary school are one of the most vulnerable groups in relation to leaving school without qualifications. The 2011 Vocational Training Act helped to strengthen the role of vocational schools in providing jobs. These schools enable social inclusion and training to catch up and follow diverse learning paths. Interoperability is re-regulated and improvements implemented in the context of adult education in the acquisition of state-recognised qualifications. A demand for a vocational



education system based on remedial training for deficiencies in the primary school curriculum is in the uniform statutory framework for national programmes providing public education.

The 'Bridge Programme' is aligned with the Vocational Training Act. Under the programme, a partial qualification can be obtained. However, the primary goal is to prepare learners to become involved in vocational training. Programmes for disadvantaged apprentices (for example, the Arany János Programme or the *Útravaló*) or programmes aimed at partial qualification acquisition can reduce the number of people leaving school without qualifications.

Early warning and pedagogical support system

This system, aimed at preventing drop-out, will be introduced, as detailed in the Public Education Act (Act CXC of 2011). Its detailed rules and necessary improvements are still under development. The use of complex, system-wide educational measures becomes necessary for learners whose grade point average result has deteriorated at least 1.1 degree in the current school year, compared with an average or less than average performance in the previous academic year. In these cases, the legal operation of early detection and the pedagogical support system associated with the reduction of learners at risk is a separate issue.

Prevent early school leaving

In order to prevent early school leaving, attending kindergarten is now mandatory from the age of three instead of the age of five, in line with the Act on Public Education in force from September 2015. The measure aims to establish the basis for successful future learning pathways and to allow learning difficulties and any need for early intervention to be discovered in time. In 2015/2016, 95% of four-year-old children attended kindergarten.

Career guidance

Career guidance services operate in the public education system on two levels:

- at school level (directing activities, processes embedded in the school);
- at career counselling service level (contact and co-ordinating tasks: status assessment, diagnostics, motivation-mapping) in pedagogical service institutions.

The Human Capacities Development Operational Programme, the Europe 2020 strategy and others involving public education, such as the National Strategies and the National Disability Programme, place special emphasis on the development of different types of career guidance activities.

The guidance of the Public Education Development Strategy emphasises the following objectives:

- the inclusion of guidance and career advice from the professional service system;
- vocational guidance and career counselling for learners. Pilot task: further education, career counselling, the development and alignment of the operating system practices;



- competence and skills development and establishment of a system to support career guidance programmes;
- empowering of participation in the labour market (self-knowledge, guidance, support the development of career management skills).

The National Disability Programme also emphasises the following:

- In the case of a child with special needs or foster parents, the following are of particular importance:
 - an appropriate level of care should be provided by the pedagogical service institutions, especially in education and further education;
 - access to career counselling professional service resources should be expanded.
- Development of further education and vocational guidance is needed as provided in the pilot system, access to successful preparation for the labour market.

Based on the above, in the 2014–2020 period more development design is also intended to support these tasks. This priority has a budget.

Early childhood intervention

In order to provide assistance as early as possible, early childhood intervention measures are brought together at governmental level. This is pursuant to Government Resolution No. 1246/2015 (IV. 23.) on the measures needed for effective intervention in early childhood.

Early childhood intervention is a summary description, which in the independent sector includes intervention aimed at pre-primary learners. Part of this belongs to the public education sector and part to the ‘special education counselling, early intervention, education and care’ (in short, early childhood intervention) tasks of the pedagogical service.

Objectives of the project:

- Harmonising the different sectors of early childhood intervention activities; co-ordinating the early years of a child’s life is a priority for the government project.
- To ensure uniform, common guidelines for learners. Developing protocols and analysis of existing protocols, implementation and adaptation. The creation of a single modern and standardised measurement and evaluation system, validated screening methods and the introduction of testing procedures.
- Increase the competencies of professionals, forming a coherent approach.
- Develop partnerships with families.
- Improve access to services dealing with children.
- Development of interfaces between areas of the organisation and co-ordination aspects involved in early intervention.



3. What information/data are collected at national level on attainment and achievement?

The educational level of the population is one of the demographics traditionally asked for in connection with census-type data recording (along with gender, date of birth, nationality, marital status, etc.), in addition to questions around criteria for disability. The census data includes the highest level of education attainment and type of disability.

