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Съвременното образование - условия, предизвикателства и перспективи

Под това название от 14 до 16 юни 2019 година се проведе Седмата международна конференция, плод на сътрудничество между Факултета по педагогика на ЮЗУ „Неофит Рилски“, Благоевград, Факултета по образовни науки на Университет „Гоце Делчев“, гр. Щип, Република Северна Македония и Сплитски университет, гр. Сплит, Република Хърватска и Института по педагогика и психология при Череповецки държавен университет, гр. Череповец, Русия.

В рамките на тридневната конференция в отделните научни секции бяха представени доклади по проблеми, свързани с дидактиката и психологията на висшето образование, иновациите в подготовката и квалификацията на учители и други педагогически специалисти, проблемите на предучилищното и училищното образование, иновативните училища в съвременното образование. В конференцията участваха заинтересовани от проблематиката на възпитанието и образованието представители на Югозападен университет „Неофит Рилски“, Софийски университет „Св. Климент Охридски“, Тракийски университет – Стара Загора, Университет „Гоце Делчев“, Щип, Република Северна Македония, Университет на Сплит, Република Хърватия, Череповецки държавен университет, гр. Череповец, Русия, Университет в Ниш, Република Сърбия, Дагестански държавен педагогически университет, гр. Махачкала, Република Дагестан, Руска федерация, както и докторанти от Израел и Гърция.

Резултат от конференцията са текстовете на сборника “Съвременното образование – условия, предизвикателства и перспективи“. Донякъде те сякаш подвеждат. Може би след тях ще останат повече питання, отколкото отговори: има ли нещо сигурно за образованието днес, може ли да се състави обобщаваща картина, не се ли разпадат вижданията за него, така както са разпилени представите за света днес? Всъщност, ако несигурността е отличителна характеристика за времето ни, въпросите са не по-малко значими от отговорите, които се дават на различни проблеми на образованието.

Представените на конференцията изследвания разкриват стремежа на авторите им да анализират различни аспекти от сложните процеси, които протичат в образованието в различни културни и национални особености в отделните страни. В тях говори различна индивидуална чувствителност и

личен опит; те носят лични убеждения и надежди за бъдещето на така изненадващото и озадачаващо ни съвременно образование!

Предаваме на съда на читателите изследванията на участниците в конференцията с мисълта, че те ще провокират у тях собствени идеи в търсене на решения и решителност за практическото им отстояване както по конкретни проблеми на образованието, така и за изграждане на „по-големи картини“ за него било на равнище училище, университет или просто за сложните връзки със социокултурните условия в обществото. Може би това е една от възможностите, които ни предлага постмодерната ни несигурност: да се мисли критично по по-глобални проблеми и да се действа локално, с лична и професионална отговорност!

Седмата международна научна конференция „Съвременното образование - условия, предизвикателства и перспективи“ е факт благодарение на целевата финансова подкрепа на фонд „Научни изследвания“ за проект разработен от екип на Факултета по педагогика“ (Договор № КП–06–МНФ/16). Нашата искрена благодарност на членовете на екипа, разработил проекта: доц. д-р Даниела Томова, доц. д-р София Дерменджиева, гл. ас. д-р Блага Джорова, гл. ас. д-р Юлиана Ковачка, гл. ас. д-р Стефан Кинов, гл. ас. д-р Невяна Докова, ас. д-р Радослава Топалска, ас. д-р Янко Руменов, ас. д-р Цветомира Иванова, ас. д-р Вяра Цветанова, ас. д-р Василена Спасова, асистент Мария Младенова, докторант Ивета Мицова.

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INCLUSION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

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Апстракт:Значењето и важноста на вклученоста во системот на предучилишно воспитание и образование се големи за секое дете. Вклучувањето на децата со посебни потреби во редовниот предучилиштен систем е првиот чекор во создавањето на инклузивно општество. Создавањето на инклузивно општество не може да се замисли без успешна инклузија во образованието. Нејзината имплементација воопшто не е едноставна и брза, таа е условена од бројни фактори. Обезбедувањето на инклузија во предучилишното воспитание бара средина која ќе одговори на потребите на децата со посебни потреби, бара способен и компетентен кадар кој може да работи со овие деца, бара расположливи средства за работа со овие деца. Ова води кон заклучокот дека е потребно да се отргнат бројни бариери кои ги има постоечкиот систем на предучилишно воспитание и образование. Процесот на инклузија воопшто не е лесен, но бенефитите од неа се водилка и охрабрувачка нота на сите заложби за создавање на инклузивна предучилишна средина. Во продолжение на трудот ќе дадеме преглед на условите кои треба да бидат исполнети за да се оствари успешна инклузија во предучилишното воспитание и образование, притоа осврт ќе дадеме на ситуацијата во некои земји во Европа.

