



bm:uk Bundesministerium für
Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur

**Task Force
Education
And Youth**

**Education Policies for Inclusion in South Eastern Europe:
Challenges and Opportunities**
International Conference

22 – 23 May 2007
Vienna

DRAFT AGENDA

Monday, 21 May 2007

Arrival of participants.

The conference will be held at: Wolke 19, at the Ares Tower. 1220 Vienna, Donau-City-Strasse 11

19:30

Welcome reception hosted by the Austrian Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture.

Welcome addresses by Ms. Barbara ISCHINGER, Director for Education, OECD and Mr. Anton DOBART, General Director of the Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

The welcome reception will take place at Hotel ANANAS, 1050 Vienna, Rechte Wienzeile 93-95.

Tuesday, 22 May 2007

OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

08:45-09:30

Welcome addresses:

Ms. Claudia SCHMIED, Minister, Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

Ms. Barbara ISCHINGER, Director for Education, OECD.

Mr. Anton DOBART, Chair of the Task Force Education and Youth, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

09:30-9:45

Introduction to the Conference Theme

The conference has three main purposes: (1) To discuss the evaluation of the OECD activity on "Education Development for Students at Risk and those with Disabilities in South Eastern Europe" (2003 – 2007)" with national and international stakeholders to develop concrete perspectives for future strategic support; (2) to provide information about relevant international and European developments with regard to education for students with special education needs, and to raise awareness to support inclusive practices amongst policymakers at all levels; and (3) to provide a platform for discussion between education Ministries, the donor community, international organisations and NGOs.

The introduction will be given by Peter EVANS, Directorate for Education of the OECD.

**EDUCATION POLICIES FOR STUDENTS AT RISK AND THOSE WITH
DISABILITIES IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE**

09:45-10:15

Education for Students with Disabilities, Learning Difficulties and Disadvantages (SENDDD): A Resource Based Approach

The OECD concept of SENDDD is based on a resources definition of special education needs as the best means of facilitating international comparison. This approach helps to overcome different national interpretations of concepts, such as special education needs, that cover very different populations of students experiencing difficulties in accessing the curriculum. The current activity in South Eastern Europe was based on the tri-partite system of dividing students into three cross-national categories of disabilities, learning and behavioural difficulties and social disadvantages.

The presentation will be given by Peter EVANS, Directorate for Education of the OECD.

Discussion.

10.15-11.00 Education Policies for Students at Risk and those with Disabilities in South Eastern Europe: Findings and Recommendations of the OECD Review and Evaluation

This session presents the key findings of the evaluation of the work carried out in South Eastern Europe by OECD between 2003 and 2007. It covers the progress of project implementation and provides an analysis of the main policy issues.

The presentations will be given by Ms. Johanna CRIGHTON, OECD Expert and Mr. Gerhard KOWAR, Directorate for Education of the OECD.

Discussion

11.00-11:30 Coffee Break

11.30-12.00 Education Reform towards Integration of Students with Special Education Needs in Mainstream Schooling: The example of Montenegro

As a part of the overall education reform process, Montenegro implemented various activities focused on provision of conditions for the integration of students with special needs into mainstream schooling (adoption of adequate legislation, establishment of database necessary for informed decision making, teacher training activities, etc.). The presentation will illustrate the main actions undertaken in the past and point towards current needs and priorities for the future.

The presentation will be given by Ivana PETRICEVIC, International Department of the Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro.

Discussion.

12.00-12:30 Statistics and Data Collection: A Report from Romania

Reliable data on students with special education needs are a prerequisite for policy development, planning and monitoring. The pilot implementation of the OECD Electronic Questionnaire for SENDDD in about 25% of the Romanian territory has been full of challenges and opportunities. It was the first attempt to explore and assess the amplitude and diversity of SEN children and pupils from the OECD and European perspective.

The presentation will be given by Mr. Traian VRASMAS, Association RENINCO Romania, Senior Lecturer at Ovidius University, Constanta.

Discussion.

12:30-13:00 Practice towards Inclusion: the Example of a Croatian Elementary School

The elementary school Ljudevita Gaja in Osijek (Northwest Croatia) has had an inclusive approach since 2002, and is one of the model schools of the OECD activity on Education Policies for Students at Risk and those with Disabilities in South Eastern Europe. This presentation will describe efforts made and obstacles faced with respect to inclusion of students with disabilities and may serve as an example for innovative school practice.

The presentation will be given by Ms. Ivana MARINIC, Ljudevita Gaja Elementary School, Osijek.

Discussion.

13:00-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-14.30 The Reform of Education for Students with Special Educational Needs in South Eastern Europe: Lessons and Experiences from Finland's Bilateral Support

Development of inclusive education policies and promotion of teacher education have constituted the focus areas in Finland's support to South Eastern Europe. The presentation will describe the cumulative experiences and lessons learned from three bilateral programmes implemented in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro since 2000.

The presentation will be given by Jussi KARAKOSKI, Department for Development Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Discussion.

