

## INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN WITH SEN IN THE EARLY EDUCATION VISION

Cornelia LAZĂR

*Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania*

### ABSTRACT

*Inclusive education is a complex and lengthy process which requires continuous analysis, adjustments and development, in order to achieve inclusive policies and practices starting with the early education. In Romania there is a tradition of inclusive education, a tradition which was applied, in 2011, by the RENINCO Association.*

*This organisation, along with its international partners, has set up a professional body for the promotion and implementation of inclusive education in Romania named GREI (Grupul Român Pentru Educație Incluzivă / The Romanian Body for Inclusive Education), whose main objective is to connect Romania to the European and international efforts to achieve inclusive education, and to sustain and develop the Romanian mode initiative, including its implementation at national and European level.*

*The purpose of this paper is to present the findings of a study based on documents that contain the legislation, principles and strategies of integration of children with SEN in early education, with a view to implementing these in the integration of antepreschool children with SEN. It is well known that early identification of special needs offers the best chance for intervention and recuperation.*

**KEYWORDS:** integration, inclusive education, special educational needs (SEN), early education, educational policy, disability

Inclusive education is a complex and lengthy process which requires continuous analysis, adjustments and development, in order to achieve inclusive policies and practices starting with the early education. The principle of inclusive education was officially promoted in the U.S. in the early '90s with Individuals Disabilities Education Act. In Romania there is a tradition of inclusive education, a tradition which was applied in:

- Inclusive education project (2007-2011) funded by the World Bank and the Romanian Government aims to ensure equal access for children who is in disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (including children with special needs) to a quality early education. Among the components of this project is training resources human for the managers of early education on issues related to inclusive education.

- Policy of the RENINCO Association, who in 2011 along with its international partners, has set up a professional body for the promotion and implementation of inclusive education in Romania named GREI (Grupul Român Pentru Educație Incluzivă / The Romanian Body for Inclusive Education); whose main objective is to connect Romania to the European and international efforts to achieve inclusive education, and to sustain and develop the Romanian initiative, including its implementation at national and european level.

Opinions of speciality highlights of inclusive education opportunity as early. In this sense, the results reported are selected by the European Agency for Development in Special Education Requirements (Mara, D., 2009, p 11). Thus, conditions that mainstream schools must meet to successfully include the students with special educational needs:

1. Motivation of teachers to create an inclusive environment in the classroom;
2. Knowledge, skills and expertise of teachers who working with students with special educational needs;
3. Supporting teachers from both the management of the educational institution and the other institutions;
4. Cooperation closely with parents of children with SEN is essential for successful inclusion;
5. A set of relevant policies to allow an inclusive framework of pupils with SEN.

The identification of special needs at an early age creates the possibility to recover as fast. So, inclusive education applies for early education also. Early education constitutes a pedagogical approach covering the period from birth to 6/7 years during which they held fundamental acquisitions in child development. World Conference at Jomtien (1990) which aimed Education for All emphasizes that learning begins at birth and goes on throughout life. The conference also brought to the fore the need to correlate the fields of health, nutrition and hygiene, social protection sphere of education, an education based on the concept of cognitive and emotional development of the child seeking to maximize and optimal context its potential. Early education becomes the first stage of preparation for formal education, who begins at the age of 6/7 years.

The values promoted by any curriculum for early childhood education are:

- Fundamental Rights of the Child (the right to life and health, the right family, the right to education, right to be heard and to express themselves freely etc.).
- full development of the child;
- Inclusion as a process to promote diversity and tolerance;

Highlights Inclusive Early Childhood Education can be found in:

1. Project for early education (2007-2011), which is financed by the Romanian Government and the Development Bank of the Council of Europe which envisages providing educational support for children with special needs from the very young (0-3 years) in order to facilitate their integration into mainstream preschool.
2. Project "Educational inclusion of preschool children in the Republic of Moldova", implemented by NGO "Woman and child-protection and support" Criuleni Development Agency with support from the Czech Republic and the Association "ADRA", Czech Republic

After analyzing the opinions and conclusions of these projects for inclusive early childhood education, the objectives who be achieved in inclusive early childhood education:

- Making the initial assessment early for children with SEN, so that measures medical and educational assistance to apply as early as possible to optimize effective recovery;
- Inform teachers and managers about learning disabilities and barriers they may face children with disabilities;
- Cultivating positive opinion towards the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream kindergartens;
- Development of skills necessary to adapt the environment in kindergarten learning to overcome barriers faced by children with disabilities;
- Creating networking among teachers and managers of kindergartens and parents of children with disabilities or with special institutions;
- Develop the capacity in schools to raise funds for their special services provided to children with SEN;
- Supplementing the resources of funding by involving of another systems.

In institutionalization of pre-school children, all these objectives are valid, because education begins at birth or even at the conception, according to the opinions of specialists in prenatal psychology (Lazar C., 2011). Although care institutions for children (0-3 years) are not considered institutions for the education of children, this is required. Therefore, it is of major importance for intervene legislative and organizational in this area so that pre-school childcare institutions become educational institutions like kindergartens. In terms of inclusive education, it is known that disabilities such as perception disabilities, mental disabilities or Down syndrome, etc. intervention is indicated in the first year of life, in many cases this causing successfully in recovering child's social integration.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Gherguț, A. (2006), *Psihopedagogia persoanelor cu cerințe special. Strategii diferențiate și inclusive în educație*, Editura Polirom, Iași;
- [2] Jigău M. (coord.), (2009), *Situația copiilor cu CES incluși în învățământul de masă*, UNICEF, Editura Vanemone;
- [3] Mara, D. (2009), *Strategii didactice în educația incluzivă*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București;
- [4] Vrasmaș, E., Vrasmaș, T. (coord.), (2012), *Educația incluzivă în grădiniță: dimensiuni, provocări și soluții*, Ed. Alpha MDN, Buzău;
- [5] Vrasmaș, E. (1999) *Educația copilului preșcolar*, Editura Pro Humanitas, București;
- [6] Vrânceanu M., Pelivan V., Ghid: *Incluziunea socio-educățională a copiilor cu dizabilități în grădinița de copii*, Asociația obștească “Femeia și copilul-protecție și sprijin”, Criuleni-Chișinău, apărut în cadrul Proiectului;