

# **EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**Austria 2014/2015 data  
background information**



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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

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*An official decision leads to a pupil being recognised as eligible for additional educational support to meet their learning needs.*

#### **Pupils' legal entitlements under what legislation**

The legislation in question is §8 of the *Schulpflichtgesetz* (Compulsory Education Act).

#### **How additional support is understood within the country context**

It consists of assistance measures, including a flexible school entrance phase (*Schuleingangsphase*), remedial lessons (*Förderunterricht*), therapeutic exercises, language training (*Sprachheilunterricht*) and dyslexia lessons.

### The criteria for an official decision are

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#### **There has been an educational assessment procedure involving a multi-disciplinary team**

The assessment procedure involves a special needs expert's opinion and, if necessary, a psychological and/or medical expert opinion.

#### **The multi-disciplinary team includes members from within and external to the pupil's school**

The team comprises the head of the local school authority, the head of the school, the class teacher, experts and the pupil's parents.

#### **There is a legal document which describes the support the pupil is eligible to receive and which is used as the basis for planning**

A personal development programme is prepared.

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

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*Placement in a mainstream class implies over 80% or more with non-disabled peers.*

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

There are no statistics on this topic. The Ministry of Education assumes that pupils with special needs are 100% integrated in mainstream classes together with non-disabled pupils. Individually, there are distinct solutions. For a limited period of time (different



lessons), pupils with disabilities are separated from their peers. Schools can autonomously decide on the spot.

There are differences between primary schools and secondary schools. In primary schools, the optimistic estimate is that, for 80% of the time, pupils with disabilities and non-disabled pupils are together. In secondary schools, the gap is assumed to be bigger, especially in languages and mathematics.

### **Difficulties in using any proxy**

There are problems with the statistical evaluation: by law, all pupils' data must be anonymised. As a result, pupils with special needs who follow a special education curriculum are often wrongly assigned to special schools in the statistics. In reality, they may be in a mainstream class. It is certain that, in Austria, there are more pupils in inclusive settings than the official data suggests.

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

Pupils with special needs participate in special schools or they attend a mainstream class. In a mainstream class, pupils with special needs are only separated from their peers for brief periods. There is no dual placement system in mainstream classes.

## **Detailed description of what is meant by 'out of formal education' within the country's data collection**

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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).*

### **Information on pupils considered out of education (i.e. those not in formal education as per the ISCED definition)**

All pupils are in formal education, even those with multiple disabilities or in time-out classes. In a few exceptional cases, pupils are temporarily excluded from school



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attendance as a therapeutic measure (cooling-down phase). In addition, some children refuse to attend school.

### **Country definitions of formal, non-formal and informal education**

In exceptional cases, pupils are home-schooled. However, this is part of formal education.

### **Sources of data from non-educational sectors – i.e. social, justice, health**

All data about schools is available from the [Statistics Austria website](#). In addition, educational data is available from the [Ministry of Education](#).

There are no other sources of data on schools.

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

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

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

There are a small number of private schools, mostly Catholic schools. They have a public right, which means they can issue certificates recognised by the state. Private schools without a public right send their pupils to a public school for an examination at the end of the school year.

### **Pupil population counted for each relevant question**

The statistics include pupils from both public and private schools and do not distinguish between the two.

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

There are no problems with data collection. Private schools have the same administrative regulations as public schools. Private schools must provide the same statistics as public schools.

## **Pupil age ranges**

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Usual pupil age ranges in the country at ISCED level 1: 6 to 10

Usual pupil age ranges in the country at ISCED level 2: 11 to 17