

Preparing HEIs in Montenegro to meet the needs of students with disabilities

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Riassunto: *Con questo articolo l'autrice vuole presentare il progetto europeo TEMPUS "Supporto e inclusione degli studenti con disabilità presso istituti di istruzione superiore in Montenegro (SINC@HE)", che ha come scopo il miglioramento dei servizi volti all'inclusione degli studenti universitari con disabilità in sinergia con le pratiche e le politiche dell'Unione Europea.*

Abstract: *Aim of this article is to present the TEMPUS Project "Support and Inclusion of Students with Disabilities at Higher Education Institutions in Montenegro (SINC@HE)"¹ that has been funded with the support of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. Main priority of the project is to promote the reform and modernization of higher education in Montenegro. More specifically the SINC@HE project has been designed to improve the quality and relevance of support and inclusion of higher education students with disabilities in Montenegro. The main project objective is to create the conditions that will assimilate the quality of inclusion of students with disabilities in EU HEIs and will be harmonized according to EU practices and policies. A long term objective of the outcomes will be to strengthen the open society values regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in HEIs.*

Keywords: *inclusion, support, students with disabilities, accessibility.*

Introduction

The idea of inclusion is being discussed and put into practice the last two decades especially in education (primary, secondary and tertiary).

Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners and can thus be understood as a key strategy to achieve EFA. As an overall principle, it should guide all education policies and practices, starting from the fact that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society (UNESCO, 2009, 9).

If inclusive education puts forward the strengths of all individuals and creates “a school and a society for all” as a living and learning place, where learning is seen as a dynamic and creative process, the first step we must take in order to proceed towards this direction is to create “a school for everyone” with or without disabilities (Kartasidou, Sampsonidou, 2003, 1284).

Although the idea of inclusion in EU Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is already put into practice, even nowadays higher education students with disabilities have to deal with an amount of obstacles and difficulties while studying in HEIs. As research has shown some of the facts that have an impact on SwD for completing their studies are (a) the lack of support, (b) the insufficient guidance during their studies, (c) the difficulties on mobility around campus especially for students with visual impairment and physical disability, and (d) the lack of providing alternative formats to meet the specific needs of SwD. In other words HEIs need to adapt and modify learning resources and learning environment so that HEIs can be “accessible” following the philosophy “Design for All” (Gray, Wilkins, 2005; Harris, Oppenheim, 2003). In order to put into practice the idea of inclusive education certain steps need to be made (UNESCO, 2009, 15):

- «Carrying out local situation analyses on the scope of the issue, available resources and their utilization in support of inclusion and inclusive education.
- Mobilizing opinion on the right to education for everybody.
- Building consensus around the concepts of inclusive and quality education.
- Reforming legislation to support inclusive education in line with international conventions, declarations and recommendations.
- Supporting local capacity-building to promote development towards inclusive education.
- Developing ways to measure the impact of inclusive and quality education.
- Developing school – and community – based mechanisms to identify children not in school and find ways to help them enter school and remain there.
- Helping teachers to understand their role in education and that inclusion of diversity in the classroom is an opportunity, not a problem».

Taken into consideration the aforementioned steps as prerequisites towards an inclusive policy a project was designed to promote the reform and modernization of HE in Montenegro focusing on the support and inclusion of higher education SwD.

Background of the project

The proposed project took into consideration the problems and barriers that SwD are facing in HEIs as they are presented in different European and national studies and researches. Montenegro is a young country in process of European integration. In that sense, harmonization in all segments with EU regulation is one of Government's primary tasks. Towards EU integration, Government of Montenegro has noted disharmony in field of education of individuals with disabilities as relevant social problem. In the absence of competitive human, material and technical recourses to support them, individuals with disabilities were able to be educated only in special schools and specialized institutions i.e. IERK. Relying on existing legal acts in cooperation and active support of Government of Finland, Montenegrin Government launched the process of institutionalization of this problem that resulted with defining and adopting "The Strategy for Inclusive Education in Montenegro" in 2009. The main goal of the Strategy is to enable individuals with disabilities, to have high quality and available education in compliance with their interests, needs and possibilities. However, the importance of ensuring the conditions for inclusion of SwD is inconsistent with the current willingness and support possibilities in Montenegrin HE: (a) sensibility of the environment for SwD is not developed, (b) university professors and staff are not trained for working with SwD and they are not able to identify their needs and possibilities, (c) SwD are not sufficiently empowered to actively participate in the university life, (d) teaching environment, for the time being, is not adapted to the physical demands of certain groups of students with disabilities, (e) educational technology is only partly used in the specific context of teaching, (f) IT support for SwD and initiatives of HEIs are sporadic activities.

