

### Definition and measurement

Recently there has been a great deal of interest in the performance of national education systems (SS6, SS7). All OECD member countries are concerned with student attainment standards, as educational reforms are planned and put in place as part of a strategy for attaining equity and moving our countries into the knowledge economy.

Students with impairments are no exception, and programmes are being developed to assist these students in improving their skills, so as to be more fully included into society and work. The demographic trends (GE2) are such that in the coming years, as a result of the increasing numbers of retired citizens and the decreasing birth rate, all available skills will be needed to maintain our economies.

In this indicator, national categories of disabled students have been reclassified to include only those where there is a clear organic basis for their learning difficulties (because of blindness or mental handicap), under the label cross-national category A (CNC A). Students falling into this category require that additional resources be made available to support their education (for further discussion see OECD, 2000). The comparisons are limited to primary and lower secondary education, reflecting data quality and availability.

### Evidence and explanations

Different countries identify different proportions of students falling into CNC A, as can be seen in Chart SS8.1. The proportions vary from 0.3% to 4.6% of all students in primary and lower secondary education.

There is particular policy interest in the setting for education of CNC A students. As shown in Chart SS8.2, in some countries these students are educated in segregated special schools while in others they may be in special classes or regular schools. Such differences can reveal potential inequities between countries' provision and will give all students very different educational and socialising experiences. In Chart SS8.2 the differences are particularly striking, with some countries having very few CNC A students in special schools (*e.g.*, Italy, Spain, and the United States) while in others the majority are educated in such schools (*e.g.*, Belgium – the Flemish community –, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands).

In almost all countries more males than females receive additional resources. Table SS8.1 shows that

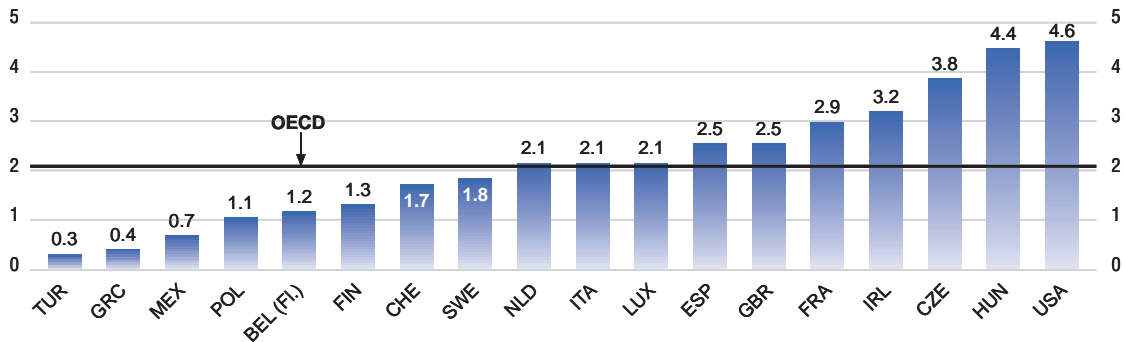
in all settings approximately 60% of all CNC A students are male.

This finding is not easy to interpret. It may be that males have more difficulty adjusting to formal education than females and hence are judged to be in need of greater support, or it may be that the education of males is valued more highly than that of females and hence male difficulties are given greater priority. On the other hand, males manifest their difficulties more overtly than females and are thus more readily identified. Whatever the reasons, this male/female difference is a potential indicator of inequity in educational systems (*e.g.* Evans, 2001) and a fuller understanding will require further research.

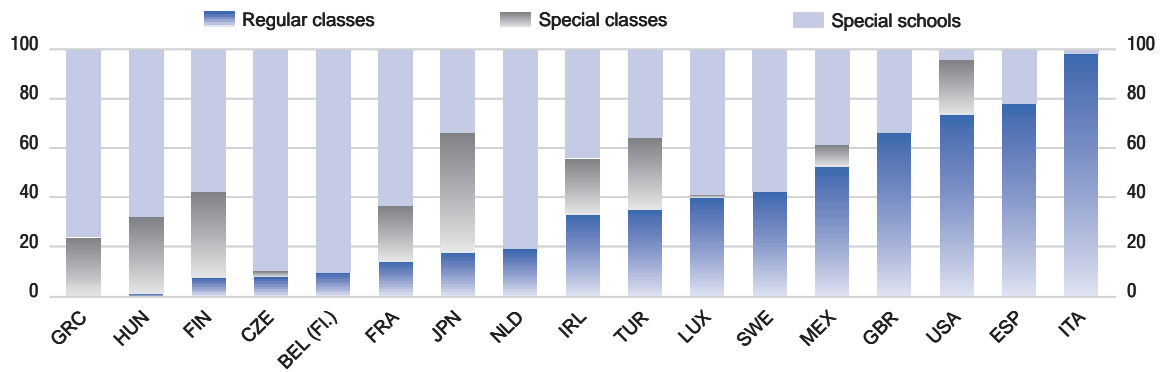
**Status indicators:** Working disabled persons (SS5).

**Response indicators:** Educational attainment (SS6), *Spending on education* (SS14), Public social expenditure (EQ3), Health care expenditure (HE4).

**Chart SS8.1. Up to 5% of students receive additional resources for their education**  
 Students in CNC A receiving additional resources in primary and lower secondary education, 1999  
 As a percentage of all students in primary and lower secondary education



**Chart SS8.2. Integration of students with impairments in education**  
 Distribution of students with impairments by location, 1999, percentages



**Table SS8.1. Six out of 10 students with impairments receiving additional resources are males**  
 Share of male children in primary and lower secondary education, by location, 1999, percentages

	Male children with impairments receiving additional resources in:			Non-disabled male children in regular education
	Special schools	Special classes	Regular classes	
Finland	65	67	66	51
Germany	62	..	..	51
Luxembourg	61	87	65	51
Mexico	59	63	61	51
Netherlands	68	..	..	52
Poland	53	..	..	52
Spain	61	..	62	52
Sweden	59	..	56	50
Switzerland	55	..	..	51
Turkey	65	62	..	55
United Kingdom	68	..	68	51

.. Not available.

Source: OECD (2000); OECD education database.

**Further reading**

■ Evans, P. (2001), "Equity Indicators Based on the Provision of Supplemental Resources for Disabled and Disadvantaged Students", in W. Hutmacher, D. Cochrane and N. Bottani (eds.), *In Pursuit of Equity in Education*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, London. ■ OECD (forthcoming), *Special Needs Education: Statistics and Indicators*, OECD, Paris. ■ OECD (1998, 2000 and 2001), *Education at a Glance – OECD Indicators*, OECD, Paris. ■ OECD (2000), *Special Needs Education: Statistics and Indicators*, OECD, Paris.