

EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**Ireland 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 data
background information**



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

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

Please note that the information below only refers to pupils for whom additional resources are allocated to schools on the basis of an individualised diagnosis or assessment.

Other pupils with special educational needs may also access additional teaching supports, but do not require a formal professional diagnosis or assessment. These pupils include those with mild general learning disability, borderline mild general learning disability, specific learning disability, and low achievement in reading or mathematics. Such pupils significantly outnumber those who access additional supports following a formal diagnosis or assessment. Data on these pupils is held at school level and not collected at national level.

Pupils' legal entitlements under what legislation

An official decision of SEN is one where a pupil has received an assessment or diagnosis from a professional. The outcome of the diagnosis or assessment is used for determining the level of additional resources to be allocated to the school for the purposes of supporting the child's education.

How additional support is understood within the country context

Additional resources are allocated to schools under one of the following categories:

- Physical disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Emotional disturbance
- Severe emotional disturbance
- Moderate general learning disability
- Severe/profound general learning disability
- Autism/autistic spectrum disorder
- Specific speech and language disorder
- Assessed syndrome in conjunction with one of the above low-incidence disabilities
- Multiple disabilities.



The additional resources pupils may be eligible for are: additional resource (specialist) teaching support, Special Needs Assistant support (care needs), specialist equipment/technology, or transport.

The criteria for an official decision are

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

An educational assessment will have been undertaken. The assessment process may or may not be implemented by a multi-disciplinary team, as multi-disciplinary assessment is not a requirement.

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

The multi-disciplinary team normally comprises health professionals (such as clinical psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, etc.) and education professionals who are external to the school, such as educational psychologists. School staff members may provide information for the assessment, but are generally not part of the multi-disciplinary team.

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

The document is not a legal document which describes the support the pupil is eligible to receive and which is used as the basis for planning. However, the Department of Education and its agencies provide guidelines to schools to assist the planning process at school level.

The official decision is subject to a formal, regular review process

The diagnosis is not subject to formal review.

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

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

Details on what the country proxy is

If a pupil is allocated additional resource teaching hours in a mainstream class, it is assumed that the pupil spends 80% or more of their time in the mainstream class.

Why this proxy was used

Currently, there is no way of confirming if this is the case, but it is very likely.

Difficulties in using any proxy

None; it appears to be a reliable proxy.



Specific country issues in applying the proxy

Some pupils in special classes or special schools may spend time in mainstream classes, but it is unlikely to be for more than 80% of the time. It is not possible to quantify this at present.

Detailed description of what is meant by ‘out of formal education’ within the country’s data collection

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)

Pupils out of formal education are those who are home educated and children who are receiving tuition in the home for a variety of reasons, such as illness or non-availability of a suitable school placement.

Country definitions of formal, non-formal and informal education

These include pupils who are in receipt of home tuition on the basis of medical conditions, school anxiety issues or who have special educational needs and have no suitable school placement. Children are also educated in the home based on parental choice, but it is not possible to get figures on the number of such children.

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

Some of Ireland’s special schools are designated for children in hospitals or children in detention centres. These figures are included in the overall figure for those in special schools. The Department of Education and Skills directly provided this information.



Provision of data on private sector education

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

Private sector education in the country

The private sector refers to educational institutions that do not receive aid from the Department of Education and Skills or any other government department and corresponds to the definition used by UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat for Independent Private.

Pupil population counted for each relevant question

Schools at ISCED level 1. There are no private schools in this category at ISCED level 2 in Ireland.

Pupil age ranges

Usual pupil age ranges in the country at ISCED level 1: 4 to 11

Usual pupil age ranges in the country at ISCED level 2: 12 to 15