Клучни зборови: инклузија, предучилишно воспитание и образование, ситуација во Европа

Abstract: The inclusion in preschool education has a great importance for every child. Inclusion of children with special needs in the regular early childhood education and care system is the first step in creating an inclusive society. Creating an inclusive society cannot be imagine without successful inclusion in education. Its implementation is not simple and fast, it is influenced by a number of factors. Providing inclusion in early childhood education and care requires an environment that will respond to the needs of children with special needs, requires competent staff who can work with these children, and asks for available means of working with these children. This leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to eliminate numerous barriers that exist in the existing system of early childhood education and care. The process of inclusion is not easy at all, but the benefits from it are a guide and an encouraging note for all of the efforts to create an inclusive pre-school environment. In continuation of the paper, we will give an overview of the conditions that need to be fulfilled to achieve successful inclusion in early childhood education and care, and then we will give an overview of the situation in some countries in Europe.

Key words: inclusion, early childhood education and care, situation in Europe.

1. Introduction

Strengthening the quality of preschool education is an issue that more often is discussed in the European context. The quality in preschool education is determined by a range of terms. The access to quality pre-school education for all children, quality staff, quality curriculum and contents, evaluation and monitoring and governance and funding are the five key points, identified by the European Commission, that improve the quality and access to pre-school education (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2017:6).

All children should have an access to quality pre-school education where participation is encouraged and diversity is accepted (Schuman, H., 2017:20-21). This period (from birth until compulsory education) is a period of rapid and intense development (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive). There is a great influence here not only from genetics, but also from the experiences that children gain through communication and contact with people in their environment (OECD, 2015:5). Here comes the great importance of early childhood education and care and the importance to make ECEC affordable and accessible to all children.

The acquired knowledge through the initial education is not the only knowledge that the educators should possess. They constantly need to upgrade their skills and keep up with the latest scientific knowledge. Numerous studies have shown that educators need trainings to work in inclusive groups. These trainings do not only concern the acquisition of knowledge, but also the development of skills and the acquisition of experience (according to Crane-Mitchel and Hedge, 2007, as cited in Sucuoğlu et al, 2013: 109).

The curriculum should enable children to achieve their optimal development. The quality of ECEC programs influence on the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of the children (United Nations Children’s Fund, 2019: 69).

The process of upbringing and education in early childhood education and care should be continuously monitored and evaluated so that at any moment there is feedback in which direction it is moving, what needs to be corrected, where we need to improve. Monitoring and evaluation are processes that support children, the family and the community (European Commission, 2014:11).

All this can be achieved if states create conditions for cross-sectoral approach in the process of improving early childhood education and care. This involves partnership between the sectors responsible for education and care at the state, local and institutional (kindergarten) level. This will enable all stakeholders to have clear expectations about the importance of collaborative work. Legal regulations and financial resources should be directed to the public good, in this case towards ECEC, and for progress, stakeholders should be regularly reported (European Commission, 2014:11).

2. Inclusion of children with SEN in preschool education in Europe

According to the available data, from the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, for the children/learners with an official decision of SEN educated in mainstream groups/classes in ISCED 02 level in the school year 2016/17⁷, the process of inclusion has entered in many countries in Europe.

From the available data can be seen that France has much higher number of children/learners with an official decision of SEN educated in mainstream groups/classes compared to the other European countries. The table shows that inclusive education has entered in many countries. Inclusion of certain number of children with SEN included in the mainstream groups’ pulls: staff training for work with these children, adapting the working conditions and providing appropriate means of work, as well as changing the organization, planning and realization of the educational work in the mainstream pre-school groups.

