The role of Special Education Schools in the process towards more inclusive educational systems

Four international case studies: Newham (UK), New Brunswick (Canada), Italy and Portugal

Gerardo Echeita & Cecilia Simón (Coordination)
Yolanda Muñoz
Elena Martín
Raquel Palomo
Raúl Echeita

The role of Special Education Schools in the process towards more inclusive educational systems. Four international case studies: Newham (UK), New Brunswick (Canada), Italy and Portugal

Authors:
Gerardo Echeita & Cecilia Simón
(Coordination)
Autonomous University of Madrid. (UAM)
EQUIDEI Research Group
Yolanda Muñoz
University of Alcalá (UAH)
EQUIDEI Research Group
Elena Martín
Autonomous University of Madrid. (UAM)
Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
Rachel Palomo
Autonomous University of Madrid. (UAM)
EQUIDEI Research Group
Raúl Echeita
UNESCO Chair on Education for Social Justice. UAM

GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA
MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN Y FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL

Catálogo de publicaciones del Ministerio: sede.educacion.gob.es/publiventa
Catálogo general de publicaciones oficiales: https://cpage.mpr.gob.es/

The role of Special Education Schools in the process towards more inclusive educational systems. Four international case studies: Newham (UK), New Brunswick (Canada), Italy and Portugal

Gerardo Echeita & Cecilia Simón
(Coordination)
Yolanda Muñoz
Elena Martín
Raquel Palomo
Raúl Echeita

MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN Y FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL
Subdirección General de Cooperación Territorial e Innovación Educativa

Edita:

Subdirección General de Atención al Ciudadano,
Documentación y Publicaciones

Edición:
NIPO en línea: 847-21-052-2
NIPO en papel: 847-21-051-7
ISBN: 978-84-369-6040-2

Maquetación e impresión: ADVANTIA Comunicación Gráfica

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

THANKS

For the record we want to recognize and express our gratitude the team of international experts who have guided advised and supported us in the preparation of this report, with their knowledge and experience, (in alphabetical order):

Mrs. Linda Jordan, United Kingdom
Mrs. Silvia Lanfranchi, Italy
Dr. Giancarlo Onger, Italy
Dr. Gordon Porter, Canada
Dr. Renzo Vianello, Italy

Prologue

Inclusion International is the international network of people with intellectual disabilities and their families which advocates for the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities worldwide. Together we agree on a 'statement of unity'[1], and are committed to progress towards Inclusion International's vision. Inclusion in education is very important to us as a global movement, and was one of the most important reasons our network was formed over 60 years ago.

We thank the authors Gerardo Echeita, Cecilia Simón, Elena Martín, Raquel Palomo and Raúl Echeita from the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM), and Yolanda Muñoz from the University of Alcalá (UAH) for allowing us to make this publication, originally published in Spanish[2], available in English. We also thank the Spanish Ministry of Education and Professional Training for proposing to work on this report in the first place.

This report looks at important examples of 'the role of special education schools in the process towards more inclusive education systems' in Newham (United Kingdom), New Brunswick (Canada), Italy and Portugal. It provides a deep analysis of the social and educational context, the historical background, the strategies and plans of actions in use and key resources, as well as on ways inclusion is monitored.

Inclusion International was delighted to co-edit the English version of this publication – we hope this will mean that more people will benefit from the valuable content. We really hope that families with children with disabilities, teachers and others around the world will gain knowledge from the examples included and will be inspired.

We believe that families are a strong social determinant in ensuring that inclusion in education is implemented, bearing in mind the child's rights. Our aim is to empower and equip families with the tools they need to fight for the inclusion of their children in their local schools, communities and in their countries. We welcome this document as it provides a very deep illustration of practices of inclusion in education in different systems.

Our vision towards inclusive education is grounded on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and its Article 24[3], as well as its General Comment 4[4] on inclusive education. Article 24 of the UN CRPD requires countries which have ratified (agreed to follow) the CRPD to provide an inclusive education system. Article 24, together with general comment 4, guarantees the right of every child with disabilities to attend the same schools as their non-disabled peers, and to receive a good quality education which provides the support they need.

---

1 https://inclusion-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Statement-of-Unity-FINAL.pdf

2 https://sede.educacion.gob.es/publiventa/el-papel-de-los-centros-de-educacion-especial-en-el-proceso-hacia-sistemas-educativos-mas-inclusivos-cuatro-estudios-de-casos-newham-uk-new-brunswick-canada-italia-y-portugal/educacion-especial-y-compensatoria/24126

3 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx

4 General Comment 4 (on UN CRPD Article 24): https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD/C/GC/4&Lang=en

We know that people with intellectual disabilities are at the highest risk of exclusion from good quality education, and of segregation from other learners. The UNESCO GEM report 2020 on inclusion and education also says that: *"Those with a sensory, physical or intellectual disability are 2.5 times more likely to have never been in school as their peers without disabilities"*[5]. This highlights the fact that, even with the UN CRPD and other strong international legal frameworks in place, we are still far from achieving inclusion for children with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities.

We strongly believe that inclusive education enables people to develop to their full potential, while contributing to and being a part of society. Inclusive education is the foundation for life-long inclusion, and it is the starting point for building fair societies, where differences are valued, celebrated and supported. People with intellectual disabilities need to be included in education systems which are inclusive of ***all***.

The value we place on inclusion in education is reflected in the following statement, delivered by UN CRPD committee member Robert Martin at Inclusion International's 2018 conference in Birmingham:

> *"Education – we still hear the term 'special education'. I say there is nothing special about being special. When special is used in the everyday world it is a term of endearment, when it is used in the intellectual disability world it means segregation and it is disrespectful and makes us feel inferior to other people. What happens when you leave school? Well, there are no special jobs and there are no special communities or societies. I say let's get rid of special once and for all."*

We believe that when families are included in this work, we will be more likely to achieve our goals. We hope that this publication will further support families in their role.

Sue Swenson,
President
Inclusion International

[5] Global education monitoring report summary, 2020: Inclusion and education: all means all, ED-2020/WS/18 https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373721

Foreword to the Spanish edition by Climent Giné Giné

In a recent study ("The Changing Role of Specialist Provisions in Supporting Inclusive Education"), the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) (2019) affirms that the rights-based approach to inclusive education, promoted by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) which pursues quality education for all, increasingly leads countries to recognize the need to change the role of providing support to students based on specialized services. Indeed, in recent years the transformation of special education schools has been, and is, a priority in the educational agenda of the governments of many countries, including Spain.

After all, this is not an easy issue internationally or in our country, in the academic sphere nor in society. While some authors think that, at a time dominated by an inclusive agenda, the idea of special education as a *parallel or separate* education system cannot be sustained (Florian, 2005), others, such as Head and Pirrie (2007), argue that special education schools have a vital role in inclusion and that their future will probably be associated with the development of two issues: first, the education of students with more complex needs; and second, how to provide mainstream schools with their experience and knowledge in supporting inclusion. These latest researchers have advocated for a change in the role of special education schools, to go from being a provider of specialized and segregated education for certain students to collaborating with mainstream schools to be able to offer quality education to all students. In this sense, they suggested that a possible scenario is the transformation of special education schools into resource centers for educational inclusion in the community.

Likewise, we have seen how the debate about the role of special education schools also extended to society. Parents, individually or organized in associations, have mobilized, both to ensure that their children were cared for in their neighborhood school together with their siblings and to try to secure a placement in a special education center with the belief that only in these centers could their children receive the specialized services that they presumably need. This debate, in some instances, has led to clashes with administrations that have, at times, ended up in court.

We are, therefore, facing a truly critical situation that needs a prompt solution aligned with the recognition of the right to inclusion declared by international organizations and established by Spanish law. Regarding rights, there are no reservations or delays.

It is for this reason that we welcome, with enthusiasm and enormous hope, the study of G. Echeita, C. Simón, Y. Muñoz, E. Martín, R. Palomo and R. Echeita. In it, we are offered four examples of the transformation of special education services in three different settings (the state; a province of a state, a district of a large city). Apart from being timely, it is a clarifying, suggestive and illustrative proposal, both for the assumed principles and for the organizational and technical options they propose, not to mention the fact that they have been carried out in different social, cultural and economic contexts, among them, although only in some cases, not far from our reality.

Reading the document will primarily help the political leaders of the Spanish government and the Autonomous Communities, as well as school leaders and educators, to make decisions on how to build a school in which all students have the opportunity to participate, learn and be successful in acquiring the skills outlined in the curriculum. These types of decisions contribute to making the educational system fully inclusive, avoiding alternatives that basically reproduce segregated "special education" in different formats. If not careful, the experience of some students can continue to be a veiled form of segregation.

In this process of change and decision making, the participation of parents is essential. You must ensure that their voices are heard and are present at the different levels (macro, intermediate and local/ grassroots) where decisions are made regarding this process of change towards a school with inclusive quality education for all.

The participation of teachers, and in particular those of special education schools, must also be ensured. It is important that staff currently working in special education schools and classrooms feel valued and supported during this process of change. special education schools have enormously valuable educational resources, especially in the expertise of their staff. The goal in moving towards inclusion is not to discard these resources, but to find ways to deploy them towards more inclusive ends.

We are facing a truly unique and transcendental moment in the long process of change, which never ends, towards a more inclusive and equitable system in Spain. It will depend on how we solve the future of special education schools, counting on the meaningful involvement of all stakeholders, and share the progress so that all students, without no one left behind, can access, participate and succeed in a school for all. Educational administrations, educators and society as a whole, face an important challenge. The contributions of this study are of enormous value.

Climent Giné
Emeritus Professor. Blanquerna – URL

References

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2019). *The Changing Role of Specialist Provisions in Supporting Inclusive Education: Mapping Specialist Provision Approaches in European Countries*. (S. Ebersold, M. Kyriazopoulou, A. Kefallinou and E. Rebollo Píriz, eds.). Odense, Denmark. Recuperado de, https://www.european-agency.org/projects/CROSP

Florian, L. (2005). Inclusion, "special needs" and the search for new understandings. *Support for Learning, 20 (2),* 96–98.

Head, G., & Pirrie, A. (2007). The place of special schools in a policy climate of inclusion. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 7 (2),* 90–96.

UN (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

1. Initial considerations

1.1. Scope of work

This report gives an account of the commission of the National Center for Educational Innovation and Research (CNIIE), of the Ministry of Education and Professional Training (MEFP), of Spain, to carry out a qualitative study on the process followed in four different case studies; Newham (United Kingdom), New Brunswick (Canada), Italy and Portugal, regarding the role that special education schools (SEC) played (and play) in fulfilling the adopted commitment in which their respective educational systems would become more inclusive.

The commission is linked to the Ministry of Education and Professional Training (MEFP) educational policy development, in terms of equity and inclusion and, in particular, in relation to the improvement of the education of students considered to have special educational needs.[6] As is well known, this classification includes all students with disabilities associated with atypical developments and sensory, physical, intellectual, psychosocial or multiple impairments.

In 2008, the Spanish government ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), therefore, making the education of students with disabilities mandatory under the protection of Art. 10 2 of the Spanish Constitution (SC), as it establishes that:

> "The norms related to fundamental rights and freedoms that the Constitution recognizes will be interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international treaties and agreements on the same matters ratified by Spain (C.E.)".

Article 24 of the aforementioned Convention clearly establishes the right of these students, in all stages of their schooling, to be educated in an inclusive manner. This implies, among other considerations, the necessary and progressive abandonment of the modalities of segregated schooling that still exists for a proportion of male and female students in Spain (2016/2017 academic year). Approximately 17% of the school popu-

---

[6] Shortly we will refer again to how difficult it is to talk about "disability", since this is not a characteristic or trait, properly speaking, of a personal nature. In any case, it is a function that explains and accounts for the disadvantages or difficulties in activity or participation that some people experience as a result of the interaction between their personal factors (state of health, character), social or environmental factors and their environment (which can be generically referred to as barriers). Therefore, the disability of a person with reduced mobility, or a sensory impairment, for example, would disappear in a fully accessible social context (from a physical, sensory and attitudinal point of view), which does not mean that the disease would also disappear or the physical disorder that caused the impairment. But the weight of traditional models when referring to these issues means that, continuously, we see each other talking, referring, for example, to students with disabilities as if, in effect, this were a stable, permanent trait of these students and classifying them into different types. For this reason, we will remember these considerations by placing disability in italics in the text, except when it is an original quote or reference. On other occasions we have forced the grammar by referring to this same situation with the expression (dis) ability, making it clear that it is necessary to question that negative prefix (dis) that so much pollutes everyone's expectations towards these people and highlighted with that capital C their capacities and potentialities that, like all human beings, they also have.

lation in Spain is considered to have *special educational needs*[7] educational programs, most of which are students with disabilities.

This contradictory reality is possible as a consequence of the application of Article 74.1 of Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education (LOE), modified by Organic Law 8/2013, of December 9, for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE), which leaves open schooling in SECs.

> "The schooling of students with special needs will be governed by the principles of normalization and inclusion and will ensure non-discrimination and effective equality in term of access and permanence in the school system, with the ability to introduce flexible measures at the different educational stages, when considered necessary. The education of these students in special education groups or centers, which may be extended to twenty-one years of age, will only be carried out when their needs cannot be met within the framework and attention measures of mainstream schools".

This dual legality and normative dependency (CRPD / LOE-LOMCE) presents a legal dilemma that, to date, is still being resolved - when this issue reaches judicial stages -, with sentences in both directions, some giving reason to those who support demands or clear policies on inclusive education based on the CRPD[8] while, in other cases, giving reasons to the administrations that had agreed to the schooling of a particular student with special needs in SEC, in accordance with, among other reasons, the provisions of the law and other regulations.[9]

In any case, this segregated schooling in special education schools receives, first and foremost, students that we identify as having educational needs associated with intellectual disabilities, severe autism spectrum disorders and other combined cognitive, sensory and physical impairments. Therefore, they tend to be students with multiple, extensive and generalized support needs.[10]

The continuity of school segregation has been considered by the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[11] as an act of direct discrimi-

---

7 http://www.odismet.es/es/datos/3educacin-y-formacin-profesional/305tasa-de-alumnado-con-necesidades-educativas-especiales-derivadas-de-una-discapacidad-matriculado-en-enseanzas-de-rgimen-general/3-33/

8 *SOLCOM*: https://asociacionsolcom.org/admitido-a-tramite-por-el-tsj-de-castilla-la-mancha-el-recurso-de-solcom-contra-el-decreto-que-regula-la-inclusion-educativa/
FUNDACION GERARD: http://www.fundaciogerard.org/?p=2795

9 *SENTENCIA DEL TRIBUNAL CONSTITUCIONAL*: https://www.tribunalconstitucional.es/NotasDePrensaDocumentos/NP_2014_011/2012-06868STC.pdf

10 Also, in Special Education Classrooms (S.E.Cl.), classrooms that are located in mainstream schools but that function for all purposes under the consideration and regulations applicable to the S.E.C. They are found in small localities where, due to the number of students and / or where they live, it is not possible to have a S.E.C.

11 *United Nations Permanent Committee* that ensures compliance with the rights established in the Convention. The states parties, which in addition to the Convention, ratified the so-called Optional Protocol linked to it, agree to regularly submit for evaluation by said Committee, the development of their policies and plans for compliance with the Convention. Spain has already rendered accounts before said Committee twice, the last in March 2019. Said Optional Protocol contemplates that individuals or civil society organizations may present before the Committee demands that, in their opinion, violate established rights. If the Committee considers that the complaints filed respond to situations of systematic and serious violation of any of the rights contemplated in the Convention, it may initiate an investigation procedure ("inquiry") through which the complaint filed is thoroughly analyzed. This investigation usually includes the creation of an ad hoc group of members of the Committee, which travels to the country and thoroughly examines the evidence and testimonies that it deems necessary to subsequently issue an assessment and recommendations.

nation and, as such, contrary to the right to inclusive education that protects all persons with disabilities, without exclusions, regardless of the type or degree of support required.

This has been shown at different times and circumstances and, in particular, in 2016 in the General Observation, Comment No. 4 on the right to inclusive education.[12]

On the other hand, it is very important to highlight that the aforementioned Committee echoed the lawsuit initially filed by SOLCOM[13] in 2014 for "systematic violation of the right to inclusive education in Spain." The Committee heard the request and, in accordance with its protocol of action in the Optional Protocol annexed to said Convention (also ratified by Spain), issued a report, after an investigation process followed, made public in June 2018. In effect, the Committee recognizes this "systematic violation" and urges Spain to take initiatives of different kinds that serve to reverse this serious situation as soon as possible.[14]

The government of Spain, through the MEFP, took this report seriously and, among other actions, promoted a draft Organic Law amending the current LOMCE, which establishes in its fourth additional provision, the evolution of the schooling of students with special educational needs:

> "School administrations will ensure that schooling decisions guarantee the most appropriate response to the specific needs of each student, in accordance with the procedure set forth in Article 74 of this law. The Government, in collaboration with the school administrations, will develop a plan so that, within ten years, in accordance with Article 24.2.e) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in compliance with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal of the 2030 Agenda, mainstream schools have the necessary resources to be able to serve students with disabilities in the best conditions. School administrations will continue to provide the necessary support to special education schools so that, in addition to educating the students who require highly specialized attention, they perform the function of reference and support centers for mainstream schools."

It is within the legislative framework and political initiative to which this report must be contextualized. We fully understand and believe that the fulfillment of the commitment assumed by Spain when ratifying the CRPD implies starting up a very complex, difficult and dilemmatic process at multiple levels of the educational system that, therefore, require the most solid arguments and support possible.

Among these is the knowledge derived from other countries' experiences (or other regional or local instances) that, for a long time, have initiated and sustained similar processes (although, as will be seen, with a focus, in part, different from that of the Spanish government) and moved towards the same vision.

Undoubtedly, this information will be valuable in the complex decision-making that the government will have to adopt. Obviously these decisions will have to be ad-

---

[12] https://rededucacioninclusiva.org/situacion-en-la-region/informes-y-documentos/comentario-general-n-4-sobre-el-derecho-a-la-educacion-inclusiva/

[13] https://asociacionsolcom.org/demoledor-informe-crpd-relacionado-con-espana/

[14] https://asociacionsolcom.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/informe-SOLCOM-CRPD-2018.pdf

justed to the social, political, administrative and historical context of current Spanish society and are not extrapolated without considering what happened in the other countries whose reality, history and circumstances were and are very different from those of Spain. In fact, it must be kept in mind that the main purpose of this type of comparative analysis is to promote the opportunity to be collectively involved in a dialogue, being open to different ideas and experiences in order to achieve, if possible, a new understanding and, above all, become aware that it is possible to think differently (Ballard, 2013)[15] in respect to a given reality.

The structure and format of this report corresponds with a document that wants to be precise, clear and concise, and that was and is oriented, first and foremost, as indicated, to help those responsible for the MEFP in finding its inspiring elements and, where appropriate, guidelines for some of the multiple actions that will need to be implemented in order to achieve the ambitious and just aspiration of a more inclusive education system. But, obviously, this same approach we believe can be of great use to a larger and more diverse audience, which will therefore have the opportunity to enrich their own arguments and analysis in what, sooner or later, should be configured as a great public debate. This publication greatly reinforces this second claim.