There is a lack also on "disability knowledge and awareness" since higher education teaching staff is not prepared to meet the needs of SwD, that leads SwD to create on their own the educational environment and (b) peers without disabilities are not able to accept that SwD do not face only

limitations and difficulties but have also skills and capacities that can help them to be socially included.

The national project partners, The Montenegrin Institute for Education and Rehabilitation of Hearing and Speech Disorders and The Association of youth with disabilities, both took an active role in the developing and implementation of the national Strategy for Inclusive Education in Montenegro which is mainly addressed to the elementary and vocational educational needs.

Montenegro is trying to enable inclusion of persons with disabilities in the general education system. But, there is a significant number of children that are not included in the educational process (not in regular schools, nor in specialized schools); this is due to decisions of some parents, against the positive law and obligation of education, and compulsory primary education, but it is understandable because the schools are inaccessible, systematic assistance in teaching is absent, support for teachers and students is absent, etc. In the state protocol and document of the national intention, Montenegro is making efforts to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, with reasonable accommodation in educational process. Private faculties, department of universities have intention and readiness to involve students with disabilities in university education, and have readiness to enrol them without requiring tuition fee.

Higher Education in Montenegro and students with disabilities

Tertiary education of Montenegro consists of universities and higher education schools. There are three Montenegrin universities: two private University of Donja Gorica (UDG) and University of Mediterranean (UNIM) with 6 faculties each and a state University of Montenegro (JUUCG) with 19 faculties. According to statistics 24043 higher education students were registered in academic year 2012/2011 in Montenegro HEIs.

According to the statistics of Association of Youth with Disabilities in Montenegro (AYDM), there are 28 students with disabilities in Montenegrin HEIs, 23 students in JUUCG, three in UNIM and two students in UDG. Large majority of those students are at the undergraduate

level of studies. Concerning the art of disability eighteen students are with physical/motor disability, five with visual impairment, three with multiple disorders, and two with hearing and speech impairment.

Possibly, there are more SwD at HEIs not included into these statistics, simply because they have not requested support from the AYDM. It is also important to note that there are no statistics available for the number of students with specific learning disabilities/difficulties (i.e. dyslexia). Also, although there is a special school for primary and secondary education at the IERK, very few of those students continue to tertiary education, which is mainly due to inadequate support and need for adaptation of all teaching materials.

The current level of support is sparse and consists of (DEV3.3, 4):

- Some form of ICT support (LMS Moodle, auditory support in electronic materials in some courses).
- Participation of a sign interpreter (one student of the Mediterranean University supports communication), according to the situation and individual needs of the students with learning disability at the Mediterranean University.
- Adaptation of the buildings (at some faculties, department) or constructing buildings according to relevant standards for students with disabilities (at the University of Donja Gorica and the Faculty of tourism Bar, University Mediterranean).
- Reduced scholarships for students with disabilities at public and private universities or tuition-free education.
- Scholarships offered from the local municipalities.
- Assistance and support from the Association of Youth with Disabilities.
- Provision of some adapted textbooks.
- Transport (organized by the NGO).
- Dormitories partially adapted.

Strategic goals of Montenegro are the implementation of inclusive education at all educational level. Thus, education and training policy of SwD is the part of the national activities, and important activities of NGO for SwD. There are some activities towards implementation of the national policies on youth with disabilities in university student's education and HEI's in Montenegro. Universities in Montenegro have support from the AYDM and specialized institutions for education of SwD i.e. IERK. However there aren't enough educated teachers at universities to teach

SwD, and there aren't enough specialized associations of higher education SwD.

The SINC@HE project

The SINC@HE project has been designed to improve the quality and relevance of support and inclusion of higher education students with disabilities in Montenegro. The main project objective is to create the conditions that will assimilate the quality of inclusion of SwD in EU HEIs and will be harmonized according to EU practices and policies. A long term objective of the outcomes will be to strengthen the open society values regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in HEIs.

