

# **EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**Bulgaria 2016/2017  
data background information**



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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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### How the official decision of special educational needs (SEN) in the country relates to the agreed EASIE operational definition

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#### Operational definition

“An official decision leads to a child/learner being recognised as eligible for additional educational support to meet their learning needs.”

#### Criteria for an official decision of SEN

- There has been an educational assessment procedure involving a multi-disciplinary team
- The multi-disciplinary team includes members from within and external to the child's/learner's (pre)school
- There is a legal document which describes the support the child/learner is eligible to receive and which is used as the basis for planning
- The official decision is subject to a formal, regular review process

#### Educational assessment procedure in the country

Additional support is provided for children and learners with SEN based on an assessment of their personal needs carried out by a personal development support team. The team is formed where the child or learner is taught – be it in a kindergarten or school. The type and forms of education, as well as the particular activities for additional support for personal development, are defined with a plan of support for the child or learner. This plan also defines the classes for resource support. Additional support for personal development is provided by kindergartens, schools, personal development support centres and specialised service units. The additional support for personal development includes:

- working with a child or learner on a particular case;
- psycho-social rehabilitation, speech and hearing rehabilitation, visual rehabilitation, rehabilitation in the case of communicative disturbances and physical disabilities;
- provision of accessible architectural, general and specialised supportive environments, technology and specialised equipment, didactic materials, methodology and specialists;
- provision of special subject education for children/learners with sensory disabilities;
- resource support.

Additional support for personal development is provided to children and learners who:



- have special educational needs (due to sensory disabilities, physical disabilities, multiple disabilities, intellectual difficulties, speech impediments, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, emotional and behavioural disorders);
- are at risk;
- have notable gifts;
- have a chronic illness.

### **How the multi-disciplinary team is comprised in the country**

The personal development support team in a kindergarten or school:

- identifies the child's/learner's strengths, difficulties with development, education and behaviour, as well as the reasons for them;
- assesses the child's/learner's personal needs;
- prepares and carries out a plan for support;
- observes and assesses the development of each individual case, etc.

The team responsible for the personal development of a child/learner always includes a psychologist or a pedagogical counsellor, as well as a speech therapist. These are employed by the kindergarten or school or provided by another institution. The team may include other specialists and representatives of the child protection authorities or organisations dealing with anti-social behaviour in minors. Personal development support teams work together with parents or, if relevant, with regional support centres for inclusive education and/or support centres for personal development.

### **The legal document used in the country to outline the support that the child/learner is eligible to receive**

These are the Pre-Primary and School Education Law and the Inclusive Education Ordinance.

### **How the document is used as the basis for planning in the country**

The Pre-Primary and School Education Law regulates the support for the personal development of children and learners and the institutions in the pre-primary and school education system which provide that support. The Inclusive Education Ordinance handles public relations with regards to the provision of inclusive education for children and learners in the pre-primary and school education system, as well as the activities of the institutions in the system in terms of providing support for the personal development of children and learners.

### **The formal, regular review process in the country**

The additional support defined by the personal development support teams is subject to confirmation by regional personal development support teams for children and learners with SEN. Each of the 28 regional centres for supporting the process of inclusive education (which are national specialised units of the Ministry of Education and Science) has a



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regional team of specialists, consisting of resource teachers (special pedagogues), psychologists, speech therapists, etc.

## **Proxy indicator for the 80% benchmark used for the country's data collection**

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The EASIE work uses an 80% benchmark of inclusive education. This is defined as:  
“An inclusive setting refers to education where the child/learner with SEN follows education in mainstream classes alongside their mainstream peers for most – 80% or more – of the school week.”

### **Proxy indicator used**

Placement in a mainstream class implies over 80% or more.

### **Details on what the country proxy is**

If additional support is assigned to a child or learner, including hours for resource development, within the class or group, this is taken to mean that the child/learner spends 80% or more of their time in the main class/group.

### **Why this proxy was used**

The national electronic information system for pre-primary and school education data indicates this.

### **Difficulties in using the proxy**

No difficulties.

### **Specific country issues in applying the proxy indicator**

Some children in special groups in kindergartens or some learners in special schools may spend time in mainstream classes/groups, but it is unlikely that the time spent will be more than 80%. At the moment, it is impossible to quantify that.

## **Detailed description of what ‘out of formal education’ means within the country**

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The 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) defines ‘formal education’ as follows:

“[...] education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies and, – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country. Formal education programmes are thus recognised as such by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, e.g. any other institution in cooperation with the national or sub-national educational authorities. Formal education consists mostly of initial education [...] Vocational education, special needs education and some parts of adult education are often recognised as being part of the formal education



system. Qualifications from formal education are by definition recognised and, therefore, are within the scope of ISCED. Institutionalised education occurs when an organization provides structured educational arrangements, such as student-teacher relationships and/or interactions, that are specially designed for education and learning.”

(United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011, *International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011*, p. 11).

### **Do the country definitions of formal, non-formal and informal education differ from the ISCED definitions?**

No, Bulgaria uses the same definitions as ISCED.

### **How specific cases – such as home-educated children/learners – are considered**

Children and learners who are taught at home or in hospital settings are covered by formal education.

### **Children/learners who are considered out of formal education (meaning those not in formal education as defined by ISCED)**

There are no children or learners outside of formal education. The ones who are taught at home or in hospital settings are considered part of formal education, since they are enrolled in schools and are taught by teachers from schools.

### **How the population of children/learners who are out of formal education is defined**

There is no such population.

## **Provision of data on private sector education**

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The data collection covers all sectors of education, including numbers for the child/learner population in the private sector.

### **Private sector education in the country**

Private kindergartens and schools are those which are founded by private individuals or legal entities as businesses, non-profit legal entities or corporations, or as organisations under legislation of a member state. Private kindergartens and schools start their activities once they are registered as an institution in the pre-primary and school education system under the conditions and in the order defined by this law. Private individuals or legal entities may found private schools. Private kindergartens and schools may educate and issue documents for completed pre-primary education, respectively completed grade, stage or degree of education in accordance with the requirements of this law as well as the legislation of other member states, provided that they have acquired permission in accordance with the legislation of the member state and that the teaching can take place in integration with the requirements of the education system of the state which has issued the permission, and the national education standards.

### **Child/learner population counted for each relevant question**

All ISCED levels.



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***Specific issues with providing data on private sector education and how these have been overcome in the data collection***

Data about private kindergartens and schools is kept in the national electronic information system for pre-primary and school education.

## **ISCED level age ranges**

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The following are the most common (pre)school entrance ages and (pre)school leaving ages for the different ISCED levels:

- Age range in the country at ISCED level 02 (pre-primary): 3 to 6
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 1: 7 to 10
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 2: 11 to 13
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 3: 14 to 18