In this sense, it is not an academic document but in fact one that claims to be *operational / executive*. Hence, the presentation of the case studies - assuming a qualitative approach -, follows a narrative style that we understand allows the reader better understanding and greater capacity to gain insight from reflecting on the ideas (*naturalistic generalization)* that should be expected from this type of analysis.

On the other hand, it is essential to highlight that its **focus and theme is not inclusive education** *sensu stricto*, since this is a much broader and systemic issue, which goes far beyond the education of students with special needs and educational modalities. Nevertheless, the reader interested in delving into the subject of inclusive education has a rich and diversified set of texts,[16] which appeared recently in different national and international magazines.

Certainly, the matters dealt with in this report are only a piece of a much more global and multidimensional conceptual and educational framework. The scope of work of this particular report was not to prepare a document that claims to analyze all the interacting elements that would have to be considered for the development of *more inclusive education*.

Undoubtedly, both in the cases analyzed and, in the conclusions, and recommendations suggested, different educational elements worth considering for progress towards more inclusive education, that go beyond what is related to the process and role of SECs, will be pointed out. However, it is important to highlight that, necessary in our opinion to review these aspects, they are by no means the only ones. Finally, we point out that in general that we will always talk about *progress towards more inclusive education*, because we understand that this is a *process*, a company susceptible to contin-

---

[15] Keith Ballard (2013). Thinking in another way: ideas for sustainable inclusion, *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* 17:8, 762-775, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2011.602527

[16] *International Journal of Inclusive Education: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/tied20/23/7-8?nav=tocList*
Revista Internacional de Educación para la Justicia Social, https://revistas.uam.es/riejs/issue/viewIssue/riejs2019.8.2/529
Revista Latinoamericana para la Educación Inclusiva http://www.rinace.net/rlei/numeros/vol13-num2.html
Publicaciones, https://revistaseug.ugr.es/index.php/publicaciones/issue/view/753
Sinéctica. Revista Electrónica de Educación, https://sinectica.iteso.mx/index.php/SINECTICA/article/view/1013

uous improvement, not a goal that can be reached or taken for granted and then after that just be *dormant*.

Having established some elements of the context that gave meaning to the assignment, as well as other aspects necessary to understand its scope and potential usefulness, it is now necessary to make explicit other *considerations* related to the development of the procedure, terminology, as well as its structure and format.

1.2. Methodology

To create this report, and after establishing the terms, conditions, timeline and expected results, it was agreed that the work team would be made up of two coordinated groups that would study four specific cases:

- The *London borough of Newham* which, in approximately 1981, began a review of its policy regarding the education of students with disabilities, which led to the gradual closure of SECs still in operation. In addition to the confirmation of the sustainability of the initiated policy, which is in force today, and the existing documentation on the process, there was the direct and personal support of Professor *Linda Jordan* who, in her day, was a member of the Education Committee of said district and one of the people who led the process.
- *The province of New Brunswick (N.B.), in eastern Canada, is surely one of the most internationally known and reputable examples of inclusive education. Also, in this case, the transformation began in the 1980s and has become more in depth in a sustainable and notable way. As in Newham, the policy implemented in New Brunswick assumed the ongoing schooling of all students enrolled in SECs into mainstream schools, until their practical disappearance. It also led to the improvement of mainstream schools that today respond more equitably to the educational needs of all their students. Once again, there was abundant documentation on the process, its foundations and achievements, as well as, for many years from the implementation of this policy and the generous support of Professor Gordon Porter, a very prominent figure in inclusive and responsible education in N.B. on the international stage*
- The third case study, *Italy*, is the country with the oldest policy (since the early 1970s) in regard to the "full inclusion" of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. The abundant and clear literature on the evolution of this policy in Italy, called "School Integration", has been a determining factor in this analysis. In addition, they have had the advice and exceptional support of Professors Renzo Vianello and Giancarlo Onger, as well as Professor Silvia Lanfranchi to confront, expand and in this case, validate or correct the analysis of available literature, previously carried out by the work team.
- Finally, the case of Portugal, has many characteristics making it one of the most inspiring examples from which Spain can learn from. Like Spain, Portugal's history of school integration for children with special educational needs started in the mid-1980s. However, there was new momentum to Portugal's policy in the 2000s culminating in the Inclusive Education Law of 2018. One of its vectors has been, precisely, the progressive *transformation of SEC into support and resource centers for the inclusive education* for all students with disabilities in Portugal. This has been achieved thanks to a long, well-planned process, with high participation and consultation, and

systematic evaluation. All this has led to the international recognition of Portugal as an exemplary case, in Europe and in the world, of the just application and development of the CRPD. The fact that, like Italy, we are talking about a national policy, as well as the shared cultural and educational similarities, as *southern countries*, make the inclusion of this case in this study especially timely.

From an analysis perspective the chosen case studies, as seen, put us in an interesting position in terms of their diverse and complementary points of view. On the one hand, we speak of a district of a large city (Newham), on the other, a small province (N.B.) and, finally, of two large countries, namely Italy and Portugal. At the same time, there are two countries with Anglo-Saxon traditions and two European, with very different historical, social, economic and cultural realities and, therefore, capable of making us think that *the world* (in any of its aspects) can be thought of and exemplified in very different ways, and therefore, that change is possible.

For the implementation, two groups were configured. On the one hand, one was made up by Gerardo Echeita, Cecilia Simón, Yolanda Muñoz, Raquel Palomo and Raúl Echeita. This team took responsibility for the first three case studies (Newham, New Brunswick, and Italy). The second group was coordinated by Elena Martín, then an advisor to the Minister of Education, who dealt with the case of *Portugal* and had the collaboration of senior officials in the Ministry of Education of Portugal. Nevertheless, the strategies in terms of information collection, the analysis and elaboration of the conclusions and lessons learned were carried out collaboratively.

It should be noted that the CNIIE management previously contacted all the advisers and external advisers corresponding to the first three case studies, through a formal invitation from the MEFP, to seek their support and collaboration in this process, a proposal to which all of them willingly agreed, showing a commitment and generosity worthy of recognition. For the record we would like to express our gratitude in this report too.

As just noted, the work team developed a *thematic script* on those aspects that, in their opinion, would provide the necessary elements of judgment useful for MEFP. Said script (see Annex, n. 1) was developed collaboratively by the team, after analyzing a first proposal presented by the CNIIE and comparing it with their own knowledge and guiding documentation, among which we highlight the report by Jordan and Goodey (2002).[17]

1.3. Terms and expressions

We have already anticipated how controversial and difficult it is to *talk / write* about the subject matter that this report deals with, in particular all that refers to the terms used to refer to the students, *the subjects*, in the SECs. It does not seem necessary to insist that thought and language are two sides of the same coin and that the forms in which we express ourselves reflect, directly and indirectly the *beliefs* that articulate the models of understanding and response (educational and social) in regard to these students.

[17] Jordan, L. y Goodey, C. (2002). *Human rights and School change. The Newman Story*. Bristol: CSIE

This is not the place to go into detail about this extensive issue, although a quick look at some of these terms sheds some light, whether a generic category (handicapped, handicapped, handicapped, disabled …) or specific one referring to people with limited intellectual functioning (stupid, idiotic, abnormal, subnormal, slightly disabled, profound, severe …), together with the *impairment assessment* underlies them all.

In this regard, there are many issues worthy of consideration and analysis that will also need to be subject to revision and conceptual change as part of the process towards more inclusive education. Because, to date, our way of thinking about this reality is strongly *dualized*, so we have a set vision in which, from the outset, there are two overarching types or categories of students: those that we tend to consider normal and those that, for some reasons or others (but especially for *disability* reasons) we consider *special* (rare, distinct, different).[18]

What is relevant is that while the former has rights, the latter have been, above all (and to a large extent still are), objects of charity, commiseration or pain, if not abandonment or extermination. And when their rights started to be recognized and claimed (see the CRPD), it seems that compliance has been conditional to not interfering, inconveniencing, or reducing the rights / privileges of the former. It is clear that the classifications establish limits to differentiate *the other* by those who have the power of the *status quo* to do so.

This dichotomous vision is at the root of the educational response scheme that has dragged on to date: mainstream, "normal" schools, for equally normal students, and special education schools for students considered "special", (different, distinct, diverse),[19] in which the resources and human and material means have been concentrated and are expected to provide an adequate response to their unique educational, personal and social reality.

It seems quite obvious that it is not be possible to move towards more inclusive education - even though it is strongly rooted in beliefs that reinforce the equal dignity and rights of all students (Etxebarria, 2018[20]), without euphemisms regarding them as a whole - if in parallel we do not review the way of speaking/writing/thinking about these students. Expressions should be sought that do not reinforce the negative stereotypes currently associated with certain terminology, and that do not limit expectations in terms of their capabilities and potential, as they do now. The emergence, among others, of the *functional diversity* construct is the result of this quest.[21] This is not the place to go into a detailed analysis of such an important aspect, but it is not a minor matter, rather the opposite.

As far as this report is concerned, we must recognize that we have made no contribution in this regard; it makes use of the expressions and terms that appeared in the sources consulted or used by our partners/advisers in the exchanges.

On the other hand, it should be noted that, in the case studies, some of the terms used, are similar but do not have the same scope. This is the case, for example, of the

---

18 Echeita, G. (2019*). Educación inclusiva. El sueño de una noche de verano*. Barcelona; Octaedro

19 D´Alessio, S. (2008). "Made in Italy". Integrazione Scolastica and the new vision of inclusive Education. En L. Barton & F. Amstrong, (Eds*). Policy, Experience and Change*. (p.53-72). Baltimore V: Springer.

20 Etxeberria, X. (2018). Ética de la inclusión y personas con discapacidad intelectual. *Revista Española de Discapacidad,* 6 (I): 281-290. Recuperado de, https://www.cedd.net/redis/index.php/redis/article/view/433

21 Romanach, J. y Lobato, M. (2005). Diversidad funcional, nuevo término para la lucha por la dignidad en la diversidad del ser humano. Recuperado de, http://forovidaindependiente.org/wp-content/uploads/diversidad_funcional.pdf

term "special educational needs". In Italy, this concept ("bisogni educativi specialist" b.e.s) is used as a general category to refer to students who do not have the "Disability Certificate", but who do experience learning difficulties and therefore require individualized support or intervention. Another example is the term "High Needs", used in the United Kingdom to designate the high support needs required by students that we would consider having intellectual or developmental disabilities. In New Brunswick, for its part, there is talk of "Exceptional Children" to refer to students with special educational needs, whether or not they arise from a disability.

We have already noted that, on the other hand, and in accordance with today's most-accepted definition of disability (WHO, 2001) - but also with some criticism (D'Odoly, 2008) - it would be correct to categorize people, but rather the areas (for activity and participation) in which some people encounter restrictions and limitations, as well as the type and degree of support needed to overcome them. This would be consistent, in turn, with the definition that the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD, 2011)[22] uses (whose own evolution in its designation is a true reflection of what we are trying to draw attention to).

Beyond all this, what we are trying to insist on is that this is not only a formal issue, but a very important matter of conceptual depth, and that it must be part of the many reforms and changes to be undertaken in this process in view of its systemic educational nature. On the other hand, given the role it has played in the history of this social reality, this is an issue in which not only education professionals should intervene, but also those in the field of health, like psychology among other disciplines.[23]

1.4. Structure and format

Each of the four case studies has been independently analyzed and as already noted, has been prepared by a different group within the team. This explains why, while maintaining a similar approach and a similar conceptual structure, there are differences in style and in the internal index of each case.

In general, an attempt has been made to briefly contextualize each case study with some elements of the country's social and political reality, as well as with basic aspects of its education system. This was not the occasion or the text to present a more detailed analysis of them, which could be done by turning to the excellent information provided by the EURYDICE network.[24] For this reason, aspects which are surely relevant are not included here, not necessarily to understand the process followed with the SECs, but subsequently to measure the general possibilities in comparison to the reality in Spain.

We must emphasize that the description of these case studies is limited and partial, conditioned by our own ideas and values, as well as by the extent of the revised literature, of which we think, in any case, is sufficient and relevant. It does not seem necessary to emphasize that the realities studied are much more complex than will be noted here and, therefore, there are aspects not analyzed.

---

[22] http://blogs.ucv.es/postgradopsocologia/2017/12/15/discapacidad-intelectual-definicion-clasificacion-y-sistemas-de-apoyo-social/

[23] Calonge, I. y Calles, A.M. (Comisarias)(2016). *Tests psicológicos en España: 1920 – 1970*. Catálogo de la exposición. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Recuperado de, http://eprints.ucm.es/35833/7/Catalogo.pdf

[24] https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/educacion/mc/redie-eurydice/inicio.html

We believe that making these circumstances explicit should serve to assume the derived analyses with reasonable caution, not so much to relativize or ignore them, or value them, but above all, for their ability to help the reader (re)think their own beliefs, values and practices on such a controversial matter.

In any case, we have appreciated that, of the four cases studied, it is possible to deduce some *significant and inspiring keys* for those who have to plan and implement education policy and concrete measures that are deemed appropriate/adjusted to the Spanish situation. We have called these *lessons learned* and as will be seen in the relevant section, focus on valuable and necessary aspects or principles of action that, as we have been insisting, will have to adapt to the complex reality of the decentralized and pluralized Spanish education system.

1.5. References

Calonge, I. y Calles, A.M. (Com.) (2016). *Tests psicológicos en España: 1920-1970*. Catálogo de la exposición. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Recuperado de, http://eprints.ucm.es/35833/7/Catalogo.pdf

D'Alessio, S. (2008). «Made in Italy». Integrazione Scholastica and the new vision of inclusive Education. En L. Barton & F. Amstrong, (Eds.). *Policy, Experience and Change*. (pp. 53-72). Baltimore V: Springer.

Echeita, G. (2019). *Educación inclusiva. El sueño de una noche de verano*. Barcelona; Octaedro.

Etxeberria, X. (2018). Ética de la inclusión y personas con discapacidad intelectual. *Revista Española de Discapacidad,* 6 (I): 281-290. Recuperado de, https://www.cedd.net/redis/index.php/redis/article/view/433

Jordan, L. y Goodey, C. (2002). *Human rights and School change. The Newman Story*. Bristol: CSIE.

Organización Mundial de la Salud, OMS (2001). *Clasificación Internacional del Funcionamiento, la Salud y la Discapacidad*. Madrid: OMS, OPS, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social. Recuperado de, https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43360/9241545445_spa.pdf?sequence=1

Keith Ballard (2013). Thinking in another way: ideas for sustainable inclusion, *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* 17:8, 762-775, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2011.602527

Romanach, J. y Lobato, M. (2005). Diversidad funcional, nuevo término para la lucha por la dignidad en la diversidad del ser humano. Recuperado de, http://foroviday independiente.org/wp-content/uploads/diversidad_funcional.pdf

2. *Case 1.* Newham, London. United Kingdom

2.1. Some aspects to consider in the social and educational context of the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (parliamentary monarchy) is a unitary state of four constituent nations: Scotland, Wales, England and Northern Ireland. The House of Commons of the United Kingdom's Parliament meets at Westminster Palace and, together with the House of Lords, is the most important legislative body in the country. The head of the UK government is the *prime minister* and is the one leading the political party with the most seats in the House of Commons (elected by the people). The Prime Minister elects the Council of Ministers.

English society is very multicultural, especially in large cities, as a result of its imperial past and migrations from, above all, India, Pakistan, the Middle East and, more recently, eastern European countries, among others. In a sense, it could be said, then, that the United Kingdom has a culture of acceptance, and openness towards diversity that provides an important basis for educational inclusion projects.

In England, since 1945 education has been compulsory for all students, ages 6 to 16 (including students with *disabilities)*, although, in this case with a segregated approach. The law required all children to go to school. However, at the age of 11, everyone took exams. Depending on the results obtained, students were referred to different types of schools, some much more academically oriented ("grammar schools"), than others ("technical" and "modern schools"). This significantly determined the future of the country's children.

Developing inclusive education in England began in 1976, when a comprehensive school system was established and, unlike the system it had until then, it did not separate students at age 11, but maintained a common or basic and compulsory track until the age of 16 ("comprehensive school"). At this point it could be said that a more inclusive, less segregated education system was beginning to be built. However, the approach to students considered to have disabilities remained dominated by a medical model[25] and, therefore, the majority continued to be educated in special education schools.

The Education Act law of 1981 supported and pushed for the idea of more inclusive education, with requirements to carry it out. The law integrated many of the aspects contained in the world-famous *Warnock Report* (1978), such as the abolition of traditional (and always negative) deficit-based diagnostic categories, and their replacement with the broader concept of *special educational needs* (s.e.n). The term students with s.e.n has since been used in a large majority of countries to refer not only to students with disabilities, associated with physical, sensory, cognitive or behavioral/emotional limitations (approximately 2% of the school population), but also to a wider range of students (about 15% on average) who, like the previous ones, experience difficulties in learning associated with other personal or social conditions.

25

During the 1980s and 1990s, England experienced great progress in inclusion policies, being, in the words of L. Jordan, one of the countries in the world with higher levels of enrollment of students with s.e.n in mainstream schools. Like all countries, it still faces the enormous challenge of *deepening the quality of this process* and, therefore, the great task of further transforming its education system to make it more inclusive; not only from the point of view of students with s.e.n but from a much broader perspective, encompassing all students in all their diversity (UNESCO, 2017).

2.2. *Newham*, a district with an inclusive education

While Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are regarded by the European Union[26] as independent electoral districts, England has nine electoral districts, out of a total of twelve in the entire UK. One of these constituencies is Greater London. Greater London is divided into 32 neighborhoods or municipalities, with respective Councils relying on the Greater London Authority; Newham is one of them.

These Councils are made up of different Committees ("Local Authorities"). In the field of education, the Local Educational Authorities (LEA) establish and lead educational policies for their locality within the framework of the general laws of the country. They have a budget for this purpose which the committee is responsible for managing.

In 2017 the population of Newham was 347,996 residents. By 1991 it had grown to 216,251 residents. It draws attention to the rapid growth in this municipality in relation to other municipalities of Greater London (see, for example, the Havering district with 256,039 residents in 2017 and 230,923 in 1991, or the Bexley district, with 246,124 residents in 2017 and 218,075 residents in 1991). According to Linda Jordan, many people, including teachers, have gone to live in Newham from other counties and even from other countries, in search of a more inclusive education and society for their sons or daughters, or an education system more consistent with their values.

Newham was established in 1964. The Labour Party had been ruling in the municipality for a long time (and continues to do so). It highlights the great sensitivity of its inhabitants, who have always shown a strong commitment to helping the most disadvantaged. Paradoxically, this was reflected in the large number of special education schools they had in the early 1980s, as it was perceived as a sign of charity and something they were proud of. Specifically, at this time, more than 700 students were distributed among 8 special education schools (a huge proportion for such a small town). In addition, another 200 students attended special education schools outside the municipality.