The project focuses on providing support to SwD in order to improve inclusion in ME HEIs that is a priority equal and transparent access to higher education. This support is established through social services such as counseling, psychological support, assistive technology and teaching aids. Thus, the specific objectives of the project are:

- To improve university regulatory frameworks, guidelines and recommendations to allow full support for disabled students in ME HEIs.
- To improve institutional capacities through providing special equipment, support services and staff training for teaching students with disabilities.
- To establish Student Advisory Offices at each partner university for counseling, guidance, tutoring, relationships and psychological support.
- To raise awareness and motivation on inclusive education and to increase the number of prospective students with disability.

The results of the proposed project will give the chance to partners, students and academics in Montenegro to get highly important knowledge in support and inclusion of students with disabilities in their daily academic life. Long-term goal of the proposed project is to strengthen the open society values by combining best EU practices and policies. This goal is going to be indicated through University databases, registers at student advisory offices and reports of workshops and events.

In order to achieve these objectives it is crucial to change the mentality of the society, meaning that besides that HEIs have to keep the teaching staff well informed and trained on the needs of SwD, teaching staff has

to promote inclusion of SwD, without, however, excluding fully students without disabilities or disturbing the balance of the class. Teaching staff should be also informed on how to deal with students with disabilities (visual impairment, learning disabilities). It is possible that a tutor can cross the line and start treating a student with disabilities with pity or as someone who needs care rather than a student who has equally rights with all the other students. It is important for students who have a disability to feel that they are being treated equally. Otherwise they may hesitate to disclose their disability and lose the chance to inform the University of their Special Needs.

Target group

The main target group addressed by the project is wide group of current and prospective SwD. According to IDEA and other studies (Study by Brunel University, 2002; Applica, Cesep, European Centre, 2007) referring to the term and categories of disability the following terms are used in SINC@HE:

- Visual impairment/disability, including blindness.
- Emotional disturbance or Psychological and psychiatric disorders.
- Physical disability or/and orthopedic impairment.
- Long-term health condition or/and other health impairment (e.g. cancer, asthma, HIV/AIDS, epilepsy, chronic fatigue syndrome, diabetes).
- Hearing impairment/disability, including deafness.
- Specific learning difficulties or Specific learning disability.

Since it is highly needed to strengthen the academic community for the concept of inclusive university, the wider target groups and university's potential partners are: students with and without disabilities, environment, university teachers, staff, and university established services and potential networks.

Procedure

Since, the project aims to have a wide impact on the national improvement of the quality and relevance of inclusive education of SwD EU and

national practices and policies regarding inclusion of SwD in HEIs have been reviewed and analyzed. This review and analysis lead to the comparison of EU/national practices and policies for the inclusion of SwD. Since the proposed project is based on the cooperation of different institutions was vital to (a) analyze the legislative framework and human resources at partner institutions and (b) define institutional structure to support inclusion of Swd before establishing support services. A prerequisite for the inclusion of SwD is the training university staff. Thus, training activities are aimed for all stakeholders to get acquainted with necessary knowledge for improving the quality of support and inclusion of SwD in Montenegro and act as multipliers for inclusion. The establishment of Student Advisory Office in the premises of AYDM that will be responsible for counselling, guidance, tutoring, relationships and psychological support is one final step that leads to the completion of the project's objectives.

Results

The benchmarking the ME HEIs has shown that ME is following the inclusive policy taken into consideration the “Strategy of integration of the persons with disabilities” and the “Law of prohibition of discrimination of the persons with disabilities” but still more work is required to achieve the objectives of inclusive education i.e. raising awareness of the society concerning “disability”, improving accessibility, providing and creating learning resources. Table 1 shows the summary of policy and standards benchmarking analysis under three levels:

- Level 1 (-) – signifies that Montenegrin HEI's are at the moment below the 'norm' for the EU as a whole.
- Level 2 (=) – signifies that Montenegrin HEI's are at the moment broadly at the same level as the “norm” for the EU as a whole.
- Level 3 (+) – signifies that Montenegrin HEI's are at the moment broadly above the “norm” for the EU as a whole.
- Finally, Column 5 identifies key gaps in each area and for each criterion and suggests possible strategies for improvement.

Following this analysis the partners with the guidance of Arcola Research have highlighted three priority areas for ME policy:

- Definitions and Awareness.

