

# **EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**Iceland 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

In Iceland, there are four specialised institutions that perform educational assessment:

- Greiningar- og ráðgjafarstöð (State Diagnostic and Counselling Centre)
- Þjónustu- og þekkingarmiðstöð (National Institute for the Blind, Visually Impaired and Deafblind)
- Heyrnar- og talmeinstöð (National Hearing and Speech Institute of Iceland)
- Barna og unglingsgeðdeild (National University Hospital of Iceland – Children’s Department (Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Department)).

In addition, there are psychologists who perform clinical assessment.

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

There are multi-disciplinary teams in the above-mentioned institutions, organised by the institutions.

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

The Law on Pre-Primary, Compulsory (Primary and Lower-Secondary) and Upper-Secondary Education of 2008 and regulations outline the right to additional support for children/learners with special educational needs.



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

Each compulsory and upper-secondary school shall make its own reception plan of support for learners with special educational needs. This plan includes how, where and from whom the support is organised and use of special equipment and facilities. There is also co-operation within the school and with parents and institutions.

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

The review process is not centralised in Iceland, but is done by experts as needed. This is at school level, municipality level and by the specialised institutions (i.e. State Diagnostic and Counselling Centre; National Institute for the Blind, Visually Impaired and Deafblind; National Hearing and Speech Institute of Iceland; National University Hospital of Iceland – Children’s Department (Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Department)). A review is sometimes required after compulsory school, before entering upper-secondary school.

## **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**

80% or more.

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

Focus on inclusive education.

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

Lack of comparable data; Iceland’s data is focused on average provision.

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

In a few compulsory schools, there are special classes for learners who need more support than the proxy indicator. In most upper-secondary schools, there are special programmes for learners with official decisions of SEN. They are in specialised programmes most of the time.



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## 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, Iceland uses the same definitions as ISCED.

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

Occasionally, there are very few learners who receive home schooling at compulsory level (one to three learners per year).

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

Temporarily, there are 10–20 learners out of formal education at upper-secondary level. These learners need different programmes, but many of them enter upper-secondary schools after 6–24 months. According to the OECD’s official definition of drop-out, Iceland has a drop out-rate of around 20% at that level.

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

Please refer to the answer above.

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## **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.



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

Private schools in Iceland at any level have to operate by Icelandic laws and regulations, and be confirmed by municipalities/state to be certified. They also have to follow the official curriculum, as must other schools. The exception at ISCED levels 1 and 2 are two international (private) schools in the capital area. At upper-secondary level, some learners spend more than 20% of their time in special classes.

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

Statistics Iceland asks private schools (and all other schools) for data annually. All the private schools submit information about children/learners, staff and operation.

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

No issues.

### **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 5
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 1: 6 to 12
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 2: 13 to 15
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 3: 16 to 19