

EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**Switzerland 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

The Needs Assessment of the Standardised Eligibility Procedure includes the following dimensions: special education support, pedagogical-therapeutic support (e.g. speech therapy), counselling and support (e.g. counselling of teacher, sign language interpreter, transport) and care and assistance (support for daily routine, social support).

Health needs are an additional dimension, but these are not the responsibility or mandate of the education system. A recommendation is made for the provision of additional support, which the responsible education authority subsequently checks and approves.

The Standardised Eligibility Procedure documents the evidence relevant to understand the problem and establish the support needs for low-incidence disabilities. The Cantons differ in their approach to implementing the procedure. However, generally there will be a case manager (e.g. school psychologist) as part of a multi-disciplinary team. In addition, parents and school representatives are involved in developing the recommendation for additional support.

How the multi-disciplinary team is comprised in the country

The Standardised Eligibility Procedure (low-incidence disabilities) is conducted by a multi-disciplinary team that is mainly external to the child's/learner's school. However, the child's/learner's teacher(s) are involved as informants (basic assessment) and to develop recommendations (needs assessment). The educational assessment for high-incidence disabilities is the responsibility of the school team, with support from external experts where necessary.



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

Article 62.3 of the Federal Constitution of Switzerland states: 'The Cantons shall ensure that adequate special needs education is provided to all children and young people with disabilities up to the age of 20'.

The Special Education Concordat of the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education is in force (only for the signatory Cantons). It demands the application of the Standardised Eligibility Procedure as a common tool to establish eligibility. This procedure is based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health for Children and Youth (ICF) and is used for low-incidence disabilities. The Standardised Eligibility Procedure sets out the dimension of additional support (see above), but does not prescribe fixed criteria as to which type of disability requires which type of additional support.

The Swiss education system is highly decentralised; types and organisation of provision will vary considerably between Cantons and even among communities within a Canton.

In addition, Cantons use a framework for special educational support (*Sonderpädagogisches Konzept/Concept de pédagogie spécialisée*), which describes the organisation and delivery of additional support (including establishing eligibility).

Cantons also provide additional support beyond the population covered by the Concordat, e.g. for children/learners with learning difficulties (high-incidence disabilities) or with a first language different from the language of instruction. Provision of additional support for high-incidence disabilities or learning difficulties is generally under the school's authority; there is no national definition for additional support. Resources will be made available based on school-based funding for additional support needs.

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

The Standardised Eligibility Procedure is a long-term planning tool, which documents overall goals and means to reach these goals. On this basis, schools develop medium-term and short-term goals to guide their work. Some Cantons have developed guidelines for this planning process.

The formal, regular review process in the country

For low-incidence disabilities, the Standardised Eligibility Procedure is used to formally review the goals and means of additional support. Generally, a formal review of these long-term goals and means should occur after two years. Medium-term and short-term goals are reviewed regularly. For high-incidence disabilities, review procedures will differ between Cantons. Some Cantons have introduced a procedure for collaborative assessment and planning meetings where parents, teacher and special educators (and sometimes children/learners) meet regularly to review progress and adapt goals and means.



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 50% or more.

Details on what the country proxy is

The count of children/learners is based on the majority of time spent in the school or classes concerned.

Why this proxy was used

It is not possible to verify the number of hours of specialised education.

Difficulties in using the proxy

None.

Specific country issues in applying the proxy indicator

For children/learners who are educated in two institutions, information is gathered for the institution where they spend more time.

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, Switzerland uses the same definitions as ISCED.

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

Home-educated children/learners are considered included in the formal education system, as the authorities of the Cantons control their schooling and programmes. There is no information available on home-educated children/learners. However, there is only a negligible number of them in Switzerland.

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

No children/learners are considered out of formal education. However, it is possible that some children in Switzerland are not known to the system.

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

The children who are not known to the system are in non-formal education.

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 definition is based on UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat, but Switzerland classifies private schools into two categories:

1. Private schools with public funding under 50%
2. Private schools with public funding of 50% or more.

Child/learner population counted for each relevant question

As above.

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

None.

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): 4 to 6
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 1: 7 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 20