- Financing.
- Systematic Support.

In other words ME HEIs need to focus, by using best practices from EU partners, on (a) public raising awareness, (b) improving assessment procedures of the needs of SwD, (c) improving accessibility in the built environment, (d) promoting transition skills from secondary to tertiary education, (e) ensuring better training for professional staff in HEIs, and (f) enhancing support services during studies to SwD.

Further a research (DEV2.1) took place concerning the three aforementioned priorities that has shown the gaps in the current process of inclusion:

- «The absence of an adequate legal framework for inclusion of SwD in HEI that is in compliance with international standards and criteria at national and HEI level.
- The absence of systematic support which will facilitate the process of inclusion of SwD.
- The lack of specialized administrative and academic staff trained to give proper support to SwD in order to enhance their inclusion in HEI.
- A low level of technological capacities intended to facilitate the inclusion of students in HEI.
- The absence of pedagogical support for guidance and counselling for SwD.
- The pre-entry and post-graduation support at HEI is not existent.
- The lack of financial resources to build systematic capacities for inclusion of SwD in HEI» (DEV 2.1, 19).

The participants of this research from the two Universities (UDG and UNIM) although have stated that they are not familiar with issues concerning disability and inclusion they were willing to contribute to the more efficient and effective inclusion of SwD at HEIs. The main obstacles to the process are likely to be financial in nature, because, both aforementioned institutions are young and privately owned, and thus are not able to finance the establishment of all those capacities by themselves.

Current resources in UDG and UNIM are fully accessible to students with physical disability. All participants agree that the steps that should be made towards inclusion must focus on policy framework at a university level i.e. ICT.

Policy and legal standards	EU standards and good practices	Montenegro situation	Benchmark Score	Gaps and areas for improvement
Implementation of United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Ratified at EU level and in most member states	Ratified Convention and Protocol 2007. Strategy of integration of the persons with disabilities from period 2008-2016 adopted. Association of the Youth with Disabilities -AYDM - actively champions Convention implementation.	+	Increase awareness among public of needs of individuals with disabilities (IwD). Improve monitoring and identification of numbers involved and their needs. Increase systematic application of UNCRPD in social, cultural and economic life. Improve accessibility in built environment.
Implementation of EU Disability Action Plan 2003-2010	Plan has 3 priorities: accessibility; active inclusion; employment. Monitoring through ANED and SPSI NSRs *show that disability is mainstreamed in markedly different ways and that significant work is still required.	Law of prohibition of discriminations of the persons with disabilities, 2011, provides framework for mainstreaming disability.	=	As above - more effort in awareness-raising is required. Another key area is in employment. Montenegro has high rates of unemployment - particularly among IwD. More effort could be concentrated in building more effective 'transition pathways' for young people between school, tertiary education and work.
EU Education and Training policies (ET2020) with regard to disability	ANED and SPSI NSRs show that education has either been underplayed or disregarded in NSRs	Strategic goals of Montenegro are the implementation of inclusive education at all educational levels - through Law on amendments on the vocational rehabilitation and employment of IwD, 2011	=	Although the legal and policy infrastructure supports 'inclusive learning', it is not systematically applied in practice. Areas where more effort could be focused are: i) better integration between the different education sectors on educational needs of Sii) resources provided to train more qualified special needs education professionals and to promote continuing professional development of education professionals iii) more coherent frameworks and guidelines for implementation of UN and EU policies in higher education