Table 1. Children/learners with an official decision of SEN educated in mainstream groups/classes for at least 80% of the time at ISCED 02 level in some countries in Europe

Country	Children/learners with an official decision of SEN educated in mainstream groups/classes for at least 80% of the time at ISCED 02 level		
	Boys	Girls	Total
France	24 388	10 285	34 673
Italy	20 307	7 661	27 968
Lithuania	11 328	7 314	18 642
Spain	9 171	4 063	13 234
Poland	6 501	3 010	9 511
UK (England)	4 979	2 310	7 289
Hungary	4 837	2 244	7 081
Slovakia	2 320	2 129	4 449
Greece	2 448	852	3 300
Czech Republic	2 103	926	3 029
Portugal	1 798	689	2 487
Estonia	1 304	719	2 023
Bulgaria	1 322	652	1 974
Belgium (Flemish community)	1 196	597	1 793

⁷ Programmes designed for children from age 3 to the start of primary education

Slovenia	730	339	1 069
Cyprus	378	184	562
UK (Wales)	377	160	537
Malta	305	128	433

Source: European Agency for Special needs and Inclusive Education. Data.

Opening the door of the mainstream groups for the children with special needs is only the first step, but it is not the only condition that needs to be fulfilled to ensure inclusion.

In order to meet the needs of inclusion, numerous reforms in the system of education and upbringing should be made.

- The legal regulations need to be changed;
- The system of initial education of teachers (teachers' should be trained to work with children with special educational needs) need to be changed;
- Changes also affect the system of continuous professional development of teachers. Trainings for work in an inclusive environment should be included; and last but not least,
- Inclusion requires appropriate material and technical means of operation, as well as appropriate infrastructure conditions.

In continuation of this paper, an overview is given of the support that some European countries give to the inclusion of children with special needs in the regular groups in preschool education. Our focus was to the: number of children with SEN included in the mainstream groups in kindergarten, the additional support provided for these children, the initial education of kindergarten teachers, the in-service training of kindergarten teachers.

3. Inclusive groups in kindergartens

The inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream groups imposed certain changes in terms of the number of children, which will be included in the group. The situation in some countries in Europe (Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia) shows that the inclusion of the children with special needs in the group entails a reduction in the number of children in the group. The inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream groups except that initiate change in the number of children in groups, requires additional staff support. According to the information we came to, the mentioned countries mention the possibilities for engaging additional staff that will help in the process of inclusion. In Austria for example, each state employs professional for inclusion. In Slovenia, special need assistant can be hired to provide physical help for the children with physical disabilities. In Croatia, whenever it is possible, in the mainstream programme an assistant or third educator is included for the children with difficulties.

The number of children with special educational needs, who can be included in the mainstream groups in Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia and the support for these children, provided by these countries is shown in the following table.

Table 2. Inclusion in kindergartens

Country	Inclusive groups in kindergartens		
	Number of children with disabilities in an inclusive group in kindergartens	Total number of children in an inclusive group in kindergartens	Support for inclusion
Austria	1 child with disabilities	at least 10 but no more than 20 children	A certain number of professionals (that give "expert advice for inclusion") are employed by each state. The responsibility of every
	2 to 4 children with disabilities	10 but no more than 15 children	

			professional is for approximately 2.5 children per hour.
Slovenia	A maximum of 2 children with special needs is allowed to be included in each mainstream group	There is a reduced number of children in the group when children with special needs are included. Consequently, the number of children could be reduced to six	For children with physical disabilities, kindergartens can hire a special needs assistant that will provide physical help for these children. This additional help is in cases where kindergartens cannot ensure the implementation of the statement within the existing staffing or through other appropriate means.
Croatia	-Based on the opinion of expert associates, in the educational group in the kindergarten can be included only one child with easier difficulty -Only 1 child with higher or combined disabilities can be included in the educational group, if there is insufficient number of children to set up a special educational program,	- If 1 child with easier difficulty is included in the group - the number of children in the group is reduced by two children - If 1 child with higher or combined disabilities is included in the educational group - the number of children is reduced by four	Whenever it is possible, an assistant or a third educator or rehabilitator is provided for the children with difficulties, which are included in the mainstream programme. If a child with severe difficulties is included in an educational group, an additional educator or expert associate with an educator-rehabilitator profile can also work in the group
Macedonia	1 child with mild disabilities in mental development or physical disability can be included in the kindergarten groups.	In this case the number of children in the groups is reduced by two children	

Source: IECE Country questionnaire – Austria, p.5-9; IECE Country questionnaire – Slovenia p.2-8; IECE Country questionnaire – Croatia, p.3 -8; Državni pedagoški standard predškolskog odgoja i naobrazbe; Child protection law, 2018:16-17)

4. Initial education of kindergarten teachers

Initial teacher education is the formal way of education that teachers receive. This form of education has an essential meaning in the process of building teacher's profile.