The 1981 Education Act, as a guiding framework, made it possible for the municipality of Newham to start the transformation process that continues to this day. Even so, it is important to know that many other municipalities (inside and outside of London) still have numerous special education schools today (some have 10 special education schools).

What made the situation in Newham different from the other boroughs of Greater London? The families of the municipality played a relevant role. The protagonist of our

[26] This text was written before the United Kingdom left the European Union ("Brexit") on 31/01/2020.

main informant for this study stands out, Linda Jordan, who in the 1970s gave birth to a girl with Down Syndrome and was one of the most important leaders in the process of change. She joined the Newham Township Education Committee in 1986, chairing it from 1988 to 1994.

Currently, 15% of the children in Newham are considered to have special educational needs. Approximately 2% of them have what they call "high needs" or extensive and generalized support needs for their personal and social development. Most of these 2% attend mainstream schools.

All schools in Newham are state funded. However, it is necessary to highlight that they have great independence in relation to how to use government resources. Funding for schools is a topic that we will look at again later in this report.

It is also worth highlighting a broad and solid participatory structure and culture that the municipality of Newham has had since 1981, a culture that had, and has, a very relevant role in the initiation and sustainability of the change process. Part of that structure has been made up of families. At the beginning they came together to form a small voluntary organization (50 families), whose mission was to support each other in the struggle for *integration*.[27] Later, the Committee officially assigned them the function of collecting / listening to complicated situations in schools, derived from negative attitudes on the part of teachers towards students with greater support needs, and addressing them. The small association thus became the Newham Parents' Center. In 1987, the Council also established the "Newham Access and Disability Advisory Group (NADAG)", which consisted of people with disabilities. All this points to the fact that, throughout the process followed in Newham, the families of children with disabilities and some adults in the same situation were a key element, both in terms of pressure and support.

Thanks to this participatory structure, families were well informed of their rights. In fact, when in 1981 the Education Act introduced changes in the organization of the schooling of children with disabilities, the family association, together with the University of East London, organized training courses, aimed at families, on the implications of the new law.

Realizing their rights, the families started a movement to pressure the Newham Council to respond to the provisions of the new 1981 law. The cases were high profile. Among them, the case of a group of parents from the local Down Syndrome group (of which Linda Jordan was a member) stands out, which, in 1983, met with the director of the Newham Education Committee insisting that their sons and daughters were enrolled in the mainstream school closest to their homes, threatening not to send their sons and daughters to any school if their request was not granted.

In any case, it should be noted that the pressure that had to be exerted was not very strong, because politicians in the municipality's administration considered the families' request relevant from the outset. Having a convinced community facilitated the rest of the process.

Surprisingly, the head of the Committee agreed with the families. Shortly afterwards, the Newham Council launched a working group on integration, the "Integration

---

[27] "Integration" and "mainstreaming" became common terms in the 1980s and 1990s especially in Europe, the US and Canada to refer to the schooling policies of some students with special educational needs but without questioning the dual system to which we referred at the beginning of this Report. The introduction of the concept of inclusion has, among other considerations, the connotation of trying to overcome this model.

Working Party", the objective of which was to elaborate a strategy to integrate the schooling of students with special education needs into mainstream schools. This working group made up of 12 people (families, teachers, counselors, etc.), met 17 times between November 1983 and September 1984.

This work team made its decisions taking into account the opinions and voices of the professionals of the educational schools, both special and mainstream, carrying out several consultation processes. The result was two reports (instead of one, which was what the Committee had requested) because, although everyone in the "Integration Working Party" agreed that it was necessary to close the special education schools, they were unable to agree on the best strategy to follow. Faced with this controversial situation, the Committee made the decision to only adopt the measures that were common to both reports: a preschool service was created to facilitate the integration of the youngest students with *disabilities*. Although it was an appropriate and a necessary measure, the families found it insufficient.

In 1987, Linda Jordan joined the Newham Township Education Committee, and the "Integration Steering Group" was created, a task force made up of experts whose role was to think about the necessary measures to implement inclusive policies. To fulfill the objective, this group organized numerous consultative rounds (mainstream schools were consulted on how to welcome children with *disabilities,* the families of children enrolled in special education schools and professionals from the special education schools that they planned to close) and took into account the opinions and needs of those directly involved. During this time, the district was fortunate to have the individual support of leading trade unionists and, in general, the support of the teachers' unions.

That same year, 1987, and as previously discussed, the Council established the "Newham Access and Disability Advisory Group (NADAG)" which was made up of people with *disabilities,* many of whom had attended special education schools. This team was open to any Newham citizen, answering questions about Council policy while making recommendations directly to the Council's Education Committee.

Although the process followed in Newham, and has been associated with the Labor Party, which has a progressive position on education and social affairs from a political perspective, it should also be noted that the 1981 law was promoted by a conservative government. It would have been very difficult to move forward in this complicated process, if not impossible, if the different parties had rowed in opposite directions.

2.3. What was the vision or principal foundation that led the transformation process?

For the purposes at hand, it is important to highlight that, in our opinion, Newham's policy has not been to transform the SEC, but to actually close them, insofar as the option of segregated education is considered incompatible with the right to an inclusive education. Rather, theirs was an initiative to move towards a policy of full inclusion.

This policy in Newham is strongly rooted in a vision that emphasizes the issue of the necessary changes to SECs, as a *matter of human rights*. The equal dignity of people with disabilities, be they children or adults, is at the heart of that vision, along with the *understanding that school segregation is discrimination*. A discrimination that,

therefore, violates one of the fundamental rights of every person and for that reason cannot be consented, given its negative effects both on people with *disabilities* (devaluation), and on society as a whole. In the opinion of the analysts who signed the report prepared years ago on this process (Jordan and Goodey, 2002) and ratified by Jordan during his work visit, school segregation contributes decisively to the maintenance of negative beliefs and attitudes towards people with *disabilities*. This reinforces - in a kind of vicious circle - their marginalization and social disadvantage and makes their segregation justifiable, in the eyes of many, which ultimately does not facilitate the dissipation of existing negative stereotypes/ ideologies and attitudes.

In this context, Newman's policy on school integration / inclusion, has had the support of the country's antidiscrimination laws, the last of them being the "Equality Act '' of 2010. This law, together with the UK's ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) (UN, 2006), has only strengthened the vision and understanding of this process, not as a technical pedagogical issue on where to educate students with special educational needs, but as a matter of human rights and deepening democracy and as such, inalienable, unquestionable and irreversible.

Nonetheless, it is still paradoxical or shocking that with these same foundations and within the same country, other LEAs maintain educational policies much less inclusive than those of Newham (Black and Norwich, 2014), however, it is true that, as L. Jordan pointed out, England has one of the most inclusive education systems in Europe.

2.4. Strategy and planning

Although the 1981 Law provided the necessary context, the demand and pressure from families for the law to be implemented was fundamental. In this sense, we can speak of a bottom-up leadership initiative. However, the strategy they followed was characterized by its transparency and enormous participation, which in a short time became an interactive process in both directions; bottom-up and top-bottom.

There were multiple advantages to the participatory strategy. In fact, Linda Jordan believes it is impossible to carry out a process of this caliber without the will of families, schools - both mainstream and special - and important actors in the community.

We have already commented on the creation of the "Integration Working Party" and the "Newham Parents' Center", which worked to increase the participation of families in the school system. There was also close collaboration between the Council and the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of East London.

In any case, in the opinion of our informants, the key factor in the strategy - the non-negotiable element - was their *strong will and determination*. Even so, it should be noted that there were some families, albeit very few, reluctant to close the special education schools that their sons and daughters attended, however, once the initiative was rolled out they realised that *integration* was the only option that would respect their children's right.

In line with what was learnt from the processes related to school change, a key factor in the framework of the strategy was having *strong leadership*, supported by passionate *convictions* for the *vision* (as a human rights issue) and *determination* to carry out the transformation process. The Education Committee was the one who exercised this fundamental role. However, it does not seem that it was leadership that im-

posed a certain vision. Rather, everything indicates that it was, to a large extent, a distributed leadership: instead of deciding for the municipality, the Committee put *ideas* on the table and waited for the schools to take the initiative or go their own way. In the same vein, the continuous efforts made to listen to the opinions and voices of all those involved stands out.

To clarify what we are trying to say, here are two examples of different situations, during the process in Newham, that prove our point:

– When the families showed fear that the mainstream schools could not respond to the needs of their sons and daughters, the Council considered the possibility of providing certain schools with more and specific resources. This is what they called (and call) the ""Resourced Schools"" (they would be, to a certain extent, like our *preferred centers* in some Autonomous Communities). With this idea in mind, the Council, instead of choosing mainstream schools that would be specially prepared to accommodate certain people, orchestrated a meeting attended by directors and other staff from the municipal schools. In it, the Education Committee explained to the schools the new need that had arisen, waiting for their collaboration. And so, it happened. After the meeting, several directors of mainstream schools approached the Committee to offer themselves as volunteers in order to establish themselves as "Resourced Schools"", putting themselves at the service of society.
– When it was time to close the special education schools, the "Integration Steering Group" carried out a consultation process from which a unanimous idea emerged: the teaching staff was not going to let more than one special education school close at the same time. Although the members of the "Steering Group", following these indications, considered that the process was going to take too long, they agreed to the demand since the cooperation of the teachers involved was essential. In addition, for each of the closures they organized several consultative rounds, listening to the needs and concerns of all parties (families, special education and mainstream schools). Accordingly, the closure of each of the centers followed a particular path. In some cases, the "Steering Group" gave the professionals of the special education schools complete independence so that they could decide for themselves the best way to proceed and incorporate their students into the mainstream schools.

In Newham, the process of closing the existing 8 SEC took ten years. If 1984 is noted as the beginning of the process (positioning, first consultations, debates, etc.), the first closure did not take place until 1988. Between 1988 and 1994, special education schools were reduced from 8 to 2, at a rate of approximately one per year. In 1999, the last special education school that underwent this process was closed. The number of students enrolled in special education schools dropped from 913 in 1984 to 96 in 2002, of which 58 were attending the only special education center that remains open in Newham, while the other 38 were enrolled in special education schools outside the borough.

A relevant characteristic of the established and executed plan was its flexibility and simplicity. Multiple circumstances were taken advantage of to gradually implement the closure of the centers: a fire in one and the need for extensive renovations in terms of accessibility in another (which made its closure necessary), etc.

In this regard, the analysts valued this flexibility and simplicity as very positive, since more exhaustive planning would have, in the long term threatened to question or stop the entire process, if at a certain moment something of what was initially planned

did not happen. Also, the fact that the plan was not very specific favored the implementation of the following steps based on the evaluation and monitoring of the process, as well as the specific circumstances of each situation.

In this context, the staff of the parent support network supported families in those situations in which mainstream schools initially did not welcome / receive children with *disabilities*. In addition, they provided regular feedback to the Newham Council on problems that were arising in the schools. Occasionally, the Council had to remind schools of their legal duties, but even the most complicated situations generally improved once the child with a *disability,* who was enrolled in a SEC, entered the mainstream school and was truly known, and not by their label. This network was key because as the centers were closed, it was very difficult for the authorities to be aware of whether the process was going well in all mainstream schools. At one point, a letter was sent to the families of children with *disabilities* from the E.C.E., indicating where they could go in case of any problem.

From all this, the importance of having a general, clear and simple plan, in terms of the initial steps, with an established vision seems clear. This helps centers and families stay calmer, or at the very least makes them aware that this is a process towards a goal and of the general steps to be taken. In the same way, it seems obvious that making *the vision* and the final objective clear, ensures the process moves forward, rather than stalling or being satisfied with having only reached a certain point.

To the extent that it was a well-informed process, supported by a clear understanding of each situation, taking into account the voices, opinions and wishes of the people directly involved, we can describe it as a heterogeneous process and sensitive to the characteristics of each context.

From the point of view that the strategy followed, in terms of communication of the plan (meaning, reasons, goals and objectives), different documents and published official positions in which the political commitment and vision that supported the process were made explicit. The passion with which some of the Council people leading the process (Linda Jordan among them) got involved was a prominent component.

As for the monitoring, it is clear that actions were carried to continuously evaluate each situation, in order to plan the next step as well as the measures and messages to be issued from the Council, reducing the fears and concerns of the actors involved.

It could also be said that the strategy was to convince and persuade but not impose. That is, rather than putting pressure on parents who did not agree with closing the SEC, the approach was to convince them little by little: through the provision of measures that would help calm them (eg, the creation of the “””Resourced Schools””” that we will analyze later); showing that inclusion is possible as seen known cases (e.g. classmates who went to mainstream school), and even by creating new schools with necessary facilities to fully respond to the needs of their children (for example, during the process two schools were built with a hydrotherapy pool and others with specific and necessary facilities for their students).

In all, despite the sound vision, families always had the right to choose the type of educational center in which they want their children to be educated, which led to a situation which we cannot say is “full inclusion”, where 100% of the students with disabilities in Newham are in mainstream schools. To date, there is still a special education school in the district that serves 56 students (the majority considered to have “Severe Learning Difficulties, SLD”), with the option, for families who wish to do so, to take their children to out-of-district special education schools funded by the district.

It is also possible that those who were promoting this process worried about students with "serious emotional and behavioral problems", along with deaf students who, at that time, were only being educated with oral lessons. Today, concern towards the latter has radically changed and their integration has become widespread thanks, on the one hand, to the development of cochlear implant technology, and on the other, to the recognition and support of the use of sign languages in their education.[28]

When we asked Linda Jordan for her thoughts on the existing special education school in Newham, she clearly stated her position, to continue with the process and work towards its completion. Among the reasons that point to their tenure is the fact that, in her opinion, in England there is a certain setback in terms of inclusion, that being an increase in schooling, in S.E.C. in other districts (Black and Norwich, 2014).

2.5. Structures and support staff in and for mainstream schools

Mainstream schools in Newham have the following structures and support staff to make the inclusion process feasible:

– *Learning Support Team and Behavior Support Team for the District:* The Teaching and Learning Support Team was created in 1987, when inclusive education policy was first established. In the beginning, the team was small and supported the nurseries with the inclusion of children with *disabilities*. Each year, when a special education school closed, some teachers who worked there joined this team.[29] Today, this service, made up entirely of male and female teachers, serves schools at all stages. On the other hand, the Behavior Support Team was also created in 1987, parallel to the closure of a special school, welcoming students with behavioral conditions. Likewise, this team was made up of teachers, in this case however, with extensive experience in educational and therapeutic work related to behavioral disorders. In general, the purpose of both teams was to give confidence to mainstream schools, as well as to share with them strategies that favor the inclusion of children and youth *with specific educational support needs*.
– *""Resourced Schools"":* Given the fear of some of the families in mainstream schools that their sons or daughters would not have the specific support required to accommodate their needs, some schools were specially equipped so that they could accommodate students with profiles of specific educational needs, including those considered to have SLD.
  • In any case, it was studied very carefully which mainstream schools in the district would be more feasible to carry out the requirements of ""Resourced Schools"" to educate students from special education schools. As previously mentioned, rather than choosing the centers and forcing them to become ""Resourced Schools"", the need was highlighted, and they waited for directors to volunteer (knowing the importance of having convinced leadership to promote any change).

---

[28] Echeita, G. (2019*). Educación inclusiva. El sueño de una noche de verano*. Barcelona; Octaedro

[29] Teachers who worked in the special education center were offered two options: join a support team or as staff in a "resourced school"

- These ""Resourced Schools"" (similar to the preferred schools in several of our Spanish Autonomous Communities), were seen at the time as a transitory measure for full inclusion. The idea was that the set of schools would gradually generate knowledge and favorable attitudes towards inclusion, so that, in the medium and long term, any student could be enrolled in any school in the district.
- However, to this day, some of these ""Resourced Schools"" are still maintained.
- This process of establishing ""Resourced Schools"" began, more or less simultaneously with the preparation of some nursery and primary schools and some secondary schools. That is, they worked on both ends of the compulsory stages, so that when the younger students with special educational needs from the SEC reached secondary school, they were already attending schools that had experience with inclusive schooling.
- These "Resourced Schools"" received support, resources and additional training to be prepared for the task at hand. In order to make visible the diversity and type of additional personal supports available to this type of school, we have analyzed the case of one of them: the Eastle Community Secondary School:[30]
  - Eastle has approximately 1,000 students between the ages of 11 and 16. Of the total number of students, 55 are considered to have special educational needs (5.5%), including 15 (1.5%), with "high needs" or complex educational needs.
  - Has 33 "teacher assistants": these staff have achieved at least a L3 BTEC, although some have additional training ("Higher level teacher assistants"). These multi-role professionals are very important to inclusion. They work one on one with the students with the greatest support needs, but also with the teachers because, by knowing the students well, they can advise them on the best way to meet their needs. Comparatively speaking, we cannot identify them with our "support teachers" (PTs), since they do not have a university degree, but something closer to what a Higher Graduate in Professional Training would be.
  - Has 4 "Complex needs teachers": These teachers are solely responsible for 55 students with special educational needs. They are teachers with specialized training who are in charge of supervising what each student needs. To do this, they directly support mainstream teachers, helping them plan their didactic programs (making sure they are inclusive), and monitor the Individual Educational Plans (IEP) of students with special educational needs. These professionals are well aware that the way in which students with different *disabilities* are treated and cared for has a great impact on the education and development of all students.
  - 1 "School counselor": We understand that they are a professional specially qualified to address the questions and needs related to the students' mental health. However, it should be noted that they only respond to "day-to-day problems", while referring students who have very specific needs in this area to other services. It is not equivalent to our counselors (Spanish "orientadores"), as they do not have educational counseling or psycho-pedagogical evaluation functions.
  - "Learning mentors": this is an additional function carried out by some of the school's teachers and who, for this, have specific *ad hoc* training. They support

[30] https://www.eastlea.newham.sch.uk/

students who, for whatever reason, at any given time need more supervision, or follow-up, on schoolwork (e.g., non-performing students).

- Students with special educational needs can also receive different types of specialized support (speech therapy, physical therapy, behavioral…) from other specialists hired by the District Council or directly by the school. These are professionals who do not work permanently in the institution, but who attend assiduously: occupational therapists, speech therapists, physiotherapists, etc.
- "Personal Assistants": In addition, in schools you can find other professionals hired directly by students with *disabilities* using their "personal budget", such as a state benefit, that the person chooses to spend on this type of support. Its functions can be multiple; for example, accompanying a student in their day to day (both inside and outside school) in order to help them communicate with others (this professional could also be hired by the school).
- Like the rest of the schools, Eastle has a "Special Educational Needs Coordinator" (SENCO) ("SEN Coordinator"): their main function is to promote and coordinate the actions necessary to ensure quality education for students with special educational needs. These functions are carried out at the district level, with the rest of "SENCOs" coming from other schools. In collaboration, they analyze the support needs of a newly enrolled student in any of the Newman schools, or reflect on the actions that are already being implemented to respond to the needs of students at different stages.
- There are also schools (or there were at the beginning of the process), with a "reference teacher": a teacher who serves as a contact for families and as a link between them and the SEN Coordinator and special needs agents outside the schools.

