One outcome of this procedure is summarised in the Appendix, which classifies the programmes through which countries indicated they provide additional resources for specified groups of students. The Appendix provides some indication of the complexity of the task. The number of categories used varies widely from country to country, as do their national labels. The Appendix also shows the classification of students in receipt of additional resources in the three broad cross-national categories of disabilities, difficulties and disadvantages. Those in the “disabilities” category have clear organic bases for their difficulties. Those in the “difficulties” category have learning and behaviour difficulties which do not appear to be due to either a clear organic basis or social disadvantage. Those in the “disadvantages” category receive additional educational resources due to aspects of their social and/or language background.

Countries also provided information on the place of education for those in receipt of additional resources (special schools, special classes in regular schools, and regular classes), the gender composition of students, and aspects of schools and staffing. In addition they provided some qualitative material on legal frameworks and facilitators and barriers to inclusion and equity. In all, a very extensive set of information has been compiled to date, and only some of the indicators are presented in this chapter.

3.1 Students with disabilities

Figure 1.1 shows the variation in the proportion of students receiving additional resources for disabilities in compulsory education (cross-national category A). Among the 16 countries concerned the proportion ranges from 0.6% in Mexico to 4.6% in the United States. The median value is 2.1%, and the inter-quartile range is from 1.6% to 3.1%.

These differences in proportions are not easy to interpret. As can be seen from the Appendix, countries differ substantially in both the number and type of programmes included in the disabilities category. Since it is unlikely that the “organic” bases of disability differ greatly among countries, it seems most likely that the different proportions in Figure 1.1 reflect national differences in the conceptualisation of disability, identification...
procedures, educational practices, comprehensiveness of provision, and policy priorities. Such variation suggests that there are differences between countries in the ways in which they try to overcome the effects of disabilities, and this could in principle have an impact on the outcomes for different types of students.

Figure 1.2 shows where students with disabilities who are in receipt of additional resources are being educated – special schools, special classes in regular schools, or regular classes. What is immediately clear is that some countries, e.g. Spain, the United States, Italy and Canada (New Brunswick) make extensive use of regular classes while others prefer to use special schools, e.g. Belgium (Flemish Community), the Czech Republic, Germany and the Netherlands. Some countries make extensive use of special classes in regular schools, e.g. France, Finland and Japan.

There is not a clear statistical relationship between proportions identified in Figure 1.1, and the use of one or other of the school locations recorded in Figure 1.2. For example, it could be expected that countries with a relatively high proportion of students in the disabilities category may make relatively extensive use of regular classes since presumably the programmes of such countries would encompass more students with relatively “mild” disabilities. However, the data indicate that this is not the case. Differences will certainly reflect different national policies concerning inclusion, which may in themselves be influenced by features of regular schools and their curriculum, and the training and attitudes of teachers which may facilitate or obstruct inclusion. In addition, there may be features of special schools which are viewed by parents and educators as desirable. It is clear, however, that the same type of disabled students may be included in regular classes in

![Figure 1.2 Percentages of students in compulsory education receiving additional resources for defined disabilities, by location, 1999](image)

1. Students in special classes are included in special schools.
2. Students in special classes are included in regular classes.

Source: Based on the classifications (category A) in the Appendix. For further details see OECD (2003). Data for Figure 1.2, p. 35.
resources for defined learning difficulties: Canada (New Brunswick) (8.3%), Belgium (Flemish Community) (9.3%), the United Kingdom (14.4%), and Finland (19.7%). In general, it appears that when such categories are recognised in national systems the numbers of students receiving additional resources are considerable.

Compared with disabled students, those with defined learning difficulties are much more likely to receive their education in regular schools. Figure 1.4 shows the distribution of students by location for 12 countries which could provide the data. In Germany the majority of these students are in special schools, and all are in special classes in France. The Netherlands uses these two forms of provision more or less equally. In the other countries regular school provision is the most common pattern, and although there may be use of special classes in regular schools, the data often do not allow this breakdown to be made.

Gender differences among students with learning difficulties

Table 1.2 gives gender ratios for students with defined difficulties (cross-national category B) classified by location of programme. As was the case for students with disabilities, there are more males in such programmes than females: the percentage of males is typically between 60% and 70%.

3.3 Students with disadvantages

Figure 1.5 shows the proportion of students receiving additional resources within compulsory education who are considered to fall within the “disadvantages” classification (cross-national category C) for different countries. Countries with no students included in this category are entered as a zero. The median for category C students as a percentage of all students in compulsory education is 0.3%. The inter-quartile range is from zero to 4.5%. This median percentage is substantially lower than that for students with disabilities and difficulties (2.1% and 2.3% respectively). Limiting the analysis to those nine countries with data on programmes providing additional resources falling within cross-national category C, the median percentage is 1.0% and the inter-quartile range is from 0.2% to 8.7%. These figures, with particularly high values for France (11.1%) and the Netherlands (16.5%), indicate that when categories of students with defined disadvantages are included in national systems the numbers of students receiving additional resources are considerable.
CHAPTER 1
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND EQUITY:
INSIGHTS FROM SPECIAL NEEDS PROVISION

Figure 1.4 Percentages of students in compulsory education receiving additional resources for defined difficulties, by location, 1999

Table 1.2 Gender and learning difficulties: proportion of students in compulsory education receiving additional resources for defined difficulties who are male, by location, 1999 (%)
Figure 1.6 shows the locations of students receiving additional resources for defined disadvantages for the eight countries who supplied this data. The majority of countries educate all of these students in regular classes. The Czech Republic uses exclusively special schools. Belgium (Flemish Community) and France make some use of special classes in regular schools, although the large majority of students with defined disadvantages in these two countries are in regular classes.

Gender differences among students with disadvantages

Table 1.3 gives gender ratios for students in receipt of additional resources for defined disadvantages (cross-national category C) in compulsory schooling. The gender ratios are provided separately for different types of location where such distinctions apply and the data are available. For all of the countries concerned there are more males than females in such programmes. The proportion of...
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