In the Eurydice Report: “*Structural indicators Monitoring Education and Training Systems in Europe*”, has been analyzed the initial education of the staff, whose duties are education and care of the children in the system of early childhood education and care. The analysis shows that in almost half of the countries (from the available data) in the entire ECEC phase (from birth to the start of compulsory education) at least one staff member per group of children is with a tertiary qualification in education sciences. Still, not a small number of countries (including Macedonia) do not have at least one staff member with a tertiary qualification in the education sciences per group of children under 3 years of age.

Alongside the initial education of the teachers, the continuing professional development of the teachers is a second very important factor that also has an essential meaning in the process of building teacher's profile. Through courses, seminars, workshops, peer observations, ECEC staff can gain new information's, knowledge, skills.

The analysis shown in the previously mentioned Eurydice report shows that in more than half of the countries CPD is a professional duty of a necessity for promotion for the staff who is engaged in each phase of ECEC.

But, there are countries (Belgium fr, Belgium nl, Hungary, Romania, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Serbia) where the groups of children under 3 years don't need to have at least one staff member with a tertiary qualification in education sciences, but still CPD is a professional duty or necessary for promotion for every staff included in the entire ECEC phase.

Opposite to them, there are countries (Greece, Portugal) where in the entire ECEC phase at least one staff member should have tertiary qualification in education sciences and when it comes to the professional development of the staff, CPD is a professional duty or necessary for promotion for the staff engaged in the groups with children aged 3 years or more.

In the table 3, is shown the Initial education and CPD of the staff engaged in education and care of the children in ECEC in some countries in Europe.

The organization of the initial education of kindergarten teachers in Europe, Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia, regarding the institution where kindergarten teachers gain their initial education, who can enroll in these programs and the duration of the programs, is shown in table 4. There is a difference in the initial education of kindergarten teachers between Austria and the other countries. In Austria, kindergarten teachers are prepared in kindergarten education schools that last 5 years, and after the eighth grade future kindergarten teachers can be enrolled in these schools. Graduates of higher education schools who also graduate with the kindergarten teacher qualification can continue a four-semester course at the Colleges at kindergarten education institutions. On the other hand, in Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia the preparation of kindergarten teachers is at university level and the study programmes in Croatia and Slovenia last 3 years, while in Macedonia they last 4 years.

Table 3. Initial education and CPD of the staff engaged in education and care of the children in ECEC

	1. At least one staff member with a tertiary qualification in education sciences	2. CPD professional duty or necessary for promotion
Belgium fr	■	●
Belgium de	●	●
Belgium nl	■	●
Bulgaria	■	■
Czech Republic		■
Denmark		
Germany	●	●
Estonia	●	●
Ireland		
Greece	●	■
Spain	■	■
France	■	■
Croatia	●	●
Italy	■	■
Cyprus	■	■
Latvia		●
Lithuania	●	●
Luxembourg	●	●
Hungary	■	●
Malta	■	■
Netherlands	■	
Austria		●
Poland	■	■
Portugal	●	■
Romania	■	●
Slovenia	●	●
Slovakia		■
Finland	●	●
Sweden	●	
United Kingdom-ENG	■	■
United Kingdom-WLS	■	■
United Kingdom-NIR	■	■
United Kingdom-SCT		●
Bosnia and Herzegovina	●	●
Iceland	●	●
Liechtenstein	■	●
Montenegro	●	●
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	■	●
Norway	●	
Serbia	■	●
Turkey	●	●

Notes:

■ = children aged 3 years or more ⁽⁵⁾; ● = the entire ECEC phase (from birth to the start of compulsory education).

1. Tertiary qualification in education = minimum 3 years ISCED 6.

2. CPD refers to continuing professional development.

⁽⁵⁾ ■ refers to children aged 2 years or more in France, 2.5 years or more in Belgium (French and Flemish Communities) and to children aged 4 years or more in Greece, the Netherlands and Liechtenstein.