14.30-15.30 2 Parallel Working Group Sessions: Discussion on the Findings and Recommendations of the OECD Review (2005) and Evaluation Report (2007)

The sessions will give delegates the opportunity to hold in-depth discussions of the key findings of the evaluation report prepared by OECD on the work in South Eastern Europe.

Working Group A will be chaired by Mr. Ian WHITMAN, Directorate for Education of the OECD.

Working Group B will be chaired by Mr. Peter EVANS, Directorate for Education of the OECD.

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:00 Continuation of the Previous Working Group Sessions

20:00 Dinner given by the Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

The dinner will take place at Hotel De France Vienna, 1010 Vienna, Schottenring 3.

Wednesday, 23 May 2007

THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF INCLUSION

09:00-09:30 **Fostering and Building Human Capital as a Precondition for Social Cohesion and Economic Growth in South Eastern Europe**

The chairman's conclusions of the Regional Table of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, held in Bucharest in November 2006, underlined the importance of its core objective on Fostering and Building Human Capital. The conclusions highlight that education and research should remain a long term priority for regional co-operation and a task force should be established in order to continue ongoing work beyond the termination of the mandate of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

The presentation will be given by Erhard BUSEK, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Discussion.

09:30-10.15 **Challenges for Equity in Education in Norway**

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research presented a white paper on education and equity in December 2006. The Government will pursue an active policy to reduce the differences in society. Its goals are to diminish class distinctions, reduce economic inequity and combat poverty and other forms of marginalisation. The Government wishes to improve the ability of the education system to meet individual needs by organising teaching and learning in a favourable way. Early intervention is one of the keys to this work. Early intervention must be understood both as action at an early stage of a child's life and as intervention when problems arise or are revealed at pre-school age, during basic education or in adulthood.

The presentation will be given by Ms. Lisbet RUGTVEDT, State Secretary, Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

Discussion.

10.15-10:45 **Towards Inclusive Education: Some UNICEF Experiences in South-Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States.**

UNICEF is currently carrying out programmes for students with special education needs (SEN) in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe and South-Eastern Europe as well as in the Commonwealth of Independent States, namely the FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Georgia, Armenia, and Uzbekistan. Substantial work in this field has also been undertaken in Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the UN-Administered Province of Kosovo and Moldova. The presentation will propose a review of UNICEF's work with a particular focus on the international legal framework, achievements, challenges and potential opportunities for partnerships.

The presentation will be given by Philippe TESTOT-FERRY, Regional Office for CEE & CIS, UNICEF.

Discussion.

10:45-11:15 *Coffee Break*

11:15-11:45 **The Situation and Position of Students with Disabilities in Institutions of Higher Education in Moldova**

Based on the findings of a sociological survey on the situation of students with disabilities in higher education which was carried out in 2004 in Moldova, recommendations will be made concerning the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education.

The presentation will be given by Ms. Natalia-Maria-Vlada BUGA, Association of Students with Disabilities GAUDEAMUS, Moldova.

Discussion.

11:45-12:15 **The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Consequences for the Future**

In December 2006, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Generally emphasising non discrimination on the grounds of disability and positive measures to support people with disabilities in the full enjoyment of their rights and fundamental freedom, the convention addresses several key issues, such as the duty to provide reasonable accommodation in article 2, the right of all persons with disabilities to education in article 24, equal recognition before the law in article 12, living independently and being included in the community in article 19. In Article 31 there is a requirement to gather and publish statistical data and report it to the UN. Up to now, 89 states are signatories to the Convention, 48 are signatories to the Optional Protocol and one has ratified the Convention. The presentation reflects the implications of this Convention for South East Europe countries from a NGO perspective.

The presentation will be given by Alexandre COTE, Office for South Eastern Europe, Handicap International.

Discussion.

12:15-12:45 **Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future.**

The International Bureau of Education (IBE-UNESCO) Council proposed that the 48th International Conference of Education (ICE) should focus on the general theme "Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future" and be held in Geneva between the 25 and 28 of November 2008. In order to articulate the ICE, four sub-themes have been proposed: Approaches, scope and content; public policies; systems, links and transitions; learners and teachers.

The presentation will be given by Renato OPERTTI, International Bureau of Education, UNESCO.

Discussion.

12.45-14:00 *Lunch Break*

14:00-16:00 **2 Parallel Working Group Sessions: Policies and Practices Towards Integration and Inclusion of Students with Special Education Needs in South Eastern Europe**

Participants will discuss priorities to support education policy towards inclusion of students with special education needs.

Working Group A will be chaired by Ms. Maja LUBIC, Education and Teacher Training Agency Croatia.

Working Group B will be chaired by Ms. Kari BRUSTAD, Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

16:00-16:30 *Coffee Break*

16:30-17:15 **Presentation of Working Group Results**

Presentations will be given by working group chairs.

CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

Closing Remarks

Mr. Ian WHITMAN, Head of Programme for non-Member Economies, Directorate for Education of the OECD.

Mr. Anton DOBART, Chair of the Task Force Education and Youth of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.