The aim of National Assessment of Basic Competencies is to assess pupils' reading ability and mathematical skills, the dissemination of educational measurement and evaluation systems and to provide necessary information to local schools and their maintainers. On 1 September 2013, the implementation of curricular changes in the general education system began (in the 1st and 5th grades of primary school and the 5th, 7th and 9th grades of upper-secondary school) as an ascending system. The new National Core Curriculum (Government Decree 110/2012) defines the key competences and skills to acquire. The National Core Curriculum provides the legal framework for the development of social and citizenship skills that respect fundamental rights, human rights and children's rights to be included in the framework curricula and in local curricula.

The indicated grades and the test booklet were sent to all learners by the Education Office. The test was taken by all 6th, 8th and 10th grade pupils (including those with SEN, following the special rules for learners with special educational needs). The educational administrations which measure the results of each school are given a greater role in helping the institutional effectiveness of local and national publicity. To this end, according to the Public Education Act (Act CXC of 2011. 80§ (2)), the Minister of Education publishes the aggregate and institutional results of national surveys on the Ministry's website.

The Ministry aims to help the institutional and maintenance management plans and the effectiveness of public education. In 2001, the Hungarian Ministry of Education initiated a large-scale study to assess school effectiveness in preparing learners for the requirements of the labour market and lifelong learning. The National Assessment of Basic Competencies measures the abilities of learners in reading and mathematical literacy in grades 6, 8 and 10 in every school. It also involves a short Student Background Questionnaire and a School Questionnaire to map the background characteristics of learners and schools. The results are reported to schools and authorities on the basis of a sample of 20 learners per school and these reports help schools to get an objective description of their achievements. The competence assessment questionnaire gives learners an opportunity to examine the relationship between family characteristics and most importantly their reading ability and mathematical knowledge. The relationship between learners' performance and family characteristics, especially the so-called help of family background index, is presented, which shows the combined influence of learners' family characteristics.

The family characteristics and opportunities are closely related to learners and define what further learning goals they set for themselves. Based on design differences, learners' abilities can be presented as various qualifications within the survey.



The relationship between institutional characteristics and learner achievement in special classrooms provides a ratio index. On the basis of learning difficulties, the ratio index was created based on the site survey questions that ask learners the percentage share of certain features of their primary school, secondary school and vocational secondary school. These features include the number and percentage of special needs and learning difficulties.

4. What information/data on attainment and achievement (including the wider areas outlined above) are collected at school level?

See question 3

5. What information/data are used for school evaluation and quality assurance at national/local level?

The National Assessment of Basic Competencies in public education in Hungary was introduced in 2001 and is based on the Public Education Act (Act CXC of 2011). On 1 September 2013, the implementation of the curricular changes in the system of general education began (1st and 5th grades of primary school and 5th, 7th and 9th grades of upper-secondary school) as an ascending system. The new National Core Curriculum (Government Decree 110/2012) defines the key competences and skills to acquire. The National Core Curriculum provides the legal framework for the development of social and citizenship skills that respect fundamental rights, human rights and children's rights to be included in the framework curricula and in local curricula. Participation in the National Assessment of Basic Competencies is compulsory for all learners, with few exceptions.

The results of the National Assessment of Basic Competencies are [published online](#) at the end of the year. Institutions can see their own criteria and analyse their results on a password-protected area of the site. The school report allows schools to analyse their own work and make comparisons with similar institutions.

The data in the school report allows outsiders to get a more detailed picture about the school. The measurement of performance not only shows the absolute scale, but also the socio-cultural background of learners. It visualises the extremely valuable educational performance of schools that work with those learners who do not live in the best of circumstances. Since the 2010 test it has been possible to follow the progress of individual learners, allowing the formation of a deeper image of the impact of the school. This is an almost unique measurement system.



6. Are there any specific initiatives in place to support/enable teachers and/or school leaders to raise the attainment and achievement of all learners?

All strategies include some elements detailed above. All of the projects and constructions that develop public education have a training or methodological sub-project, which gives the teachers further training or preparation of methodological materials and support for conferences and events. In addition, so-called professional teaching staff work in public educational institutions. Professional teaching staff are involved in the professional work of the educational institution's management, planning and organisation and control a summary opinion taken into account in the process of teacher qualification.

7. What other policies may influence levels of attainment and achievement for all learners?

The National Core Curriculum sets out:

- the educational duties of school education, teaching theoretical content and conceptual foundations;
- the main fields of knowledge and content;
- Acts on teaching and education in national public education stages and the development functions of pupils with special educational needs.