Source: European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018, p. 12

Table 4. Organization of initial education of kindergarten teachers

Country	Organization of initial education of kindergarten teachers		
	Institution	Enrollment	Duration

Austria	Kindergarten education schools	After the eighth grade	5 years
	Colleges at kindergarten education institutions	Graduates of higher education schools who also graduate with the kindergarten teacher qualification	Four-semester course
Slovenia	Educators at the pre-primary level are educated and trained at the three state universities: Ljubljana, Maribor and Koper	Anyone can enroll in the stated study programme who has: a. passed the matriculation exam. b. passed the concluding exam or professional matriculation exam in the secondary school programme The Preschool Teacher or in the secondary school programme The Health Technician. c. anyone who has prior to 01.06.95 completed any four-year secondary school programme.	3 years
Croatia	Undergraduate university study programme (Early and preschool education)	Completed secondary education	3 years
Macedonia	5 Faculties at 4 State Universities prepare pre-school teachers	Completed secondary education; passed state matura, international matura, passed the school matura or passed the final exam. At the faculties for pre-school teachers also can be enrolled candidates with completed four-year secondary education in the previous school years (prior to the academic year 2007/2008) who did not have a state matura.	4 years

Source: Country information for Austria; Country information for Slovenia; Preschool education, University of Ljubljana; Country information for Croatia; IECE Country questionnaire – Croatia, p. 5

5. Training of preschool staff for inclusive education

The initial education of teachers in kindergartens until a few years ago was directed only in preparing teachers to work with children with typical development. Special educators worked exclusively with children with special needs. Today's state of inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream groups in kindergartens requires ready teachers who will be able to work in such an inclusive environment. This entails changing the curricula for training of teachers in kindergartens. The analysis of some study programs that prepare teachers in kindergartens (Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia) shows gradual uptake of knowledge for inclusive education in the initial preparation of pre-school teachers. For now, the findings in the field of inclusive education teachers (at University of Ljubljana, at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University in Zagreb, At the Faculty of Education – Bitola, at the faculty of Education in Skopje, at the Faculty of Educational sciences in Stip) generally receive from the contents of one or two courses within the study program. Some of these courses are compulsory, and some are just electives. In Austria, special education is included with 1-2 hours per week in the fourth and in the fifth years of teacher training. At University in Koper (study programme Pre-school teaching), students in the third year study Special pedagogics as compulsory subject, and as Internally elective subjects of the study programme they have Discovering and identification of children with special needs, Learning for diversity and social justice,

Basic methods of learning with blind and visually impaired pre-school children. At the Institute of Pedagogy in Skopje in the second semester students study the mandatory subject Special pedagogy and in the second semester they have the elective subject Pedagogical work with vulnerable children, in the fourth semester students can study the elective subject Educational work with children with interference in behavior

However, the practice itself and experiences will show which changes are necessary to make in the initial preparation of pre-school teachers in order to be prepared to work in an inclusive environment.

In addition to the initial preparation that provides knowledge, skills, here is the professional development of teachers through which the acquired knowledge and skills are deepened. Researchers have pointed out that the educators that constantly work on their professional development provide stimulating learning environment that enables children to develop properly and to achieve optimum results (According to Munton et al, 2002, as cited in Eurofound, 2015:6).

Country	Training (regarding inclusion) in initial education of preschool teachers	In – service training
Austria	<p>Special education is included with 1-2 hours per week in the fourth and in the fifth years of teacher training. From 2016 inclusive education was included with 2 hours per week.</p> <p>For each kindergarten group that requires training for kindergarten teachers, an educational specialist is uniformly provided</p>	<p>Teachers have the right to education in the extent of the working week. The content can be determined individually</p>
Slovenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Faculty of Education, University in Ljubljana pre-school teachers study <i>Inclusive education</i> as a compulsory subject in the 5th Semester and gain 5 ECTS. And as an elective subjects they have: Special Pedagogy – 4 ECTS. • For the study programme Pre-school teaching at University in Koper students in the third year study <i>Special pedagogics</i> as compulsory subject with 7 ECTS, and as Internally elective subjects of the study programme they have <i>Discovering and identification of children with special needs</i> with 6 ECTS, <i>Learning for diversity and social justice</i> with 6 ECTS, <i>Basic methods of learning with blind and visually impaired pre-school children</i> with 6 ECTS. 	<p>Additional knowledge on working with learners with special needs in practice, pre-primary teachers may obtain within programmes of in-service training. The National Education Institute each academic year advertises and prepares these programmes. Since 2011-2012 was incorporated the principle that all teachers should obtain certain knowledge of learners with special needs.</p> <p>In-service training programmes for working with a selected group of learners with special needs are offered by the Central Faculties.</p>
Croatia	<p>The initial training of staff includes understanding and supporting children with diverse and additional needs. At the Faculty of Teacher Education, University in Zagreb, in the second year of studies, students have the mandatory subject <i>Inclusive Pedagogy 1</i> (3 ECTS), and in the third year students have the mandatory subject <i>Inclusive pedagogy 2</i> (2 ECTS),</p>	<p>The professional development of the educational staff is organized and carried by several agencies: Education and teacher training Agency. Some organisations that organise trainings for Preschool Teachers or other supportive professional staff on a regular basis are: the Croatian office of the International Step by Step Association; the Centre for Lifelong Learning of the Faculty of Teacher</p>