Targeting	EU standards and good practices	ME situation	Gaps and areas for improvement
Targeting strategy adopted	No standards identified	No specific targeting	Methodologies and tools to accurately capture the actual population of young IwD, and their profiles and needs
Implementation	EU standards and good practices	ME situation	Gaps and areas for improvement
Support measures on rights	EU Fundamental Rights Agency. EU2020 Digital Agenda. EU Disability High Level Group issues regular reports on progress made on the implementation of the UN Convention	No specific measures identified	Develop systems and tools to incorporate the rights of disabled students in HEIs. Examples: France -Social criteria-based grants; University of Primorska – University Statutes
Support measures on accessibility; built environment; accommodation	Most Member States have taken initiatives to improve the accessibility of public buildings and to adopt rules that are 'disability-friendly' in new construction. However, the level and quality of provision is uneven. Definition of 'reasonable accommodation' varies widely	Only University of Donja Gorica – a new University – has purpose-built accommodation and accessibility-focused design. Some provision in other universities- Podgorica and Nikšić, with rooms specialized for students with motor disabilities. Faculties at the Mediterranean University are partially accessible	More extensive implementation of EU Disability Strategy and related standards on accessibility – e.g. the EU 'design for All' mandate; ISO standard 21542 on accessibility and Mandate 273 on accessibility. Apply relevant good practices from EU examples, e.g. 'Mobility Training' (University of Warsaw)
Support measures on governance	No specific policy measures at EU level. Examples of individual HEIs developing structures to involve disabled students in decision-making.	No specific measures to raise awareness or include disabled students in decision-making. Universities in Montenegro have support from the AYDM and specialized institutions for education of students with disabilities.	Set up new awareness-raising, collaboration and decision making structures both within HEIs and linking them with external stakeholders like AYDM. Examples: Disability Equality Scheme (UK); Disability officers (Greece, Spain); Studentenwerke (Germany); Disability and Well-Being Support Advisors (UK)

Support measures on ICTs	European Parliament resolution 2007 called for the continuing development of design standards in ICTs to support IwD Directive 2009/136/EC on universal service and user's rights relating to electronic communications networks and services. Standardization mandate 376 on European accessibility requirements. But Riga Dashboard report notes that progress towards achieving the Riga targets is much too slow. ICT and assistive technology support varies widely across EU but there are some examples of innovation	No systematic provision of ICTs and assistive technologies. Some measures – e.g. digitisation of learning content – have been implemented; e-learning systems (LMS Moodle), and auditory support in electronic materials available for some courses	-	More systematic implementation of EU standards and directives on procurement and installation of ICTs. Introduce relevant good practices from EU. Examples: University of Macerata e-learning system (OLAT); University of Warsaw – trackball devices, Magic Wand Keyboard, 'HeadMouse' sensor (PL); Institute of Education, London – Disability Assistive Technology room; University College, London – Student Enabling IT Suite
Pre-entry support measures	Generally neglected at EU and member state level, but some examples of innovation and good practice	Scholarships for SwD at public and private university or scholarship-free education. Scholarships from the local municipalities. Assistance and support from the Association of Youth with disabilities	-	Integration of existing initiatives into more coherent financial support package. Explore feasibility of adopting good practice examples from EU. Examples: Fund for learning support (Ireland); Disabled Students Allowance (UK); Grants for signing (Austria, Spain); Social criteria-based grants (France)
Post-qualification support measures	Generally neglected at EU and member state level, but some examples of innovation and good practice	Not recognised, through AYDM does some work in this field.	-	Develop post-qualification support infrastructure in HEIs. Example: University of Macerata – CETRIIL: centre for internship and job orientation

Outcomes and Impacts	EU standards and good practices	ME situation		Gaps and areas for improvement
Evaluation/research carried out on policy and practice impacts	Implementation of survey module on European Disability and Social Integration (EDSIM)	Not developed, but AYDM carries out monitoring and analysis of profiles and needs	-	Build on existing AYDM research to develop an 'Observatory' to monitor impacts of initiatives and assess progress in relation to policy goals. Use EU funding instruments (e.g. LLP; PROGRESS Programme) to secure funding
Actual outcomes and impacts identified	Benchmarking and various studies on ICT for ageing and/or disability launched: Measuring eAccessibility in EU, SeniorWatch2, assistive technology industry, eAccessibility legislation. EU Academic Network on Disability launched	Not developed, but AYDM has been involved in monitoring and evaluation projects, and Montenegrin universities have participated in joint research projects	-	As above

Table 1. Summary of policy and standards benchmarking analysis (Source: Report DEV1.3, 10-14)

To be specific, universities need to adopt policies that will set certain standards with regard to the inclusion of students with various types of disabilities. Once these policies and standards are in place, the ICT element of the HEI needs to be adjusted to help students with disabilities such as hearing and visual impairments. In turn, more attention needs to be dedicated to human resources that all staff members, both academic and administrative, can go through a program of seminars, training and workshops in order to be able to facilitate the process of inclusion of students with disabilities (DEV2.1, 19).