- In schools that are not considered """Resourced Schools""", the initial distribution of support resources is made on the basis that they have approximately 2% of students with special educational needs, taking into account the distribution or *natural proportion* of this student body in society.
- However, it is also expected that there may be certain variability in the needs of each school based on different circumstances, and for this they have the "Clusters" ("groupings"): The 90 schools (approximately) in Newham are divided in 6 "Clusters" or groupings of schools. The members of these "Clusters" (the SENCOs and other professionals from the schools) meet monthly to discuss their support needs (consequently financial) and to share experiences and knowledge. Thus, depending on the needs of the "Cluster" as a whole, the Newham Council transfers an amount of money that is distributed within the "Cluster" itself in accordance with its needs.
- This minimizes the labeling of students for the purposes of provision of resources and allows them to respond to their needs and those of the schools quickly and efficiently. In other words, in the face of the needs of a school (derived, for example, from the schooling of a student with complex educational needs), the "Cluster" can reorganize the resources it has so that these needs can be addressed in the moment (knowing that if more money is necessary, the Council will remit it when it can). This is part of a culture of trust, collaboration and mutual support within the "Cluster", where all its members know the reality of all the schools and assumes that each of them will use the additional resources that it requests in the best possible way and for the purpose for which they were requested.

- All this is carried out within a framework of full financial autonomy for the schools, in matters such as the hiring of teachers or support staff; an aspect that is very different from the situation in Spain.
- In England, each pupil with special educational needs is allocated a budget of between £ 4,000 and £ 25,000 per year, depending on the resources required to meet their specific educational support needs.

2.6. Curriculum, evaluation and Person-Centered Planning. Making inclusive education possible

In this section, we highlight some aspects of how the mainstream school system in England works. Specifically, those elements in which England could be an example, or rather *inspiration*, as to how the Spanish school system might advance towards more inclusive education. With that said, we do not intend to be exhaustive in the analysis, far from it (since we do not have the conditions), but at least point to other possibilities that, if applicable, would be interesting to study in greater depth.

Most significant is the evaluation / accreditation of learning:

– We've seen a significant advance towards an assessment approach more focused on competencies than on content, reflected in the accreditation obtained by students at the end of compulsory schooling; Instead of talking about titles, they talk about levels of competence, taking into account the expert-novice theories that defend that a person does not have the same level of ability in all existing areas, but that, depending on their practice and experience, is more expert in some domains than in others.
– At this moment, two complementary accreditation models seem to coexist. On the one hand, one that leads to the GCSE title ("General Certificate of Secondary Education") and the other towards a BTEC ("Business and Technology Education Council"), which is similar to Professional Qualifications in Spain. If at the age of 16 students have passed a series of exams (by subjects) with a grade between 1-9, they obtain the GCSE title. If they score between 1-3, they get a level 1 (L1) in the BTEC scheme. If their grade is between 4-9, they receive level 2 (L2). Within the BTEC framework, a level 3 (L3) is the equivalent of the "A levels" that are achieved after completing the "Upper Secondary Education" in the so-called "Colleges" (the equivalent of our baccalaureate) and the levels of 6 or 7 (L6 or L7) correspond to university degrees.
– For the purposes of integrated education in mainstream schools (especially in secondary education) for students with *disabilities* and with extensive and generalized support needs (intellectual and developmental disabilities), it's worth noting that they have established different degrees of competency according to each student's needs, referred to as "Entry Levels":
  - Pre-entry
  - Entry 1
  - Entry 2
  - Entry 3
– This curriculum and competency assessment allows teachers (common core and support) to design / program and evaluate their lesson plans in an inclusive way, insofar as each student may be working at their level of competence within the

framework of teaching units or common topics / lessons. In our view,[31] this is much more consistent with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) than the approach of our "significant curriculum adaptations".
– On the other hand, the English curriculum has, particularly in secondary school, a notable practical / functional emphasis, with a significant degree of optionality and highly adaptable lessons for a wide variety of student interests, incentives and abilities.

It is important to highlight that this approach towards a competency-based curriculum and assessment is congruent with the criteria of "personalized learning" (Coll, 2016), a principle that, in the field of education (and training for employment) for people with intellectual or developmental *disabilities*, takes the name of Person-Centered Planning (PCP) (Crespo and Verdugo, 2014).

Although this approach was not a part of the initial process, it has gained traction in the last four years. Since 2004, all students with special educational needs have a Personal or Individual Plan, based on the PCP process. In the case of students with "high needs" the plan is much broader and specific.

The PCP approach offsets our model of "psycho-pedagogical evaluation" by being much more participatory than our "individualized adapted curriculums" (Sandoval, Simón & Echeita, 2019). It is a paradigm shift in which the focus shifts from the difficulties and weaknesses of the person, to their strengths, needs and concerns as a person, providing the necessary resources and/or support that allow them, little by little, to achieve their life goals.

For students with "high needs", PCP will be a fundamental element for their transition to and inclusion in adult life and the world of work. PCP is not only positive for people with *disabilities,* but also for families, as it helps them change their focus; from impairments to possibilities and generates positive expectations for their sons' and daughters' future (in terms of the impact this has on their education and development). With the PCP approach, in the first year of school, individualized plans are elaborated and reviewed annually. All the important people in the student's life participate (e.g., family, teaching team, specific professionals) in the plan's elaboration, development and evaluation.

In short, every PCP begins with a conversation, first with the family, and after with the students perspective taking center stage. In this conversation, the aspirations and objectives or goals of the family and the student are discussed, as per the following six questions:

– What is it that people like or admire about you?
– Who are the most important people in your life?
– What is important to you, now and in the future?
– What is going well, and not well, in your life right now?
– What assistance do you need?
– Who can do what, how and when?

It is relevant to bear in mind that, when working like this with families, one starts from long-term goals or aspirations ("How do you imagine a perfect week for your son or

[31]

daughter when they are 25 years old?"), from which short-term objectives are generated following the SMART method (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based goals).

The four areas of all PCPs are: a) independent living, b) friends, relationships and community, c) health and d) employment. At a minimum, for each of these areas a long-term aspiration should be specified (e.g., for the "Friends" dimension: to have friends, to be part of the community, and to have people help me have fun and achieve what I want in my life) and short-term goals (following the example of "Friends": in April next year, I will go out with friends at least twice a week. We will do activities such as going to the gym, swimming, going to the movies or to concerts), from which the necessary supports are established.

The previous analysis refers to the fact that in the process we are analyzing, we must have a systemic perspective and development approach throughout one's life, that goes far beyond what happens exclusively in schools. Conversely it must be very aware of what should happen after compulsory education ultimately, preparing all young people for a quality adult life where employment plays a central role.

In this sense, it is critical to draw attention to the fact that Newham secondary schools play a strategic role ("hub") between education and employment, within the framework of a renewed vision in our country called Transition Plans to Adult and Work Life.

This is why "Job Centers" have been established in Newham, where people with *disabilities c*an register. Depending on the accommodations the person needs to get a job, a solution is offered (such as guidance, in cases of low support needs, and training courses in other circumstances, etc.).

For students with "high needs" the process is more complex. Based on the evidence, they know that if young people and families have aspirations and the system has expectations (positive beliefs that people with disabilities can get a job), inclusion in the world of work will be much more feasible.

In any case, for this to happen, when these students turn 14 years old, a "job coach" (a coach for employment), goes to schools and helps students and their families with the PCP line related to employment (both in terms of planning and implementation). The PCP, in this part incorporates, among its essential elements, a vocational profile (based on a study on the limitations/ abilities, strengths and interests of the person) and opportunities for a "real work experience" (real employment experiences or internships in community).

For all these reasons, addressing the role of special schools as a stand-alone issue, separate from the multiple and important reforms that the mainstream school system needs (curriculum, organization, evaluation, transition and work orientation for adult life and employment, among many others) is risky. In view of what can be learned from the Newham case, failure to undertake an overarching strategy would be a serious mistake and, above all, a frustrating task incoherent with the ultimate goal.

2.7. Results

As the school authorities in Newham understood, it's always controversial and complex to talk about and analyze the *results* of a process like this, especially when it's a question of human rights. The concern behind these reflections is that someone considers

the decision to, or not to, initiate a similar process subject to the existence of some type of evidence that shows that it is an option or a desirable, valuable, timely path.

This is not the place to go into a more in-depth analysis of these issues, but in the case of Newham, there is some evidence that shows the important results and impact that should be considered, for example, school performance in the District school population ("Achievement"). Jordan and Goodey (2002) point out that, first, there was no solid evidence found to show that this process was detrimental to students without special educational needs. Rather the opposite; the decision to enroll students with special educational needs from SECs into mainstream schools was associated with the improved results for mainstream schools in regard to GCSE completion, so much so that, in 1999 Newham schools led in the district ranking with the best results for four years.

Furthermore, in 2002, external consultants organized a review of the inclusion strategy carried out in Newham, using discussion groups representing schools, families and participating students. The final report verified the need to continue with this policy and the necessity to further measures to promote and deepen the quality of inclusion. Some conclusions from this evaluation were the following (Jordan and Goodey, 2002):

– Not all schools are equally welcoming / inclusive.
– Constant attention is needed to improve the quality of the experience for all students.
– Measures must continue to be taken so that it is the teachers, and not support staff, who take care of all the boys and girls.
– The Newham Council needs to reaffirm that inclusion is a rights issue, and not merely an administrative or pedagogical issue.

It is clear that, today, more than thirty years after the initiation of this policy, the fact that Newham continues to be the most inclusive LEA in England (Black and Norwich, 2014), must surely mean that inclusive education is no longer a debatable or questionable, passing or circumstantial matter. On the contrary, no one doubts that inclusive education is nothing less than a matter of social justice, desired and a good aspiration for all students and society as a whole. From our perspective this in itself, is already a big win for this process.

Even so, it should be noted that the fact that it is not questioned does not mean that it cannot be at risk of setbacks or stagnations. This threat is perceived today as a consequence of the aggressive accountability policy and the climate of competitiveness that is settling in many societies, fueled largely by the biased use of national and international performance tests.

2.8. Summary: facilitators and barriers to inclusive education

Analyzing the Newham case study reveals a series of converging factors and circumstances that facilitated more inclusive education. Among them we highlight the following:

– A clear *vision* of the goal understood as a *human rights issue* related to the equal dignity of all people.

- A distributed and sustained *leadership,* with many opportunities for multiple key actors (school technicians, families and family representatives, politicians from the Council itself, etc.) to have responsibility and feel part of those who brought energy to the process.
- The people who mainly exercised this leadership had the power and will to guide, promote and sustain the required changes. Everything indicates that they were people with high political responsibility in that district, *conviction and firm determination to put into practice* what others simply "declare" as acceptable and positive (inclusive education without restrictions or euphemisms), but who then cannot execute or generate the ultimate results of "full inclusion" policies.
- In this process, the *patience, resignation and generosity* that most of the families involved appeared to show must be highlighted, above all, in the beginning, when few things were sure to be "perfect". It seems that a large part of the families experienced the process as a contribution to a social transformation that those who would come later would enjoy and take "for granted" (as has happened; today it is an unquestioned policy in Newham and, as such, attracts families and professionals from other places).
- Among the facilitators of this process, we must also highlight *the great support from the children of the mainstream schools themselves,* highlighting the importance of trusting them to solve some of the difficulties, fears and challenges that adults sometimes anticipate as unsolvable. Undoubtedly, this trust in the students themselves, with and without special educational needs, can be improved by implementing appropriate collaborative / cooperative work strategies that help develop empathy and improve coexistence through actions such as the creation of structures with helpers, moderators and conflict resolution, among others. For this reason, the in-service training plans that need to be implemented so that the education of SEC students in mainstream schools is more than just a matter of location and becomes a matter of "quality education" to which these and the rest of the children have the right.
- There is no doubt that the process towards inclusive education has been accompanied by *significant investments in material resources, accommodations and accessibility of schools*, as well as the provision of support staff with different functions and profiles. Although Eastle School can be described as a Resourced School, it is not representative of all schools, nevertheless, it highlights the range of new support resources that must be provided to mainstream schools to carry out this commitment.
- Another important facilitator of the process is acknowledging and anticipating, as much as possible, the fact that *things will not always work out well*. Having strategies, such as "reference teachers" in the schools, so that families always have someone to turn to for support during turbulent times in this process, is paramount. In fact, as other experts have pointed out, these turbulences can be destabilizing, but they are also an unequivocal sign that the necessary changes being attempted are the ones that make the process feasible. Therefore, they should not necessarily be viewed as a problem, but rather as an indicator that you are moving forward. If it did not exist, we would almost certainly be facing a superficial or cosmetic transformation, not a deep one that is needed.
- Another facilitator of the process - together with the dynamics of its flexible planning, which we have alluded to before - has been the fact that the intended purpose was communicated properly. In this sense, Linda Jordan insisted on the idea of making it clear that the task we are all pursuing (SEC professionals too), is *to improve the excel-*

lence of mainstream schools, and not, as it has been reported in the Spanish press, "transferring students from one type of school to another".[32]
– For this to happen, it is important that there are good information channels and available evidence on the progress of the process, not to question it, but to improve it through informed decisions and empower the families and those individuals whose role is it to guarantee the fulfillment of the children's right to inclusive education.
– The search and support for the development of inspiring practices may include the creation of model schools (in terms of infrastructure, staffing and staff "like that of the SEC"), which can be a way of showing that what is preached is possible. The ""Re-sourced Schools""" have been an important pillar in this regard.
– It is obvious that the broad context of this experience (a district of a big city, with a relatively small number of special needs schools (8) and students enrolled in them (711 at the beginning), with a Labor government in power in that time, etc.), is a clear facilitator where everything seems to be more complimentary and controllable, at least in principle. For this reason, it is necessary to look at the results with caution; if carried out at a regional or national level, at least in part, the process may have different results.

On the other hand, the analysis also allows us to recognize some of the main barriers that a process of this nature will face. We highlight the following:

– Negative attitudes and stereotypes that exist among teachers (and the general population) towards people with *disabilities,* and in particular, towards those with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The existence of prejudices, stereotypes and negative and deeply rooted biases towards these students - largely as a direct consequence of their segregation and social stigma - generates a lot of fear and resistance among teachers, who, on the other hand, have been told historically, the education of these students is the responsibility of specialized and motivated teachers, and that it must rolled out in special schools.
– This fact brings to the fore the importance of a national strategy to sustain policies of conceptual and attitudinal change, in order to make this process possible and sustainable. We refer, for example, to curricular development policies (it is essential to develop a broad curriculum that assumes diversity of timings and capacities), teacher training (training that should affect the responsibility of teachers to attend to the students' experience as a whole, without exceptions) and psycho-pedagogical advice (advice that must be considered from the educational model). This strategy could be well supported by inspection and guidance services (guidance teams and departments), as long as the process of rethinking their functions and areas of intervention, which is now highly centralized - especially in the case of the Educational and Psych pedagogical Guidance Teams (Palomo, Simón and Echeita, 2019).
– The existence of contradictory, confusing and conditional policies, which make it difficult for many schools and authorities to "be an island of inclusion in a sea of traditional educational practices", as it continues to be for Newham in the English national context.

[32] https://elpais.com/sociedad/2018/12/27/actualidad/1545917225_924744.html

- *Contradictory,* inasmuch as the right to inclusive education is preached through actions such as ratifying the CRPD (UN, 2006), but schooling in SECs continues and even increases (something that also occurs in Spain).
- *Confusing,* since inclusive education is established as a legislative principle, but there is no institutional leadership or strategic initiatives to promote it or support strategies to make it possible, so that short, medium and long-term targets may be precise and measurable, for example, in terms of a decrease in the number of SECs and / or the number of students enrolled in them.
- *Conditioned,* in the sense that inclusion is configured as a kind of "lottery", since it depends, first of all, on where you live. In this way it happens that, although in Newham the vast majority of students with special educational needs have a policy of almost "full inclusion" within their reach, in other nearby LEAs, they are schooled in SECs. Also conditioned by the fact that those responsible for education consider, or not, that they have enough evidence to take this important step. This is well reflected in the documentation reviewed, where it is pointed out how, after a very positive report from the English Inspection Service ("OFsted"), which made explicit the important achievements and progress for all students and the positive aspects of inclusive education in Newham, "there was still a demand for more evidence that it works."

– Another significant barrier, eliminated in Newham, was the provision of personal resources to the schools, based (as in Spain) on the existence of recognition of the condition of the student with special educational needs, through a process of evaluation. This model reinforces labels, maintaining the idea that these students as "special", different from the majority, which is something else and consumes a lot of resources (like the time dedicated to serve them). In this sense, the alternative strategy followed in Newham has been to generously provide all the schools with sufficient resources, personal and technical, to serve all children with *disabilities,* and their needs, in the zone or area that the school serves. For example, for every eight tutor teachers, all schools have a "teacher assistant", without the need to justify this allocation based on the number of students with special educational needs. It also points to the importance of setting up networks of schools ("clusters") that can share experiences, resources and knowledge of the challenges of inclusion, making a commitment to a community perspective that is appropriate and an important element of the strategy as followed in Portugal, and which has shown some developments in our country (Parrilla, Muñoz-Cadavid and Sierra, 2013).

The consolidation of a full inclusion policy started in Newham more than 30 years ago, is not synonymous, far from it, with quality inclusive education. Without a doubt, that is the great challenge, and the process must continue and be improved; the process of attaining quality education is based on its ability to guarantee, for all students, equity, being together (access), feeling a part of and emotionally well within the peer group (participation) and learning as much as possible according to the necessary competencies for a complex, changing and difficult world (learning / performance).

For this to be possible, it is important not to mix the two arguments that are often used, as opposition in the debate on this issue. On the one hand, the argument is that inclusive education is a human rights issue. On the other hand, and generally on the part of the detractors and disbelievers, is that mainstream schools are not prepared for this radical change. What the case of Newham highlights is that these two arguments

must be work together: on the one hand, reinforcing the ethical, moral and legal foundation of the process (based on its consideration as a human right and with the support of the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations), and on the other, to strongly resume the agenda for the transformation and improvement of mainstream schools in all their dimensions (cultures, policies and practices), so that, in effect, it's possible to carry out the first premise.

Ultimately, it is the needs of children, and their rights, and not the needs or concerns of schools (whether mainstream or special), that have to direct the vision of this initiative, together with the will and determination to take it forward ("if you want, you can," Linda Jordan told us). For this, it is necessary to undertake, among others, some of the intelligent actions and strategies developed in Newham during these years and whose final roll out has been easier than it initially seemed.

2.9. References

Coll. C. (2016). La personalización del aprendizaje escolar. El qué, el por qué y el cómo de un reto insoslayable. En J.M. Vilalta *Retos de la educación en Cataluña* (pp_). Barcelona: Fundación Jaume Bofill. Recuperado de, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305999815_La_personalizacion_del_aprendizaje_escolar_El_que_el_por_que_y_el_como_de_un_reto_insoslayable

Dominguez, A. B. y Alonso, P. (2004). *La educación del alumnado sordo hoy. Perspectivas y respuestas educativas*. Archidona: Aljibe.

Black, A. y Norwich, B. (2014). *Contrasting responses to diversity: school placement trend 2007-2013 for all local authorities in England*. Bristol: CSIE.