		Education, University of Zagreb, and the Centre for Life-long Learning of the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka
Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Faculty of Education – Bitola, in the sixth semester students study the mandatory subject <i>Inclusive Pedagogy</i> – 4 ECTS, in the seventh semester they study the mandatory subject <i>Uppbringing – educational work with gifted and talented</i> – 6 ECTS • At the faculty of Education in Skopje, students study the elective subject in the seventh semester <i>Methods of work with gifted children</i> – 3 ECTS; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Institute of Pedagogy in Skopje in the second semester students study the mandatory subject <i>Special pedagogy</i> – 6 ECTS, and in the second semester they have the elective subject <i>pedagogical work with vulnerable children</i> – 6 ECTS, in the fourth semester students can study the elective subject <i>Educational work with children with interference in behavior</i> • At the Faculty of Educational sciences in Stip students can choose to study in the seventh semester between the 2 elective subjects: <i>Methods of work with children with SEN</i> – 6 ECTS and <i>Inclusive education – Inclusive education</i> – 6 ECTS 	The employees in a public institution for children have the right to professional development, for which the director adopts a plan for continuous professional development in accordance with a program for continuous education of the professional public service providers

Source: Country information for Austria; IECE country questionnaire – Austria, p.7-8; Country information for Slovenia; Pre-school Education University of Ljubljana; Pre-school teaching. University in Koper; Study programmes at the Faculty of Education Bitola; Study Programmes at the Faculty of Education – Skopje, Study programe at the Institute of pedagogy Skopje, Study Programme at the Faculty of Educational Sciences – Stip, Child protection law, p. 43, IECE Country questionnaire – Croatia, p. 6, Course description – Syllabus, Teacher Education, University in Zagreb. Country information for Croatia. Bouillet, 2017:18;

Conclusion

Today, the former practice of separating children with special needs and their accommodation in special institutions separated from other children is abandoned. Today, there is more and more effort whenever there is an opportunity to ensure the inclusion of children with special needs in the mainstream groups. Data from numerous European countries show a situation of inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream groups in kindergartens. The data show that inclusion is a reality in pre-school practice and that with all its disadvantages in realization, it is possible a model for education of children with special educational needs. The inclusion of children with special needs in the mainstream groups, necessarily requires the transformation of the system of pre-school education and upbringing. Requires a change in the initial preparation of staff working with children, requires engagement of persons and additional support in

the work with children with special needs, requires continuous professional development of the engaged staff working with children and requires commitment of the states.

The analysis of the study programs that prepare teachers who work in kindergartens have seen the involvement of subjects in the field of inclusive education. These are just the basics that future teachers receive, which they further have the opportunity to deepen and expand through their continuous professional development. This shows that the curriculum for teacher training in kindergartens began to undergo changes with the inclusion of content from inclusive education. Practical experiences and needs themselves should also be alert in the future for the necessary changes in the study programs. Almost all countries have placed continuing professional development as a duty and obligation for the advancement of teachers involved in the groups of children 3 years of age and older. Not a small number of countries (more than half) sets this requirement for all teachers involved in the overall process of preschool education. These educational policies are aimed at continuously upgrading the knowledge and skills of the staff. We can especially emphasize the need for continuous upgrading of the knowledge for working with children with special needs in the regular groups, certainly based on the previous analyzes and monitoring of the needs and development of the educational staff.

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