Thus, those results have been discussed during the completion of WP2 and WP3. More specifically on the one hand, the main aim of DEV2.2 was to produce guidelines and recommendations for new institutional structures for support SwD; roles and responsibilities for all students and staff involved and also the formal/legal structure on which the support services should be established at each HEI. On their basis, DEV2.3 has included the regulatory documents for possible and sustainable modifications of the present and establishment of new services for SwD. On the other the main goal of WP3 was to prepare the strategy for the implementation of support services as institutional level. HEIs in ME were involved actively in defining the institutional strategy for inclusion of SwD taking into account specific needs related to the subject in their own organization and local context. After defining the needs a manual was delivered for the practical implementation of support services of SwD. The manual was discussed with the authorities and staff representatives within each university. As final outcome, a consolidated plan for the implementation of support services for SwD was delivered.

Conclusion

The SINC@HE project had a difficult task to accomplish due to the nature of the goal and objectives. Concerning inclusion of individuals with disabilities Montenegrin policy is recognized in the mentioned documents:

- Accepted Ratified UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- The Strategy of integration of the persons with disabilities from period 2008–2016.
- Law of prohibition of discrimination of the persons with disabilities, 2011.
- Law on amendments on the vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, 2011.
- Law of movement of persons with disabilities with dog-helper, 2009.

But still the need to strengthen the inclusion policy towards higher education SwD has been a request from all stakeholders participating in the project. Thus, the regulatory documents should establish the full support and define roles, rights and responsibilities for all students and staff involved.

Since each HEI should establish their own acts and law regulative, a document (DEV2.2) has been established that contains guidelines and recommendations about the core of regulatory documents. These regulatory documents will make possible and sustainable modifications of the present and establishment of new services for SwD. Furthermore, since the establishment of formal/legal structure for supporting of services for SwD represents the whole process it was decided to follow a chronological establishment of the documents:

- Rector's charter for students with disabilities.
- Senate Resolution (definition of all services and principles).
- Detailed regulations that implement Senate Resolution.

Rectors of the three Universities in Montenegro – the University of Montenegro, Mediterranean University and the University of Donja Gorica, signed the “Charter relating to the support and inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education institutions in Montenegro” at 15th of March 2013 in Podgorica. Signing this document, rectors, prof. Dr. Predrag Miranovic, prof. Dr. Slobodan Backović and prof. Dr. Veselin Vukotic are committed to increase the quality of inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education institutions, and to improve legislation in this area. This important event was attended by representatives of the Association of Youth with Disabilities (AYDM), whose executive director Marina Vujacic said that the Charter commit not only universities, but also students with disabilities which thus provides a special opportunity for further education.

In order to change the culture and mentality towards inclusion and sup-

port of SwD in HEIs in ME the project will focus on training academic and administrative staff as well as students without disabilities. Aim of this training is to provide participants who will be actively involved in providing different kind of services and support to persons with disabilities with necessary tools and knowledge. Beside general themes regarding disability, they will be trained on Assistive technologies for work with students with disabilities – using different types and kind of teaching materials and on everyday work with students with disabilities (counselling, technical and psychological support). In order to provide better support to students with disabilities trained University staff should be responsible for selecting adequate service, respecting students' needs and possibilities. The context under which should be handled training is within the reform of the regulatory environment in Montenegrin HEIs. The following documents are adopted and Universities should be working in line with them:

- The Bologna declaration on the European higher education area (1999) and the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27th November establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. In essence, the main impact of the Bologna process should be to support increased standardisation and benchmarking in relation to legislation, policies and practices covering disability.
- The UN convention and protocol on rights of persons with Disabilities, which has been ratified by the Montenegrin Government, together with EU legislation – the Disability Action Plan and the new “Disability Strategy” – as well as legislation and instruments put into place at the national level, like the “Strategy of integration of the persons with disabilities” and the “Law of prohibition of discrimination of the persons with disabilities”.

The different levels in which this project has been designed and until now implemented are the educational challenge that we all as educators have to face in order to promote inclusive education in a society for all:

«Our goals, how we teach, what we teach, how we relate to children and each other are rooted in the norms of our culture. Our society's predominant worldview and cultural norms are so deeply ingrained in how we educate children that we seldom think about the possibility that there may be other different but equally legitimate and effective approaches to teaching and learning» (Geneva, 2000, 23).

Notes

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