The specific deviations from the National Curriculum (for learners with special educational needs) are determined by the so-called Directive (kindergarten education for children with special needs and school education policies for learners with special educational needs). Mainstream and special education have a number of meeting points.

Based on the National Core Curriculum, so-called Curriculum Frameworks were published. The Curriculum Frameworks include education and training goals, the subject system, subject topics, content and subject requirements for one or two grades. They also include interdisciplinary knowledge and skills and areas of improvement and define the requirements for available optional support and the recommended time frame.

Education and teaching in kindergarten, school and college follows to educational programmes. The educational programme is adopted by the teaching staff and approved by the institution's leadership. Once the educational programme's provisions take effect, the maintainer or the additional actuator is obliged to provide the maintenance required for the operating agreement. The educational programme will be made public.

As part of the school's educational programme, complete framework curricula are issued by the Ministry to prepare the local curriculum.

The educational institutions, pedagogical service institutions and their maintainers, as well as the work of teachers and student advocacy activities are related to pedagogical professional services. Pedagogical professional services' duties are:

- Pedagogical evaluation



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- Professional counselling and special subject-related tasks
 - Provision of educational information
 - Public education administration services
 - Support for and organisation of training, in-service training and self-education for teachers
 - Organisation and harmonisation of study, sports and talent promotion competitions
 - Information and counselling service for pupils
 - Early warning and pedagogical support system.

8. Please provide a short commentary/critical reflection on the main policy challenges

In Hungary from the 1800s to the 1990s, special education was segregated (for a long time, almost exclusively). In the 1990s, partly due to national and international professional processes and partly to national and international warnings, inclusive processes were started. Thanks to this, almost 67% of learners with special educational needs receive education in the integrated framework (if learners with severe and multiple disabilities are counted in separate groups, the figure is 69%). In general, it can be said that the challenges in inclusive education are particularly the change in the educational attitude, a paradigm shift, the introduction of new techniques and the adaptation of the mainstream curriculum.



ANNEX 1. EXAMPLE OF PRACTICE TO RAISE LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

Contact person: Katalin Galambos, teacher

1. Location of school/learning community and short description of context

The location of the learning community is mainly Budapest (the capital of Hungary) but the backgrounds of the learners in different schools are diverse.

The resource/methodology centre which participates in this project as a 'national co-ordinator', has been working for 10 years in co-operation with mainstream schools which include pupils with special educational needs. There are more than 30 schools supported by this resource centre to enhance inclusive education.

2. Summary information on school/learning community

The resource/methodology centre (Mozgasjavito Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary School for Physical Rehabilitation, Institute for Standard Special Needs Educational Methodology and Residence Hall) provides education for around 200 pupils with physical disabilities on different levels, from kindergarten to secondary school. Besides the mainstream educational goals, the institute has a special programme of therapy for developing physical abilities.

All the specialist knowledge can be used in the mainstream system through the methodology centre.

Schools have many good practices, which should be shared with others including pupils with different educational needs or backgrounds. For example, co-operating with partners, or using altered pedagogical methods, etc.

3. Summary of key feature/strengths of current practice

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4. Data/information available

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5. Focus of example/work to raise achievement

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6. Summary information about developments/current work in this area

In the inclusive education of learners with any disabilities or differences it is very important to consider the fact that the main goal is to build an inclusive society. To join society, everybody needs an independent, self-determined life.

The nominated methodology centre works as a resource centre to support mainstream schools in:

- co-ordinating the co-operation of schools in the learning community;
- organising meetings, conferences, events to share best practices, etc.;
- supporting families with children with disabilities through different programmes (counselling, summer camp, presentations, discussions, etc.);
- enhancing the participation of actors from different fields (social, medical and civil society);
- collaborating with higher education (mainly in the field of special education).

The constantly changing legislation in the field of education influences the practice of schools, both in the mainstream and the special system. Working collaboratively, learning together and sharing best practices could help schools to strengthen their own roles in their learning environment. For the leaders, it is essential to adjust to the new circumstances, which can be achieved with an innovative, proactive way of thinking.

By participating in this project, the methodology centre, together with the mainstream schools, will be able to generate good practices for raising the achievement of all learners in inclusive education, also at national and international levels.

7. Key learning points from this example

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8. Supporting materials (web links, papers, presentations, etc.)

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