Jordan, L. y Goodey, C. (2002). *Human rights and School change. The Newman Story.* Bristol: CSIE.

Sandoval, M. Simón, C. y Echeita, G. (2019). *Educación inclusiva y atención a la diversidad desde la orientación educativa*. Madrid: Pirámide.

Palacios, A. (2008). *El modelo social de discapacidad: orígenes, caracterización y plasmación en la Convención Internacional sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad*. Madrid: CERMI. Recuperado de, https://www.cermi.es/sites/default/files/docs/colecciones/Elmodelosocialdediscapacidad.pdf

Palomo, R., Simón, C. y Echeita, G. (2019). Los servicios de orientación educativa y psicopedagógica ante el desafío de una educación más inclusiva. *Educar y Orientar*, 11, 54-59. Recuperado de, https://copoe.org/asociaciones-de-copoe/las-revistas-de-nuestras-asociaciones/item/657-numero-11-de-educar-y-orientar-la-revista-de-copoe

Parrilla, A., Muñoz -Cadavid, A. y Sierra, S. (2013). Proyectos educativos con vocación comunitaria. *Revista de investigación en educación*, 11, (3), 15-31. Recuperado de, http://reined.webs.uvigo.es/index.php/reined/article/view/282

UNESCO (2017). *Guía para asegurar la equidad y la inclusión en la educación*. Paris: UNESCO, recuperado de, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259592

Crespo, M. y Verdugo. M.A. (2014). Planificación centrada en la persona: una nueva forma de trabajar en el ámbito de la discapacidad. En, M.A. Verdugo y R. Shaloch. *Discapacidad e inclusión. Manual para la docencia* (pp.133-154). Salamanca: Amaru.

3. *Case 2*. New Brunswick, Canada

3.1. Some aspects to consider in the social and educational context of the country

Canada is a federation made up of ten provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Saskatchewan) and three territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon).

In the 13 jurisdictions -10 provinces and 3 territories- the Departments or Ministries of Education are in charge of organizing, imparting and evaluating education at the primary and secondary levels, as well as technical and vocational education and post-secondary education. Some jurisdictions have separate Departments or Ministries, one of which is responsible for primary education and the other for post-secondary education and vocational training.

Public education is free to all Canadians who meet various age and residency requirements. Each province and territory have one or two Departments / Ministries responsible for education, headed by a minister who is almost always an elected member of the legislature and appointed to the position by the leader of the government of the jurisdiction. The vice ministers, who belong to the public administration, are responsible for the functioning of the Departments. The Ministries and Departments are in charge of educational, administrative and financial management and of school support functions. They define both the educational services to be provided and the political and legislative frameworks for education in the jurisdiction.

Local oversight of education is generally entrusted to school districts and District Boards of Education (DECs), which are responsible, through the superintendents of their school districts, for curriculum implementation and school operation.

Its members are elected by public vote. The power delegated to the local authorities is at the discretion of the provincial and territorial governments that, generally, are in charge of the operation and administration (including the finances), of the group of schools within their board or division, which ranges from the application of curricula, staff accountability, student enrollment, to new school construction and other major expenses.

Canada is a bilingual country, and the Constitution recognizes French and English as its two official languages. However, along with the official languages there are others native to the area. Inuktitut has official language status in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Nunavik. According to the 2006 Census, more than 85 percent of French native-speaking Canadians live in the province of Quebec: minority language rights in each province (French-speaking students living outside the province of Quebec and English-speaking students living in the province of Quebec), are protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter defines the conditions under which Canadians have the right to access publicly funded education in either minority language. Each province and territory has established French school boards to administer French schools. In the province of Quebec, the same structure applies to education in schools in English.

While there are many similarities in Canada's provincial and territorial education systems, there are significant differences in curriculum, assessment, and accountability

policies between jurisdictions related to geography, history, language, culture, and corresponding countries as well as specific needs of the populations served.

Each jurisdiction provides kindergarten programs, either full-day or half-day, mandatory or voluntary. Eight jurisdictions provide full-day kindergarten for all five-year-olds. In 2014, the Council of Ministers of Education,[33] CMEC, launched the Early Learning and Development Framework, which presents a comprehensive Canadian vision for early learning that can be adapted to the needs and unique circumstances of each province and territory.

The ages for compulsory schooling vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but most require school attendance between the ages of 6 and 16. In some cases, compulsory schooling begins at age 5 and in others it extends to age 18 or until graduation from high school. In most jurisdictions, elementary schools cover six to eight years of schooling.

High school covers the last four to six years of compulsory education. The high school graduation rate in 2003 was 74%, with 78% of girls and 70% of boys graduating. In 2004-2005, the dropout rate had dropped to 10 percent.

The province to which this report refers is New Brunswick (NB), although there are other provinces, such as Ontario, in which there are districts such as the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District, which pride themselves on "being the first educational system in the world to welcome all students, within the framework of an inclusive educational system" (Hansen, et al, 2006: 6), and whose policy on full school inclusion has many similarities with that of NB.

New Brunswick, according to Statistics Canada 2018 census data, has a total population of 770,633[34] inhabitants. Saint John is the largest city in the province, with a population of 70,063;[35] It is also the oldest city in the province. Moncton is home to 69,074 people, while Fredericton, the provincial capital, has a population of 56,724.[36]

New Brunswick is the only official bilingual province in Canada. Approximately 33% of the population is French speaking. Hence, there are two school systems in the province, the English-speaking system and the French-speaking system.

The Education Law of the Province distributes authorities and responsibilities between the provincial government, represented by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and the District Education Councils (DECs), which are elected at the local level every four years.

In general, the Minister establishes and supervises education and service standards, as well as the policy framework. The DECs, through the superintendents of their school districts, are responsible for the implementation of the program and the operation of the schools.

For administrative purposes, the province is divided into seven school districts, four English-speaking and three French-speaking. The governance structure also includes school-based advisory committees, known as Parent School Support Committees. Members are elected at the school level and serve three-year terms.

New Brunswick has two Departments of Education with their corresponding ministers:

---

[33] Body that brings together all the Ministers of Education and post-secondary school since e 1967. Consult https://www.cmec.ca/en/

[34] Similar to the city of Valencia.

[35] Similar to Ciudad Real, for example

[36] Similar to Ávila, for example

– Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
– Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour.

It is home to four public universities that offer a wide variety of educational programs. New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) offers more than 90 postsecondary education programs in English.

There is a dual system of English and French schools in the public education system supported with provincial funds, from kindergarten to grade 12 (18 years). Attendance in New Brunswick public schools is mandatory until completion of high school or to the age of 18.

Just prior to Bill 85 there were approximately 25 special education schools in New Brunswick. Most were run by parents' associations, previously named Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded, now called Community Living.

Almost all students with disabilities at this time were in separate facilities. Most of the funding was provided by the associations and the government only paid the teachers and assistants, so they were basically "charity programs".

The local authority "sponsored" one or two of these programs that were installed in one wing of a public-school building that was available at the time.

There was also a provincial institution for children with disabilities in Saint John (the largest city in the province), an institution that had between 200 and 300 students. It was residential and closed in 1984. Hence the impetus to develop multidisciplinary teams (social workers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and psychologists), to support schools.

The degree of change in relation to special education schools was different throughout the province. However, in a period of two or three years, at most, the change took place throughout the province, a change that ended in 1989 when all special education schools were closed. It was a process that was not free of challenges and difficulties, but from that moment until today it can be said that there are no special education schools in New Brunswick.

3.2. Vision and political and legal framework in the development of a more inclusive educational system

The history of the development of an inclusive model in New Brunswick had three great moments marked by some especially significant milestones:

1. *Beginning:* 1980s. First initiatives in 1983-84 (in the district where Gordon Porter worked) and subsequent legislation in Bill 85 of 1986, which established the mandate for all schools. Implementation was slow at first, but after 1987 districts were instructed to implement the policy within three years. In the 1989 analysis (Report on Integration prepared by "The Special Committee on Social Policy Development" of New Brunswick), important recommendations were made, and the mandate was renewed. As we will point out later in this report, much of the negative aspects that accompanied the discussion on the subject were eliminated and the positive aspects of inclusive education were emphasized.
2. *Systematization*. This took place in the 1990s. Challenges continued to exist and the need to work more on resources and strategies emerged. Several documents and

protocols were published guiding the different actions carried out: thus in 1994 the New Brunswick Department of Education published a guide on *Best Practices for Inclusion* and a Guide for Support Teachers ("Teacher Assistant Guidelines"). In 2000 a manual was published with resources to support students "with difficulties" ("Resource for Assisting Struggling Learners").[37]

3. *Deepening*. Since the publication of the McKay Report (2006) and the Porter and AuCoin Report (2012), the mandate was again revitalized. In 2009 a "Definition of Inclusion" was shared. In 2012, a report was published, accompanied by a plan for the improvement of services and inclusive education: "Strengthening Inclusion, Strengthening Schools Report, a Review of Inclusive Education Programs and Practices in New Brunswick Schools: An Action Plan for Growth".[38] The following year, in 2013, Policy 322 was established, the first policy-specific directive by the Ministry on inclusive education. It is interesting to note their definition, which led to inclusive education:

> "the pairing of philosophy and pedagogical practices that allows each student to feel respected, confident and safe so he or she can participate with peers in the common learning environment and learn and develop to his or her full potential. It is based on a system of values and beliefs centered on the best interest of the student, which promotes social cohesion, belonging, active participation in learning, a complete school experience, and positive interactions with peers and others in the school community.
>
> These values and beliefs will be shared by schools and communities. Inclusive education is put into practice within school communities that value diversity and nurture the well-being and quality of learning of each of their members. Inclusive education is carried out through a range of public and community programs and services available to all students. Inclusive education is the foundation for ensuring an inclusive New Brunswick society" (p. 2).

It should be noted that, according to Gordon Porter in his analysis for this report, this story has not been marked by a particular party or political sign. Rather, it responds to a situation where everything indicates that it has been both conservative and liberal parties that have promoted this policy, by people with a vision and conducive leadership.

The "Progressive Conservative" party/government was in office from 1970 to 1987. Prime Minister Richard Hatfield was technically conservative, but in fact very progressive. He championed the rights of New Brunswick French-speaking people and people with disabilities. He was one of the two prime ministers to support the constitutional changes that included the 1982 Bill of Rights. When challenged against the fact that the Ministry of Education did not comply with the Charter that came into force in 1985, he promised to do something, which later led to the approval of Law 85 (Bill 85) in 1986.

When Law 85 was introduced, the leader of the opposition party, the Liberals, also supported the rights of people with disabilities and the legislation was passed unanimously in the legislature. Therefore, we can affirm that there was majority support on

---

[37] See the full document here: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/Inclusion/BestPracticesinInclusion.pdf

[38] See the full document here: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/Inclusion/TeacherAssistantGuidelines.pdf

the part of the different political parties for the regulations on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Many interest groups were involved at the time; teachers' unions, psychology and medicine professionals, various school districts (at that time there were approximately 40 districts) and their leaders, as well as some parents / guardians of girls and boys who were going to access mainstream schools.

In 1987, the Liberal Party came to power. Given the continuing controversy over the integration of students with disabilities, in 1989, it appointed a Committee of Legislators to review the existing policy. The Minister of Education came from a city that resisted change, which marked her positioning in the process.

After intense work over a month, involving many school visits and hearings, the Liberal Committee concluded that inclusion was a good thing. The inclusive model had worked in many schools and those who encountered difficulties could learn from it.

This committee, from the same party as the Minister, asked his own Minister of Education to provide more leadership and support to the process to address existing problems. It was surprising that being from the same party, negative comments were made and proposals for change were made, something unusual in Canadian politics, as Porter points out.

What we call now inclusion was implemented roughly between 1989 and 1999, depending on the focus of the local school district. Progress was made, but many other issues emerged during that decade.

In 2004, a new progressive conservative government ordered a review, which was embodied in the 2006 McKay Report. That report identified many ways to improve inclusion. Some budget was allocated to specific areas, but implementation took place when the Liberals returned to power just months after the report was released. Progress was slow, especially at the school level. As noted above, a committee defined inclusive education in 2009, a first serious effort for a common declaration at the provincial level. This included the suggestion that the term "Common learning environment" be used instead of "regular / normal classroom", which has subsequently been found to be very useful. However, in practice, the challenges remained, and, in some cases, there was quite extensive public criticism of how inclusion was working.

In 2010 a progressive conservative government returned to power. The Minister committed to inclusion as his predecessor had done. At this time Gordon Porter was appointed to review practices and develop strategies that would make a difference, and he invited Angela AuCoin to join the team as the French-speaking leader of the review process. In June 2012, the aforementioned report "Strengthening Inclusion, Strengthening Schools" was presented, and followed by a 3-year action plan led by AuCoin and Porter. In September of that year, the aforementioned Law 322 ("Policy 322") of Inclusive Education was signed by the Minister, through which efforts were focused on training and capacity building for teachers.

A liberal government was elected in 2014 that stayed in power until 2018. This did not translate into any substantial change in policy or practice, although the focus on inclusion was less apparent than on other occasions. In 2018 a progressive conservative minority government came to power. To date they have not acted on inclusion, as they do not have people on their team who are as committed to school inclusion as did the government in 2010-2014.

In short, it can be said that both progressive and conservative governments have supported inclusive education. However, according to Gordon Porter, history shows that there has been extra support from conservative parties.

The conditions that took New Brunswick a step further than the rest of the country's provinces in terms of inclusive education are fundamental to understand the beginning and development of this process, which after more than 30 years is still alive and in constant change towards better ways to respond to the needs of all students and their families.

As noted in the initial phase of the process (1980s), there was an impulse on the part of people with disabilities, who became references for the entire society in relation to the fight for their rights. Specifically, Terry Fox and Rick Hansen have had great influence.

– In 1980, Terry Fox promoted the awareness of people with disabilities with his "Marathon of Hope."
– Rick Hansen further promoted the rights of people with physical disabilities with his "Man in Motion" World Tour that culminated in 1988.

On the other hand, a fundamental impulse for inclusion is found in certain national laws, as we have previously noted: in 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and in 1985 the Equal Rights for People with Physical or Mental Disabilities (section 15 of the Charter). In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms made Canada a clear leader in guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities at the constitutional level (Mackelprang & Salsgiver, 2015).

As Calder and Aucoin (2018) explain well, in 1985 all Canadians, regardless of their race, nationality or ethnic origin, color, sex, age and / or physical or mental capacity, were granted the right to be recognized as equal before the law. The Charter is above all provincial and territorial legislation, establishing itself as a connecting link between all Canadians on the issue of equality.

The provisions of Section 15 (Equality Rights) gave the families of children with disabilities the opportunity to question the legality of segregated educational programs. In this sense, some decisions of the Canadian Court have had important repercussions in advancing inclusion. It is worth noting the following cases in which the courts legislated in favor of the right to attend mainstream schools:

– 1986. Elmwood vs. the Halifax County School Board.
– 1989. Nathalie Robichaud in New Brunswick.
– 1997. Eaton vs. Brant Board of Education.
– 2012. The Moore case (Moore vs British Columbia).

Calder and Aucoin (2018, p. 17), refer to the impact of these judicial decisions. For example, the aforementioned Moore case in 2012 had a critical impact on families as they realized they could take school districts to court and they could win. The impact of Eaton's case has to do with the perception of teachers as professionals who have an important role in advocating for the most appropriate services for students with "learning needs". Another important implication based on the Robichaud and Moore cases is the need for educators to keep accurate records that demonstrate the effectiveness of their educational approaches.

As mentioned above, in Canada, the rights of boys and girls that they call "exceptional" are protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but also by provincial and territorial legislation, and by other administrative policies.

As noted above, in 1994 the New Brunswick Department of Education published a document called "Best Practices for Inclusion"[39] that guides inclusive educational practices in the province. This document is the result of joint reflection and identification of the indicators of success for inclusion by the different school districts. It establishes the principles and beliefs that should guide said practice and that give a good account of the model that is pursued, as well as clarity in the definition of the actions that must be integrated into the process (p.1):

a. All children can learn.
b. All children attend age-appropriate regular classrooms in their local schools.
c. All children receive appropriate educational programs.
d. All children receive a curriculum relevant to their needs.
e. All children participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
f. All children benefit from cooperation and collaboration among home, school and community.

It seems that New Brunswick has almost always had more progressive thinking than most provinces in Canada, specifically in some specific school districts, where the policies of the United States and several progressive communities were analyzed, as early as the early 1980s, as well in Canada, on inclusive education. In addition to that noted in the introduction to this case, another Catholic school district in Ontario, Wellington County, and a particular leader, Joe Waters, provided the clearest example of systemic approaches.

With the passage of Bill 85 to address equality issues, New Brunswick promoted Canada as an international leader in inclusive education (Porter and Richler, 1991; Calder and Aucoin, 2018).

For example, Section 45 (2)1 of Bill 85 (1986) addresses student placement considerations and is particularly significant:

> "A school board shall place exceptional pupils such that they receive special education programs and services in circumstances where exceptional pupils can participate with pupils who are not exceptional pupils within regular classroom settings to the extent that is considered practicable by the board having due regard for the education needs of all pupils."

This law was superseded by the New Brunswick Education Act in 1997, which was placed above all other educational standards.

As we have already noted, the most important moral and legislative support for this view was in the interpretation made by the New Brunswick educational authorities of the 1982 Canadian Bill of Rights and Freedom.

With all this, it can be said that the process followed in New Brunswick is strongly rooted in a vision that emphasizes the issue of the necessary transformation of special education schools as a matter of human rights. The equal dignity of people with disabilities, be they children or adults, is at the center of that vision, along with an understanding of school segregation as a discriminatory situation. Consequently, school

[39] https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/Inclusion/BestPracticesinInclusion.pdf

segregation violates one of those rights and cannot be consented to, due to its negative effects both on people with disabilities and on society in general.

3.3. New Brunswick Specific Educational Context and Advocates for Inclusion

Families and associations representing people with disabilities were a powerful lobbying mechanism both nationally and at the New Brunswick provincial level. There was a sense of justice and rights associated with the integration / inclusion effort when it began. However, according to Gordon Porter, there were other determining factors:

1. New Brunswick had what some have described as a "primitive" special education system in the 1970s. This was because it was a small, rural province, and the least wealthy of any Canadian province. As Gordon Porter points out, with a late start to implement the "special education" model in public schools, when it started, it was the most innovative models that were best suited to this small community. Rural circumstances appear to facilitate inclusion more than the more widespread practices in other wealthier, more populated and urban areas of Canada. A big change was needed and moving towards inclusion was the sensible thing to do in that context.
2. Families and human rights groups were quite active in New Brunswick. The New Brunswick Association for Community Living was made up of more than 40 local associations and many of them ran segregated schools on a small budget. They demanded support and did so throughout the province, so politicians in many communities knew the groups and recognized the hard work they had done to provide education for children with disabilities.
3. The public education system had several people working with the family groups, who ran small segregated schools as a voluntary activity. This included Gordon Porter who, while he was principal of a mainstream school, was also a volunteer and president of the parents' association that ran the segregated school. Therefore, there were people within the public schools who were aware of the problems of special schools and who supported the change.
4. Additionally, many educators were willing to innovate and try new things, especially since the ongoing process of change made new resources available. More money was being invested to accommodate diversity across the board in New Brunswick. This also affected the decision to close, between 1983 and 1985, all the special education institutions that existed until then. As we have previously commented, about 25 institutions within three years closed their doors, as a result of the change in the educational model that consisted of reinforcing mainstream schools. The money from that closure was invested in better services in the local districts. In fact, much more money was needed and was allocated, to some extent, exceeding the budgets provided by politicians.
5. Ultimately, there were a handful of senior officials in the Education and Social Affairs departments who "took a chance," and provided critical leadership for the transformation. They bet on inclusive education when there were few examples in larger and wealthier parts of Canada.

