

EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**Serbia 2016/2017
data background information**



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

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

Prior to enrolling in a pre-primary institution, children undergo a physical examination by a paediatrician, who can request additional examinations if needed and who considers the child’s development history. Prior to entering primary education, children’s psychological functioning is also assessed.

If findings at either of these two stages indicate a need for additional support, institutions start collecting additional data. This process involves the child in question, peers, parents and other family members, teachers, psychologists, pedagogues, and a medical doctor if needed. Techniques used in this process include interviews, observations, standardised tests, portfolios and questionnaires. Based on the results, institutions formulate a document called a pedagogical profile, which is an official basis for planning support, i.e. an individual education plan (IEP).

A body external to an institution must be included if there are indications that a child needs:

- an IEP with modified outcomes;
- to be enrolled in a special education institution;
- support in the domains of healthcare and social services;
- financial support for education.

This external body is called an intersectoral commission (ISC) and it assesses whether a child needs additional educational, healthcare or social services support. Each ISC member collects data on the child in order to assess their needs in the member’s respective domain. Members do this by interviewing the child and their family, by using instruments



to assess relevant aspects of functioning in a given domain, and by inspecting other results and findings from other relevant institutions if these are available.

How the multi-disciplinary team is comprised in the country

At school level, the team comprises parents/caregivers, the child's/learner's class teacher, a pedagogical assistant, a psychologist, a pedagogue and, on occasion, an expert external to the institution suggested by the parents/caregivers.

The ISC is established by and for each municipality. It consists of five members, four of them being long-term members, and one being a temporary member and in charge of just one specific case. The long-term members are:

- a representative of the healthcare sector, i.e. a medical doctor;
- a representative of the educational sector, i.e. a psychologist;
- a representative of the social services sector;
- a special educator.

The fifth member is a person who is very familiar with the child's/learner's development. This person is chosen at the parents' suggestion from medical doctors, social workers, teachers or other education workers involved in a child's/learner's case.

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

The pedagogical profile is the basis for planning support in an institution. It consists of four domains:

- Learning
- Social skills
- Communication skills
- Independence and self-care.

The pedagogical profile outlines assets and support needs. It also states sources of support that a child/learner already has in their social environment. It consists of:

- personal data on the child/learner;
- an assessment methodology review: a description of inventories, questionnaires and tests used;
- a description of the child's/learner's functional status;
- identified barriers;
- needed means of support;
- an individualised plan for supporting the child/learner;
- a timeline.



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

An individualisation plan is a document which specifies measures for removing physical and communicational barriers and for providing aspects of support that a child/learner needs. This document defines specific means of support for each school subject and other areas based on support needs and assets defined in the pedagogical profile.

The IEP is a document that alters a curriculum on the basis of assets and support needs defined in the pedagogical profile. The IEP defines:

- a schedule of activities;
- education outcomes;
- an individualised programme for each subject;
- individualised teaching methods.

The action plan is a part of the IEP that operationalises precise contents, methods, techniques, materials, responsible persons, timing and outcomes for each step in the process of giving additional support.

The formal, regular review process in the country

Within an institution, a team for support provision reviews the process of meeting goals and outcomes envisioned in the IEP. The review process is undertaken every three months in the first year, and subsequently at the beginning of each semester. During this process, the team analyses what means of support were successful and what outcomes the child/learner has accomplished. On the basis of this analysis, a revision of the IEP may be undertaken.

There is also an external reviewer, an educational advisor, who monitors the regularity of the process of the IEP development, its content and realisation. When the ISC is involved, each member monitors the support within their area. Providers of support are obliged to report to the ISC members on the realisation of the support plan six months after its development. In case of changes in the child's/learner's functioning, the assessment process is repeated.

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

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

The Serbian proxy is the number of children/learners enrolled in mainstream classes for whom the teaching/learning process is individualised by an IEP.

Why this proxy was used

This proxy is the only one available regarding the required data.

Difficulties in using the proxy

There should not be any difficulties in using this proxy – it covers the whole population with an official decision of SEN in mainstream classes.

Specific country issues in applying the proxy indicator

No issues.

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

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, Serbia uses the same definitions as ISCED.

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

Home-educated children/learners are not considered.



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

Those children of formal education age who are not enrolled in any formal education institution during the current academic year.

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

Non-formal education participants are not officially recognised at this point.

Provision of data on private sector education

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

The private sector consists of institutions that are established and managed by private legal entities and not by the state. Within the private sector, school fees are covered by parents/caregivers, while it is free in the public sector.

Child/learner population counted for each relevant question

Only information on the public sector is available.

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

Data reporting is only compulsory for public sector institutions; therefore, children/learners enrolled in private institutions are omitted from the reported numbers.

ISCED level age ranges

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): 6 to 7
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 1: 7 to 10
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 2: 11 to 14
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 3: 15 to 19