It seems important to us to recognize the role that families with children with disabilities played in this process. In New Brunswick it all started with a group of partner

families, a community group that promoted the start of an inclusive program or school. This group subsequently applied to the Ministry of Education for a grant. At first it was a small amount, then half the cost of a teacher was subsidized, then the full salary of a teacher based on the following formula: 1 teacher for 5 students; 2 teachers for 11 students; 3 teachers for 18 students and so on. At that time there was no government money for facilities, furniture or supplies. So you could say that it was a model of "community charity." On the other hand, inclusive schools only existed in communities that took the initiative to organize them, therefore, not in all. The Ministry of Education did not initiate the provision of services, it was families through community initiatives.

It should also be noted that, little by little at the provincial and local level, the parent's association, "New Brunswick Association for Community Living", (NBACL),[40] was taking a more active and committed role in defending the model. The NBACL also worked with the national body, "Canadian Association for Community Living" (CACL),[41] to fund specialized training and training opportunities for teachers and families on the benefits of inclusion, which played an important role in the whole process and its results.

It is still striking that the equivalent of what might be called the governmental disability organization (representing different groups of people with disabilities), was not a significant force in the effort that was being carried out at that time. Everything indicates that they were more concerned with what might be lost from inclusion if resources were insufficient. They didn't object, but they weren't very helpful. It was at the end of the decade of 1980 when People First[42] became a real support in this effort.

Other important actors who played a role (not always in favor) of the process were the following:

– Mainstream teachers and teachers' unions: many teachers were part of the team working for inclusion. But the teacher's union did not support the project in its early days. They were concerned with what integration / inclusion would mean for classroom conditions. Their union representatives used inclusion as a way to pressure the Ministry of Education to advocate for the situation of teachers, demand classes with lower ratios, more teaching assistants, psychologists and psychologists, etc. They ultimately made the decision to support inclusion, but only if all of those issues were addressed. They focused (and continue to focus) on the challenges that inclusion poses for teachers.
– School psycho-pedagogical teams: according to Gordon Porter, it cannot be said that they were a support to the inclusive education process in its beginnings. At that time these services were not well developed, although changes and investments have been made to them over time. Collectively, these professionals approached inclusion with caution. Many had a clinical perspective and focused on the assessment of the individual and their impairments, and not on their potential development and learning if educated in mainstream classrooms interacting with their peers (Porter, 2008).
– University: Universities, in the early days, also did not contribute to the advancement of inclusive education in New Brunswick. At the time this process started in colleges

[40] See web : https://nbacl.nb.ca/
[41] Consult: https://cacl.ca/
[42] To learn more, consult: http://www.peoplefirstofcanada.ca/

there was a very poor approach to "special education". What was worked on was more oriented to learning difficulties and not to the students who had been segregated in special schools. The only university staff who provided real support was a visiting professor with some experience, funded for one or two years by the Ministry of Education. The French university was somewhat better in this regard, with several professors assuming some leadership, but they were not influential in the early stages of inclusion in New Brunswick.

The District and NBACL brought in academic experts from other provinces and the US who led workshops and training activities in the summer. According to Gordon Porter, this did help establish a solid foundation for the implementation of some useful strategies.

It should be noted that each community (English and French) interpreted the issue of student integration[43] differently (Dumas, 2006). The Francophone province recognized the possibility of including students at different levels, according to their needs, which was in direct contrast to current legislation. However, this problem was addressed in 1991 with the reaffirmation of the full integration of all students to the greatest extent possible.

The fundamental belief about inclusive education was that inclusive contexts, in which students with disabilities learn with the rest of their peers, are academically and socially more beneficial for all students involved. In New Brunswick, inclusive education means that teachers in the mainstream classroom take responsibility for all the students in their class regardless of their differences. However, classroom teachers do not act alone. There is a support network for them, as will be shown later. In addition, in this inclusive education model, families and the entire group of students in the class must be seen as a natural part of the support team.

3.4. Planning, strategy and leadership

As Porter points out, "being inclusive and staying inclusive" was the long-term goal he set. In the beginning, most of the planning that was carried out was for the short and medium term. First, they had to develop a plan to ensure that the first steps they were taking towards inclusion were successful. Failure was not an option and these first steps were essential. Accordingly, they had to solve the immediate problems that arose and it was necessary to ensure that they did not overwhelm the teachers. There was a lot of support and coordination among the professionals in the New Brunswick school district. The Ministry of Education also supported him, both at a conceptual and budgetary level.

As stated in Porter and Richler (1991), the "The Special Committee on Social Policy Development of the New Brunswick Legislature" issued a report on the "Review of School Integration" in October 1989. The report's recommendations are summarized as follows:

---

[43] Until 1993, the different provinces generally spoke of integration, but as of 1994 (probably due to various influences, including the Salamanca Declaration (UNESCO, 1994)), the expression, inclusion. We have respected this duality of terms by using the expression integration when they are references or analyzes relative to the period prior to 1994. See, https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/mackay/AppendixK.pdf

– The province should reaffirm its commitment to Law 85, which ordered the integration of children with special needs into the mainstream school system.
– The Minister of Education should clarify differences over the interpretation and implementation of the regulations and issue "clear directives to all school boards".
– The Minister of Education must immediately give the school Boards the funds they need to comply with the requirements of the Act.
– More training should be provided to teachers in teaching exceptional children, and universities should provide more training in their educational programs.
– The Minister of Education should provide leadership by emphasizing the successes and positive points of integration.

On the other hand, as part of this process, very special attention was paid to the teacher training in critical areas. This was a medium-term job. Universities made a commitment to this and, for which, they received financial support to hire new faculty, at least for a period of time. However, in Gordon Porter's opinion this was not a very successful initiative. From his perspective, along the lines of what has been stated above, the College of Education at the University in New Brunswick did not take a critical role in the transition to inclusion.

In one of the leading districts, training sessions for the "Methods and Resource Professors" were first held for two days a month in the afternoon, from 1984 to about 1995. Subsequently, they were held one day a month. All teachers attended these sessions, in which aspects related to the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively with all students were discussed. At some point there were invited experts but, in most cases, these sessions were based on joint reflection and sharing the expert knowledge of the team members. The consistency and frequency of these sessions made a real difference in the efforts that were carried out in each school. The result was a sense of mission and loyalty towards the task of supporting inclusion. Other districts did similar things, but in larger cities it was not systematic at all.

As Gordon Porter points out, an important element of the strategy developed had to do with including special education teachers / assistants from the special schools that were closing, to the so-called common learning environment, that is, the mainstream classrooms. In this regard, the first thing to note is that all special school teachers had the same basic training as mainstream school teachers. Therefore, they had the necessary certification for, if necessary (as it happened), those who wanted to, could move to the role of mainstream teaching staff. Some opted for this change very early, for example, those who were nearing retirement. But most went on to become "support teachers" in the regular school in their first year or two.

To do their job well, the youngest asked for extra hours to be teachers in mainstream classes; they recognized that they needed mainstream teaching experience to be credible as "support teachers." Most of those who made this decision remained in this role.

Porter notes that New Brunswick was in an expansive stage at the time. They were incorporating a lot of support teachers. Setting up coinciding templates: a) former special education teachers; b) method and resource teachers who worked with students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools; and c) newly hired support teachers.

Over time, a critical number of support teachers were trained so when a school had an opening for a support teacher, the district principal and Director of Student Services had the opportunity to identify the best candidates for the position, from the

point of view of their interest and aptitude to work with other teachers, which was the model to be implemented. As expected, over time, a high number of these support teachers were able to apply for jobs as principals and assistant principals, which was a very good way to prepare them for inclusive leadership in their own schools.

Many efforts were made to help teachers develop diverse competencies to work with all students. Thus, for example, in New Brunswick the concept of "multilevel teaching" was developed in the absence of a model that was considered adequate in the literature of the time. This is important because, in terms of inclusive pedagogical practices, the 1990s saw a radical change in pedagogy in New Brunswick schools, which began in the late 1980s. New Brunswick faculty already stated then the need for "multilevel teaching": teaching focused on the class as a whole, but with different levels of participation in terms of conceptual content and skills. This change also included a renewed emphasis on school communities, and a holistic approach to individuals as students (Porter and Richler, 1991).

These practices were aimed at promoting student-centered teaching and curricular differentiation, with greater recognition of diversity of all kinds in a classroom, by definition, heterogeneous. According to Gordon Porter, teaching methods tailored to the individual needs of students helped address the diversity of the student body. At this time, educational legislation already existed to ensure the inclusion of all students and, in parallel, pedagogical transformations, such as those mentioned, were becoming increasingly conducive to the educational inclusion of all students in New Brunswick. Let us remember that in 2000 the Department of Education published a guide with resources to help students considered to be in difficulty ("Resources for Assisting Struggling Learners"),[44] which included differentiated teaching, multilevel teaching, the use of ICT and the importance of multiple intelligences as resources to attend to diversity.

Along these lines, a lot of work was also carried out on "cooperative learning", taking as a reference the model of the Johnson brothers (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1984). Likewise, other programs were developed to strengthen teacher training, for example, the so-called "Teachers Helping Teachers",[45] a model for the development of strategies based on the strengths of the school and its teachers. Most New Brunswick schools were able to use this approach to support teachers.

Schools were also expected to develop a plan to address ways to improve inclusion, and in 1994 the province developed and encouraged the use of the framework provided by the report that we alluded to earlier; "Best Practices for Inclusion" (Department of Education, New Brunswick, 1994). This report outlines the planning process for the transition to inclusive education. It establishes that entry into the mainstream system is facilitated through consultation with families, the Department of Health, community services, etc. Additionally, it notes that faculty, administrators, families, and students will work together to ensure that the transition from one class to another, or from one school to another, is done effectively, with the best interests of the students in mind.

The transition to secondary education is considered in a systematic way and proposes to work together with the different professionals in post-secondary education,

---

[44] https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/Inclusion/ResourceForAssistingStrugglingLearners.pdf

[45] You can check the details of this program: https://inclusiveeducation.ca/2018/02/22/teachers-helping-teachers-a-30-minute-problem-solving-model/

such as job coaches, counselors and community groups, to ensure that, when leaving secondary education, there are new opportunities. Finally, it states that schools will provide a variety of work experiences that facilitate the transition for students to adult life and employment. This entire transition process is guided by another document published in 2001 "Resource for the Transition of Students with Exceptionalities from School to Work or Post-Secondary Education and Adult Life",[46] by the New Brunswick Department of Education.

Another factor to consider in understanding the strategy and achievements in New Brunswick was the size and complexity of the political and bureaucratic system. The New Brunswick system was small, which made the process easier. A few key leaders could make a significant change and leadership was key throughout the process as we will point out later. In Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, it was much more difficult, and this may be one of the factors that limited the progress of this process in these places.

The existence of long-term leadership in the process was key to the transformation we are talking about. Ultimately, success was largely a matter of distributed and sustained leadership, with many opportunities for many key players (education professionals, family and family representatives, as well as New Brunswick politicians) to be accountable and feel they motivated the process.

Leadership appeared at three levels. First, there was the leadership of the parents' organization that focused on the set vision and goal and maintaining the expectation of change. At the provincial level, there was a large leadership team during the 1980s. That leadership materialized in Gordon Porter's participation as president of NBACL from 1981-83, later replaced by a secondary education administrator from the French part of New Brunswick. For example, these leaders were integrated into the school system where they were also advocate leaders for parents, as were many others. There were also parents who worked in other fields and who had credibility within the sector. These leaders were not seen as politically radical, but sensible people with reasonable expectations. This leadership was maintained throughout the 1980s.

Second, was the leadership of the Department of Education. Here there was also constant leadership, more in the Anglophone system than in the Francophone, but the official positions of the Ministry applied to both. The Vice Minister of the English system was particularly important, in addition to having a lot of experience in the education sector and not coming from a medical or clinical approach when defining the needs of students, she changed the name and focus of the "Special Education Sector" to "Services for Students".

Third, there was a large investment in training and capacity building, which can be interpreted as leadership by the teachers themselves. The province allocated a significant amount of funds for workshops, seminars, school visits, summer workshops, and more. The NBACL often hosted these events and brought in prominent advocates and scholars from other parts of Canada and the United States. At this point, New Brunswick faculty and leadership teams had many options to train around inclusive education.

Lastly, another characteristic of the time was the training of school directors and Methods and Resource teaching staff, on what was called to be a new function of the "old" special education teachers in mainstream schools.

---

[46] https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/Inclusion/ResourceTransitionStudentsWithExceptionalitiesFromSchoolToWork.pdf

As for the communication strategies, different kinds were implemented to inform the general public, create awareness and information campaigns. They varied over time (diffusion in newspapers, documents, videos, etc.) and at different levels (in districts and by the Ministry of Education).

At the local level, the district in which Gordon Porter worked (Woodstock), conducted a campaign to disseminate positive or success stories through local newspapers. These stories were personalized for a specific school, a specific student and their classmates. This was done consistently over several years, both during and after the implementation process.

Short documents were also prepared at the district and provincial level. For example, in the district in which Gordon Porter worked, they edited a video entitled "A Chance to Belong", which showed the experience of three students and their families. Along these lines, the Ministry of Education also produced several videos.

How did you work with the families in the face of the disappearance of the special education schools?

As Gordon Porter points out, there was no other option before the decision to close special education schools. However, each district and school drew its own path and the speed of the transition varied between districts and schools (Bélanger andGougeon, 2009). If families were concerned about the response their children would receive at school, the school proceeded with caution, developing an individual step-by-step plan, ensuring that parents were informed and involved in the process. In this plan, an important consideration that varied, depending on the case, was the time that the student spent in the so-called "Support Rooms / Classes". In any case, several school districts did not encourage the student to spend a lot of time in these types of classrooms, unless they really needed to. But regardless of good intentions, in some schools there were boys and girls who did, in fact, spend a great deal of time there.

In summary, as a whole, the strategy followed can be seen not as the result of a specific plan previously designed and then implemented; rather it was an effort or development responding to the reality of each moment, implemented and consolidated over time.

Ultimately, the New Brunswick initiative shows a combination of a top-down approach to change and vice versa. In this way, we find that:

– The idea of inclusion came from a few "elite" members, both from the education sector and from groups defending the rights of families, as we have already seen (Moliner, 2006).
– These people got support from the family movement. They knew that something different was needed to meet the needs of their children, and they trusted these representatives to define the goal.
– Education professionals were able to develop some innovative programs that demonstrated that integration / inclusion could work.
– These representative members acted together to set things in motion and later those with the most influence provided the necessary support.

Precisely the issue of support, understood in a broad sense of the term, as in the rest of the cases studied, has been a strategic element in this process.

3.5. Supports and resources

In terms of professional support, all schools were provided with support resources to deal with the "natural proportion" of boys and girls with disabilities in the area served by the school. This was done without the need to justify this allocation based on the number of students with special needs enrolled in the school, a different strategy from that followed in Spain, where the distribution of resources is based on the number of students recognized as having special educational needs.

In accordance with Law 322 of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development of New Brunswick, passed on September 17, 2013, the inclusion support network was made up of professional teams and profiles indicated below (for further description, broad composition, functions and organization see "The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development", 2014). It should be noted that support was organized at different levels: first at the district level through to the District ESS, and then at the school level:

– District Education Support Service (District ESS). Led by the Director of Education Support Services. The purpose of this team is to support the "School-Based ESS Teams". The District ESS Team is made up of district education support teachers (*PMR*, literacy, numeracy, French) subject coordinators, psychologists, speech therapists, social workers and other district staff who support the School-Based ESS Team (see below). The work of the district staff is coordinated through the respective schools. Where appropriate, this includes coordination with the Integrated Service Delivery Child and Youth Development Team.
– School-Based Education Support Service (ESS Team). This is the central core of the support system in New Brunswick. It is a team led by the school principal that helps classroom teachers develop and implement instructional and / or administration strategies and coordinate support resources for students with diverse educational needs.
– In addition to school administrators, the team consists of Education Support Teachers and other staff members whose primary role is to strengthen the school's capacity to ensure all students learn. The composition of the team is determined by the size, level and local context of the school. This team meets regularly, preferably once a week, but at least every 10 days.
– The main professional profiles of this team / support service at each school are:
  • Educational Assistant. Parallel professionals who work in the public education system to help teachers respond to the learning and personal needs of students.
  • Education Support Teacher (EST). Accredited teacher who works in the public education system to support classroom teachers in the development, implementation and evaluation of instructional strategies to ensure student success in learning, as well as to provide direct instruction to individuals or small groups of students when necessary. *They are specialists in different subjects*: Literacy, Numeracy, Guidance or Autism (ESTs)These professionals must dedicate a minimum of 60% of their time directly to support and *collaborate with* classroom *teachers*. A maximum of 25% of the time in direct instruction or intervention with small groups of children, and occasionally, with individual students, and a maximum of 15% of their time in administrative tasks directly associated with supporting teachers and students.
  • Guidance Counsellor: contributes to the education of students in inclusive schools and classrooms through the implementation of the Comprehensive and Develop-

mental School Counseling Program.[47] There are multiple objectives pursued through this function, from support or "coaching" to teachers in aspects of students' social-emotional development, to promoting positive behavior of these through specific intervention programs, such as the "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)".

- On the support team created by the "The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014)", in addition to those mentioned, it also explicitly included:
  - School Intervention Workers (SIWs): play a valuable and vital role in helping students successfully to access curriculum and services, while learning in a positive, safe, and supportive environment.
  - Professionals for the improvement of the "First Nation" collective ("First Nation Enhancement Practitioner")[48] They play a valuable role in helping students from the Indigenous communities of Canada, primarily located in the three aforementioned territories.
  - Apsea / Apsea Itinerant Teacher: They contribute to the education of students with sensory impairments in inclusive schools and classrooms.
  - Related Service Providers: speech therapists, school psychologists, school social workers, occupational therapists and physical therapists.
  - Subject coordinators.
  - *First Nation* coordinators.
  - School Directors: District Education Centers.

Although the policy on *Early Childhood* was not *sensu stricto*, in the beginning, a significant part of the process towards the policy of full inclusion followed in NB, was then and remains now aimed at ensuring an inclusive education system quality, nourished by well-articulated strategies for the early detection of developmental difficulties or disorders, as well as for its comprehensive and continuous care, especially within the framework of an intervention model based on family participation.

In this regard, for *Early Intervention* in NB, we currently find the *Early Intervention Program* which offers services aimed at families of children from 0 to 8 years of age who have a higher risk of developing developmental delays, and which is governed by specific standards,[49] provides screening, evaluation, intervention, and case management services to families, and connects families to other helpful resources when intensive intervention is not recommended.

There is a Family and Early Childhood Agency, which is part of each community's early childhood networks. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development contracts these services with 7 approved Early Childhood and Family Agencies that are located in each community and operate under non-profit management. There are 3 French-speaking agencies and 4 English-speaking agencies. They start from the approach that children under 8 years of age, at risk of developmental delays, require effective and timely interventions and, therefore, the intensity of an intervention will be proportional to the degree of assessed need.

---

47 For a description of all the roles see, : http://www.gnb.ca/0000/publications/ss/NBSchoolCounsellingREV.pdf

48 The "First Nation" has been commonly used since the 1980s to replace the terms "Indian Band / Reserve".

49 See: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/ELCC/ECHDPE/EarlyIntervention.pdf

The Early Intervention Program is not required; therefore, family participation is voluntary. The goals of the program focus on healthy growth and development, quality parent-child interaction, and family well-being through voluntary home visits, among other activities. The model builds on the critical elements of *Healthy Families America*, which provides a competency-based framework for intervention and assessment. Family and Early Childhood Agencies must offer diverse and complete services, among others we can find: child-parent attachment, group support for parents, creative outreach, home visits, school transition activities, early evaluation, direct evaluation. They also develop concrete goals and indicators to facilitate an understanding of child development. There is also a specific Early Care service for boys and girls with ASD.[50]

3.6. Curriculum Development Measures

It is necessary to highlight the important role of the *Personalized Learning Plans (PLP)* in articulating with equity the presence, learning and participation of each student. In accordance with Policy 322 and the Provincial Guidelines and Standards (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015), in the case of educational planning for students with diverse learning needs, the Personalized Learning Plan has a fundamental role to ensure the response of the school to the needs of the student.

A PLP is considered necessary when a student experiences difficulty for a long period of time and does not make progress despite the additional support provided by a teacher on a regular basis. When the classroom teacher or parent suspects that a PLP may be necessary for a student, they contact the school's Educational Support Teacher, and the planning process begins.

Together they do a careful evaluation of the student. If deemed appropriate, they are referred to the school's support team, the ESS ("Educational School-Based"). If everyone agrees that a PLP is necessary, the superintendent authorizes it.

Once it is decided that a PLP is necessary, a planning team is formed with all the people who have a role in the student's day-to-day life. This includes leadership teams, classroom teachers, Educational Support Teachers, Educational Assistants, along with the family and the student.

The Education Support Teachers (EST) are generally responsible for ensuring that all team members who have participated in the plan have the necessary information for the proper development of the program for the student. The EST also facilitates team meetings, organizes other meetings, provides information to all who need it, monitors interventions to ensure they are implemented as planned, and reviews the student's progress in conjunction with the classroom teacher / subject.

In collaboration, practical strategies, objectives, expected results, goals and educational supports are identified, which aim to ensure that the student is successful in learning, that it is meaningful and appropriate, as per their individual needs. Significant support personnel, if any, who may be involved are detailed in these plans. These would include Educational Assistant, speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, Educational Support Teachers-Autism, among others.

---

[50] For more information on this service see: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.13836.html

Ultimately, the process must be professional and collaborative, and the result must be a plan that is clearly related to the decisions that the teacher makes about teaching and the student's daily learning in the classroom (Muñoz and Porter, 2018).

In 2014, as we have commented previously, the functions and strategies to be followed by the school support teams "School-Based Education Support Services Teams" were established. This document sets out the *Response to Intervention* (RTI) model.[51] It is a model to improve the educational results of all students through the exhaustive monitoring of their individual progress and the use of data to make informed and rigorous decisions on educational needs, as well as on the educational actions that this demand.

In the context of NB, three concepts are receiving increasing attention to help ensure "quality education for all". These concepts are Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which we have talked about previously, *differentiated instruction* (DI) and progress monitoring (with a specific type called *response to intervention* -RTI) (Hutchinson, 2017: 5). Below we briefly explain what each of them consists of and their implication in the inclusive school model.

RTI is a framework that focuses on both prevention and intervention. It aims to provide high-quality instruction and intervention to meet the needs of all students. The *Response to Intervention* is generally described as a three - tier model that includes instruction and academic and behavioral interventions: Tier 1, the whole class; Tier 2, small group interventions; Tier 3, intensive interventions.

RTI is a flexible framework and allows for the movement of students between different levels. Progress is closely monitored and decisions about instructional needs are based on data collected from the ongoing formative assessment.

RTI is combined with the principles of Universal Design for Learning, which are defined in Policy 322 as follows:

> a set of principles for classroom instruction and curriculum development that give all students equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides strategies for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone. This flexible approach to learning can be customized and adjusted for individual students.

Another of the fundamental strategies in the NB model is *Differentiated Instruction* (DI). Differentiated instruction is a strategic way to meet the needs of a greater number of students in the classroom. It is a way of allowing each student to achieve specific learning outcomes through a variety of activities in a shared learning environment (Hutchinson, 2017; Policy 322; Porter and Aucoin, 2012; Tomlinson, 1999, 2001). Tomlinson (2008), further specifies the benefits of differentiated learning by stating that in differentiated classrooms, teachers provide each individual with different ways of learning in the most effective way possible, considering that the "learning profile" of each student is unique. These teachers believe that expectations for students should be high. They ensure that all students, both struggling and advanced, exceed their own expectations. Hutchinson (2017) establishes 10 principles under which differentiated teaching

[51] For an explanation of the model: https://www.understood.org/es-mx/school-learning/special-services/rti/understanding-response-to-intervention

must operate, among them we find the use of respectful tasks, consider the perspective of all students, flexible and heterogeneous groupings, use of texts at various levels, offer varied response formats and different options, make connections between what they know and what they are learning, involve everyone, recognize everyone's learning, as well as various evaluations so that everyone can show what they have learned.

Finally, in relation to the issues of accreditation and evaluation of student learning, it is important to highlight some relevant aspects. In NB when elementary school students finish, they graduate to the next educational level directly. Additionally, all students receive the same certificate upon graduation from high school.

In terms of learning assessments, there are 2 important aspects to consider:

– The Personalized Learning Plan is used as a reference for the general evaluation, taking into account whether the objectives agreed in the PLP have been achieved. Under Policy 322, a one-time version of the New Brunswick High School Diploma must be awarded to students who successfully complete a program of study prescribed by the Ministry. This includes the completion of a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP).
– The student will have a transcript that identifies the courses in which they participated. In grades 11 and 12, the system is based on "credits" by subject, very similar to college programs. There are some required courses, and the rest are options that the student selects based on interest or some other factor.

3.7. Evaluation of the process and results

As for the impact and results that have been generated by the process towards a more inclusive education in Canada, different studies have been carried out over the years (see in particular Porter and Aucoin, 2012). Among the studies that show the benefits of inclusive education, the one carried out by Timmons and Wagner (2010) should be highlighted. This work has had the potential to positively influence policy makers and public perception on the value of inclusive education. The data collected for this research study is derived primarily from the 2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), a post-census survey of persons with *disabilities*. PALS provides a wealth of information on this situation of children in Canada. All survey results are based on family perceptions.

Analysis of the data revealed that families reported that their children with *disabilities* enjoyed better overall health, progressed very well in school, interacted very well with their peers, and had higher expectations in inclusive school settings than in " medium or low inclusive settings." This positive association was consistent, regardless of the type and intensity of the support required by these students.

According to the authors of the work, without ruling out the difficulties associated with the inclusion process, the fact that students with *disabilities* are educated in inclusive environments, where their diversity is accepted and valued, means making a difference in the lives of them all, and potentially having a positive impact on their health.

In relation to what happened specifically in New Brunswick, we can find different works in which information was collected on general or specific aspects related to the process, delimiting strengths and barriers and, based on which, recommendations have been made to improve it. For example, in the case of teachers and their training needs,

we find works supported by the Department of Education itself, such as Scott and Compton (1996), Scott and New Brunswick Dept. of Education (1997), or Scott (1998, 1999, 2001).

Regarding the evaluation of the process, we found studies of different scope. For example, case studies such as that by Bélanger and Gougeon (2009), which analyzed schools in different provinces, including New Brunswick. In two schools in the province of New Brunswick (in the French-speaking part), they found a set of factors that were identified as keys to the inclusive education process. Thus, at the *Bon Accueil* school, the following aspects were highlighted: a) the relationship and participation of the families in the center, an "atmosphere of open doors"; b) the involvement of the local community as a resource to promote the full inclusion of students (job search, use of community services…); c) the accessibility of the school; d) the existence of individualized support plans and e) the human and material resources to develop and promote this full inclusion of all students.

The school promoted values of belonging, safety and responsibility, quality of life and respect. While some teachers expressed reservations about applying inclusive practices, they often referred to the lack of resources to do so and not inclusion as a goal. Available resources were used to the fullest extent, including time management. In terms of human resources, the role *of the Methods and Resource Teacher* (MRT) was considered by many to be key, as well as the teacher's aide, to the successful implementation of inclusion in a school.

Other studies have been developed at the provincial level. On the one hand, it should be noted, due to the role it played in promoting the changes that were being introduced, the study published in 1989 by the Special Committee on Social Policy Development of New Brunswick Legislature, "School Integration Review", whose recommendations we have already collected in the section on Strategy and Leadership Planning. This report was published after five weeks of public hearings on school integration, during which the twelve-member committee visited sixty-three schools and heard more than 250 statements submitted by parents, faculty, administration, school boards, and other citizens.

Along these lines, another study that has had a wide impact is the one already mentioned by Porter and Auco in (2012), "Strengthening Inclusion, Strengthening Schools: a report of the review of inclusive education programs and practices in New Brunswick schools". This report responds to the request by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development to conduct a review of the current situation of inclusive education in the province of New Brunswick. The Minister appointed Gordon L. Porter to lead the review process with the help of Angela AuCoin. The aim was to make recommendations to improve the development of inclusive education for all New Brunswick students. The ultimate goal was to strengthen New Brunswick's public education system by developing an updated action plan for the implementation of the MacKay Report. From this report, 12 areas of action were derived around which action plans and specific recommendations were designed: leadership, roles and responsibilities, instruction and learning, professional learning, collaboration structures, equity, financing and responsibility, personalized learning plans, positive learning environment, higher education, alternative education and conflict resolution.

As can be seen from the analysis carried out, although there are many steps taken in NB schools to ensure the success of all their students, without exclusions of any kind, improvements are still needed in different areas such as those indicated in the

report. But this itself is a reflection of what we understand by *process* when we speak of inclusive education (IBE-UNESCO, 2016).

3.8. Final thoughts

According to the reflection carried out by Porter and Richler (1991), regarding the keys that facilitated the process of transforming the education system and schools in order to be more inclusive -with the change that this also implied for special education schools, we identified four central elements:

A. *Vision.* To achieve a systemic transformation, it is necessary for all those involved to develop a shared vision regarding what inclusive education is and how each and every student can benefit from it (Porter and Towell, 2017).
The fundamental reference for New Brunswick and other Canadian provinces for the entire process has been the defense of *human rights* and as such has been present in the speeches of all the people who were involved in the process, from political leaders, to families, associations, even teachers, albeit with different intensities, passion and conviction. For this, leaders, both from the administration and from the school, must be trained and prepared to argue and show the benefits of inclusive education.
In order to build this shared vision among the entire community, it's been important to devise and sustain awareness-raising, aimed not only at the educational field but also at public opinion in general (sharing successful experiences, inspiring practices…).

B. *Legislative framework.* The development of an educational policy based on regulations consistent with the established vision, which, among many other aspects, must include a broad and consensual definition of Inclusive Education.

C. *Support.* As is clear from the title of the report by Porter and AuCoin (2012), strengthening a mainstream school is strengthening inclusion. One of the central keys of the process has been building *support networks* for teaching performance and in the school environment. (Belanger and Gougeon, 2009).
   - Support networks, understood in a broad and systemic way that include both the school's professionals, as well as the students, families and professionals and community services.
   - For this, *leadership* at different levels (from administration to families) has proven necessary. In this framework, the management team has an important role as referents who must assume the leadership of the transformation process for the schools (Porter, 2011). But, understanding this from a distributed leadership that, as such, knows how to take advantage of the potential of the different members that make up the school community.
   - The involvement of families, as well as ensuring continuous dialogue, the flow of information and the transparency of the process has been fundamental. This, in turn, implies taking care of the families in this process (from the development of action plans to decision-making in all aspects that have to do with their son or daughter).

- In the same way, it has been and is strategic to have the support and participation of the entities that represent the different groups of people with disabilities (Moliner, 2008).

D. *Innovation*. Understanding inclusive education as a process of continuous review and improvement of the inherited school system, but also from the perspective of "getting started", of not waiting to have all the resources that ideally make it possible and optimizing the existing ones. Which is not to say that these are not important and necessary.
An innovation linked to processes is evaluation and delivery of recommendations associated with action plans. Make evidence-based decisions to make recommendations, act and re-evaluate (see, for example, the report by Porter and AuCoin, 2012). Innovation has been linked to a great concern to take care of teacher development and provide different resources and strategies aimed at developing an *inclusive pedagogy* (Florian and Linklater, 2010).

In conclusion, the case study of New Brunswick, shows that it has been the needs of students and their rights, and not the needs or concerns of educational institutions (mainstream or special) that have motivated, oriented and sustained this difficult but necessary initiative, in which, the values of equity and the *recognition of the right* to inclusive education have shown, and are showing, a good (although not perfect) correlation in the daily life of schools.

3.9. References

Ainscow, M., Dyson, A., Goldrick, S., & West, M. (2012 *). Developing equitable education systems*. Abington, Oxon: Routledge.

Bélanger, N. and Gougeon, NA (2009). Inclusion on the Agenda in Four Different School Contexts in Canada (Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Québec). *Research in Comparative and International Education,* 4 (3). https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.2304/rcie.2009.4.3.289

Booth, T. and Ainscow.M. (2015). *Guide for Inclusive Education. Developing learning and participation in schools*. Madrid: OEI / FUHEM [Trad. Cast. Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2011). *Index for Inclusion. Developing learning and participation in schools* (3rd ed. Rev.). Bristol: CSIE].

Bunch, G. (2015). An Analysis of the Move to Inclusive Education in Canada. What Works. *Interuniversity Electronic Journal of Teacher Training, 18* (1), 1-15. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.6018/reifop.18.1.214311

Calder, K. and AuCoin, A. (2018). History of Inclusive Education. In *Inclusive Education. Stories of success and hope in a Canadian context* (pp. 9-24). Ontario: Pearson.

Canadian Council on Learning (2009). *Does placement matter? Comparing the academic performance of students with special needs in inclusive and separate settings. Lesson in Learning*. Retrieved from, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519296.pdf

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014). *School- Based Education Support Services Topics to Support Inclusive Education*.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in New Brunswick (September 17, 2013 *). Policy 322*.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2015). *Guidelines and Standards. Educational Planning for Students with Diverse Learning Needs.*

Hansen, J., Leyden, G., Bunch, G., and Pearpoint, J. (2006). *Each Belongs. The remarkable story of the first school system to move to inclusion.* Toronto: Couto Printing

IBE-UNESCO (2016). *Training Tools for Curriculum Development. Reaching out to all Learners: a Resource Pack Supporting Inclusive Education.* Geneva: International Bureau of Education-UNESCO. http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/ibe-crp-inclusiveeducation-2016_eng.pdf

Florian, L. and Linklater, H. (2010). Preparing teachers for inclusive education: Using inclusive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning for all. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 40* (4), 369-86.

Hutchinson, Nancy L. (2017). *Inclusion of exceptional learners in Canadian schools.* Toronto: Pearson.

Lupart, J. and Webber, C. (2012) Canadian Schools in Transition. *Exceptionality Education International, 22* (2), 8–37.

MacKay, AW (2006). *Relier le soin et les défis: use notre potentiel humain. L'inclusion scolaire: Étude des services en adaptation scolaire au Nouveau-Brunswick. Fredericton, New Brunswick.* New Brunswick Department of Education.

Moliner, O. (2008). Conditions, processes and circumstances that allow progress towards educational inclusion: resuming the contributions of the Canadian experience. *Iberoamerican Electronic Magazine on Quality, Efficacy and Change in Education, 6* (2), 27-44.

Muñoz Martínez, Y. and Gordon L. Porter (2018). Planning for all students: promoting inclusive instruction. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* In press. DOI: 10.1080 / 13603116.2018.1544301

Porter, GL (2008). *Making Canadian Schools Inclusive: A Call to Action*. Education Canada, Printemps. Toronto, Ontario: The Canadian Education Association.

Porter, GL (2011). *School Principals: Leading the way to Inclusive Schools: Implementation Steps for Moving Forward. Fredericton,* New Brunswick: Canadian Association for Community Living.

Porter, G. and Aucoin, A. (2012). *Strengthening inclusion, strengthening schools: report of the review of inclusive education programs and practices in New Brunswick schools.* Fredericton: Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Porter, GL & D. Richler (1991). *Changing Canadian schools: perspectives on disability and inclusion*. North York: Canada, Roeher Institute.

Porter, G. and Towell, D. (2017). *Promoting inclusive education. Keys to transformational change in education systems. Inclusive Education.* Canada- Center for Inclusive Futures.

Scott, NH and Compton, E. (1996). *Report on the 1995-96 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick.* https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED403246

Scott, NH and New Brunswick Dept. of Education. (1997). *Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick, 1996-97 Report*. New Brunswick Dept. of Education, Fredericton. Https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet? Accno = ED415212

Scott, NH (1998). *Off to a Good Start: Report on the 1997-98 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick.* https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED426974

Scott, NH (1999) *Supporting New Teachers: A Report on the 1998-99 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick.* https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED437347

Scott, NH (2001). *Mentoring New Teachers: A Report on the 2001 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick.* https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED463280

Special Committee on Social Policy Development of the New Brunswick Legislature (1989-1990). *Report on the Review of School Integration. Special Committee on Social Policy Development of the New Brunswick Legislature.*

Timmons, V. and Wagner, M. (2010). *Inclusive education knowledge exchange initiative: An analysis of the Statistics Canada Participation and Activity Limitation Survey. Final report.* Retrieved from http://en.copian.ca/library/research/ccl/inclusive_edu_know/inclusive_edu:know.pdf

Tomlinson, C. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. (2001). *The diversified classroom.* Barcelona: Octahedron.

Tomlinson, C. (2008). The Goals of Differentiation. *Educational leadership: journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development,* 66 (3): 26-30.

Towell, D. (2019). *Advancing the journey to inclusive schooling Notes on developing strategies for achieving school transformation from within.* Center for inclusive future. file: /// C: /Users/CS.5021580/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/V4Y57E40/School%20transformation%20notes.pdf

4. *Case 3*. Italy

4.1. Some aspects to consider of the social and educational context of the country

Italy,[52] officially the Italian Republic, is a regional and world power, a founding member of the European Union, a signatory to the Treaty of Rome in 1957. It ranks 28th in the world (2017 report), according to the *Human Development Index*. With its capital city being Rome, its territory is divided into twenty regions formed and 110 provinces.

Its government is a parliamentary republic. Italy became a republic after a plebiscite held on June 2, 1946. On this occasion, for the first time, women were able to vote. Humberto II, former King of Italy, was forced to abdicate and go into exile. The Republican Constitution was approved on January 1, 1948.

In its Constitution, Italy declared itself "built on the Resistance." In other words, the liberated political forces that opposed Mussolini during World War II sought to elaborate a constitution that would be the antithesis of the fascist regime lived in and that, for this, would lay the foundations of a fully democratic country with a *strong concern for equality,* in clear contrast to many years of subjection and repression experienced. The following are excerpts from key provisions of the Italian constitution related to education that would later become the basis and legal support for the *School Integration*:

> *Article 3:*
> All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, regardless of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, personal and social conditions. It is the duty of the Republic to eliminate economic and social obstacles that impede the full development of the person and the effective participation of all workers in political, economic and social spheres, to ensure the freedom and equality of citizens.
> *Article 30:*
> It is the duty and right of parents to support, instruct and educate their children…
> *Article 33:*
> Art and science are free and teaching them is free. The Republic establishes general norms for education and establishes state schools for all types and grades …
> *Article 34:*
> Schools are open to all …
> *Article 38:*
> People with disabilities have the right to education and professional training.

[52] https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italia

Prior to its policy of *Integrazione Scolastica* (IS)[53] with regard to students with disabilities, it is appropriate to recall that in the 1960s, Italy underwent a prior process, which could also be called "integration". Many people, impoverished for multiple reasons, including the disasters of World War II, began a migratory movement from south to north and from rural areas to cities, in search of prosperity for themselves and their families. This migratory movement (in a country characterized by the existence of multiple dialects), forced the educational system to make decisions on how to respond in schools, to students who, being all formally Italians, did not speak the same language and who came to school with unequal social and cultural capital.

In these circumstances, Italy responded to the existing diversity by creating separate and differentiated classes; *known as "different classes".* In these classes all students were considered to have learning challenges, most of which were probably caused by the mismatch between the dominant school culture and the educational needs of students with a low sociocultural and economic standing. They were grouped together, as were their families.

Obviously, the response pattern with respect to students with disabilities could not be different. For this reason, numerous residential institutions, schools and special classrooms were created which, as in other countries, respond to a model between charity and rehabilitation. This model considered disability a *"personal tragedy" (Echeita, 2016),* in which families themselves and religious organizations, above all, were involved.

In the 1960s, Italy responded to the dilemmas of diversity in the classrooms with a system of segregation, both for socio-cultural and economic reasons, and in regard to disability (Giangreco and Doyle, 2012). However, this was happening in a country where recent history showed a strong and growing sensitivity towards unjust and discriminatory situations. This created a powerful spirit of denouncing inequality and segregation, not only in the school system, but also in relation to mental illness, whose most serious cases were then resolved through harsh internment practices in the sadly famous "madhouses".

Soresi, Nota, Sgaramella, Ginevra and Santilli (2013), point out that some researchers, including Soresi himself, actively participated in political battles and organized hunger strikes contributing to the emergence of a strong political and social movement focused on trying to guarantee the fundamental human rights that its Constitution proposed. This movement would culminate in the 1970s, with *"Integrazione Scolastica"*, on the one hand, and "*Democratic Psychiatry*", on the other.

A key figure, in the field of health, was the Italian psychiatrist Franco Basaglia,[54] who publicly denounced the deplorable and inhuman conditions of the asylums, founding, as we have just pointed out, the movement of "Democratic Psychiatry". His struggle to change the way of thinking about *mental health* (thinking in positive terms of *health* promotion, and not in negative terms of simply coping with the *disease,* in this

---

53 The term Integrazione Scolastica (IS) is preferred by many Italian academics to refer to the policy that we would call school integration, but which, where appropriate, has not been replaced by that of educational inclusion. They consider that the meaning of the term in Italian better reflects the educational principles and values that in other contexts are attributed to the concept of educational inclusion and should therefore not be changed. Obviously, there are also authors who advocate otherwise, that is, for the need to align with international terminology to use ("Inclusive education").

54 https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franco_Basaglia

case *insanity*) led later, to Law 180/1978, also known as the "Basaglia Law". This law was the first legal text worldwide that established rights for people with mental illnesses and that prohibited the internment of people against their will. The "Basaglia Law" stipulated the gradual but sustained closure of psychiatric hospitals and prohibited the construction of new establishments of this type.

The pioneering studies, at the beginning of the 20th century, of María Montessori and Giussepe Montesano, among others, also contributed to the foundation of the *Integrazione Scolastica*. These studies showed that boys and girls with various disorders or *disabilities* were potentially "educable", opening the door to their schooling, even if it was initially in specialized institutions.

Before entering into the process followed in Italy, to proceed with the closure of most of its special education schools within the framework of it *IS* policy, it is helpful to make note of certain elements of its school system in order to appropriately contextualize the analysis. For this we will rely, fundamentally, on the work of Giangreco and Doyle (2012).

Basic and compulsory education

Compulsory education in Italy is organized into three stages:

Age	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	19
Levels	*Primary school*						*Secondary I*			*Secondary II*	

Basic and compulsory education in Italy ranges from 6 to 16 years old. If students leave school at 16 without graduating, they can choose to work. In such cases, employers are required, by law, to provide a two-year career path in order to contribute to their vocational development.

Secondary School II, (with an approximate duration of 5 years, from age 15 to 19 years), is structured in three differentiated lines; (a) professional, (b) technical and (c) *Lyceum,* which can be classical, musical, scientific, linguistic or humanistic.

All (or almost all) students with *disabilities* who have completed primary education and Secondary School I continue with Secondary School II, as do students with intellectual *disabilities* or more complex developmental disorders. These students usually take, together with other classmates, the modality of Secondary School II called "*corsi di qualificazione professionale regionali*" (regional professional qualification courses). These courses, with a total duration of between one and three years, prepare students to carry out work activities in the mechanical, agricultural, electrical, graphic and textile sectors, etc. They take special care that the students have contact with the business world through internships. At the end of the training, depending on the objectives achieved, the students obtain recognition for their professional qualification or, instead, a certificate of attendance.

High school students have a weekly schedule of 30 hours. In this sense, it is significant to show that the legislation establishes a minimum number of hours per week for all students, but their families can decide if their son or daughter attends school the minimum number of hours established or more (24, 27, 30 or 40 hours a week), and if those hours are distributed from Monday to Friday or Monday to Saturday (which means that some students go to school for five days and others six). There are often

many options for schedules in one school. It is in these aspects that the educational centers and districts and provinces in which they are located have control.

A moderate percentage of high school students (II), who have extensive and widespread support needs, tend to spend less than the mandated 30 hours. These students might attend full-time one day a week and partially on other days (for example, 2 hours) in external services or centers that provide support only to students with disabilities.

Evaluation and accreditation

The Italian system, like the Spanish, has two types of accreditation upon completion of *Secondary School II*: a *certificate of schooling* that records the time in school, but does not accredit for subsequent studies, or a *high school graduate diploma,* that does qualify for higher education.

Since 1995 Art.15 of Ministerial Order n.80, differentiates the evaluation of students with sensory or physical *disabilities* from those with cognitive / intellectual disabilities. While the former is evaluated with the same criteria / standards as the rest of the students (with any access accommodations they may need), the latter are evaluated according to the criteria / standards established in their *Individualized Educational Plan* (IEP). We understand that it is, therefore, a scheme similar to what is done in Spain with an asterisk (*) that appears with the *adjusted grades* of students considered with special educational needs.

Transition to active adult life

For professional orientation, in Italy, they distinguish two types of students. The first includes those students with *disabilities* who, with the appropriate access accommodations, can achieve the same goals as the rest of their peers. The second includes students with intellectual *disabilities,* autism, personality disorders or other *disabilities* that greatly limit the student's achievement of the same goals compared to others (Vianello, 1999).

At the end of Secondary School II, for students in the second group, higher education is considered too demanding. In this sense, the experts consulted point out that it is positive to have a large number of alternatives that respond to the different levels of ability, possibilities, motivations and needs of the students (although they also believe that the current problem is that there are not enough resources to offer all students with *disabilities* the alternative that would be most desirable for him or her) (Vianello, 1999).

One of these alternatives is the "*cooperative sociali*" (social cooperatives). These coops arose in opposition to other institutionalizing / segregating options ("centri occupazionali" and "laboratory protetto"). In concept, these cooperatives should be inclusive work environments. However, in practice, there is great variability between the services and characteristics of the "*cooperative sociali*". Coops are called "integrated" when they host a similar number of students with and without *disabilities*. Furthermore, while some limit themselves to offering educational and care services, others have more desirable aspirations: preparing for inclusion in the world of work (Vianello, 1999).

They also have the *"*laboratory protetto*"* (protected workshops). They are centers, mostly managed by private institutions, that exclusively serve students with *disabilities*. They prepare students for very specific jobs.

Finally, they have "centri occupazionali" (occupational centers). These centers differ from the protected workshops in that they host students with *disabilities* who require widespread and extensive support. Sometimes, in the absence of the availability of other resources, they also receive people who would be better off in sheltered workshops or in social cooperatives. In these centers the main objective is not to facilitate work placements but to involve students in activities that promote their health (or prevent a deterioration of their situation).

All this tells us about a structure for the work placement of people with *disabilities* very similar to the one that exists in Spain.[55]

On the other hand, incentives aimed at companies to facilitate the inclusion of people with *disabilities* in the world of work are organized in different ways in the different Italian regions. In any case, Law 68 of 1999 describes the regulatory framework within which labor integration must be carried out. Below, we share some of the most significant extracts of this provision:

– Companies with 15-35 employees are required to hire a person with a disability.
– Companies with 36-50 employees are required to hire two workers with disabilities.
– Companies with more than 50 employees are required to have 7% of people with disabilities among their workforce.
– There will be an administrative sanction for companies that do not respect their employment obligations.

It should be noted that inclusion in the world of work for students with *disabilities* continues to be a challenge in Italy, especially when the youth unemployment rate for students in general is disproportionate (31.4% in April 2019) (Vianello, 1999).

Other organizational aspects

– Although many students attend schools near their homes, families have the option of enrolling them in other public schools of their choice.
– From the legislative point of view, *education laws have a state jurisdiction* and are applicable in all regions and provinces.
– In Italy, as in Spain, the teaching staff in public schools *are civil servants* and the system for providing placements in schools seems to follow a similar scheme to our "concursos de traslados" (contest for relocating competition), in their case on a provincial basis, although they can request to enroll in successive years in different provincial lists. In Italy, as in Spain, this system makes it difficult to have stable school staff and implement educational projects in the medium and long term, given the high mobility of teachers.
– On the other hand, in relation to support teachers ("Insegnanti di sostegno"), there is usually a singular rationalization that affects both their function and their stability. On

[55] https://aspadex.org/centro-ocupacional-centro-especial-empleo-empleo-con-apoyo/

the one hand, there are usually more places available for this type of teaching staff than for "mainstream teaching staff", which encourages their greater mobility. On the other, it is a fast way to reach the desired location and with its greater professional stability, because after working for 5 years as "Insegnanti di sostegno", they are preferred in contest for relocating competitions to be mainstream teaching staff.

– All teachers in a school, regardless of their role or function (tutor or support teacher - "Insegnanti di sostegno"), have exactly the same number of hours of teaching with students (22 hours per week in primary school and 18 hours per week in secondary school).

Resource distribution

Regarding resource distribution, the provinces receive from the state budgetary allocations, as per the number of male and female students considered *disabled*, to provide the necessary personal and material resources or accessibility. With these funds and with their own, the regions distribute resources autonomously according to the different situations of each school.

Schooling of students with disabilities

Given the *IS* policy that exists in Italy, the schooling of (almost) all students considered *disabled* takes place in mainstream schools, so there are no processes to determine their mode of schooling (segregated or mainstream), given that there is no such duality.

On the other hand, the recognition of the condition of "students with disabilities" is not carried out in the educational system, but within the framework of the national health system. This evaluation is based on the *International Classification of Health and Disability Functioning* (ICF), promoted by the World Health Organization (2001). It is the health professionals who determine whether or not a student has a *disability* and those who offer a functional diagnosis of said student. On the other hand, they coordinate with schools for the purposes of planning and monitoring the Individual Educational Plan "*Piano Educativo Individuale",* where the educational needs of these students are noted, a general education plan is set, an annual education plan is derived, and must be followed, and the supports required are established.

Specialized support services, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, or the like, are *not* part of the services provided by schools, but are offered by *outside providers or agencies.* These are usually provided to students who need them after school hours. In a small number of cases, according to Giangreco and Doyle (2012), Italian law allows - for students with more generalized and extensive support needs ("severe learning difficulties") - that such specialized therapeutic support services be provided during school hours (for example, early in the day), but outside the school. Everything indicates that the degree of coordination and collaboration between schools and these specialized agencies or services varies considerably from one place to another in the country.

4.2. *Integrazione Scolastica* in Italy

In Italy, at present, there is a residual number of Special Education Schools. The vast majority of students (approximately 99%) considered to have *special educational needs* ("*Bisogni Educativi Speciali,* BES"), which includes students considered to be *disabled*, but also others who have specific learning difficulties, are enrolled in mainstream schools, primary and secondary education. As in Newham and New Brunswick, we will not be talking about a process of transforming these special education schools into "resource centers", but rather closing them. Those that remain, with minimal exceptions, do not enroll students with *disabilities,* but are, above all, providers of specialized rehabilitation / therapeutic support services.

In Italy, the decisions that led to the *closure of special schools* were supported by arguments and reasoning based on ethical, political, social and legal aspects, over and above those of a pedagogical, psychological or educational nature (Soresi et al., 2013). They also occurred in a unique historical context with the existence of strong social values in favor of equality (Canevaro & de Anna, 2010).

The sources consulted coincide in stating that "first it was *a human rights issue,* but pressure from families and associations of people with disabilities also influenced." This consideration of a human rights issue was based on the Italian Constitution, in particular, in Art. 34, previously noted: "Schools are open to all." In addition, they emphasize that "the claim of families and associations was not so much the need to include students with *disabilities* in mainstream schools, but in those in their own neighborhood."

It is in this social, political and cultural context outlined in the first section of this case study, where the first and most important part of the process of *Integrazione Scolastica: Law 118 of 1971* was forged. This Law initiates a first *radical period* within this process that has been traditionally known as *Wild Insertion* "*Inserimento selvaggio*". This expression refers to the fact that between 1971 and 1977 the percentage of students with *disabilities* enrolled in mainstream education classes increased from estimates of 20-30% to more than 90%. This generated great challenges and difficulties for mainstream schools, because the change in the "location" of the students with the greatest difficulties was not accompanied by any type of support policies, transition plans or teacher training.

Now, it should be noted that this law did not "oblige" the "integration" of students with special educational needs into mainstream schools, rather it opened the possibility for families to make the "most convenient" decision.[56] Well, despite the difficult conditions for true integration, as has been pointed out, families, for the majority, opted for integrated schooling.

All this tells us there was a truly convinced society and families; in short, a very unique social context which, surely, today would not be the case. These families were, without a doubt, "very brave", but, above all, the facts suggest that they had a *strong ethical conviction* that this inclusive option was the best for their sons and daughters. The fact that it was not an imposed decision also contributed to the families feeling

---

[56] Section 18 (i): "Compulsory education must take place in regular schools, in public schools, except in those cases in which the subject suffers from a serious intellectual impairment or physical disabilities, so great as to impede or hinder the learning processes in the mainstream classroom."

responsible for the process and their willingness to accept the difficulties and agree on options or solutions to address the existing barriers.

Due to its influence on the rest of school policies and on societal ideas in general, there was special interest and relevance in the publication of the *Falcucci Document* (1975), a report prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Education based on a study on the situation of students with *disabilities*. This report constitutes the *Magna Carta* of the integration of students with *disabilities* in Italy and contains the inspiring principles of Law 517/1977 and Law 104/1992, as well as the foundations of what today we would call an *inclusive school*, such as.

a) the recognition of the status of "person" to the "disabled" child and being "the protagonist of his/ her own life",
b) the conviction that in them there are cognitive and relational potentialities that are often blocked by the schemes and by the demands of current culture, which reminds us of the social construct nature of *disability,*
c) the conviction that encouraging the development of this potential, of each child and each young person, is a task for which the school is responsible.

This document, in addition to its content, had great relevance at the political level since Franca Falcucci[57] (later to be Minister of Education), at that time, was a prominent member of the *Christian Democrats*; the political party then head of the government. The fact that support *for integration* came from a *Christian Democrat*, when a significant portion of special education schools were run by religious institutions, was a tremendously conducive circumstance for change. In any case, everything indicates that the integration policy was a globally accepted initiative, which is associated more with a progressive transversal movement in society than with a particular political party.

Some scholars have argued that this period of *wild insertion* was necessary ("traumatic but very helpful"). They allude to the fact that, if they had delayed the implementation until the plans and services, the teaching staff and in general the mainstream schools were prepared, the integration of all the students with *disabilities* enrolled in the SEC would never have occurred. In addition, they suggest that *wild insertion* forced school personnel to discover for themselves how to solve the new challenges they had to face and thus created the necessary conditions for further progress.

This challenging period stimulated the professionalism of the teachers and, with it, the innovation and improvement of schools from the point of view of their capacity to serve the diversity of their students. In this way, experiences and ideas were generated that, finally, were specified in a new Law that, now, had a clear framework and established the necessary support and measures to continue with the process for improving quality: *Law 517 of 1977.* With this law, the special schools and classrooms were permanently closed.

Although when viewed from a historical perspective, this period of *wild insertion* was ultimately *useful,* it should not be interpreted, in the opinion of the sources consulted, as the recommended path for those who now wish to follow a similar process. In this regard, they warned us that, for example, support professionals are an essential

[57] https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franca_Falcucci

resource in this dynamic transformation and that, also as it was in their case, it would have been very positive to have them on board from the beginning.

4.3. Planning and strategy

From the point of view of the *strategy*, it can be seen as a process that, in its beginnings, started *from the bottom up*. In other words, the movement was motivated by protests and social expectations, since the population as a whole seemed to strongly feel the need to carry out this process towards full inclusion; pressure that led politicians to take legislative action.

After this first period, the *Integrazione Scolastica* developed in Italy as a cyclical process from bottom to top and from top to bottom. In other words, the demands and needs felt by society led to laws (the 1977 and 1992 laws) that, in turn, promoted change. These changes led to the emergence of new needs that, again, ended in legislative measures. We are, in short, facing an interactive process with communication channels in both directions.

Everything points to the fact that the psychological, psychiatric, pedagogical and sociological culture of the moment ignited and sustained the *Integrazione Scolastica* process without a strong movement against or, in any case, without the significant voices against (especially of the supporters of SECs), or their underlying defensible reasons (economic interests). Arguably (almost) everyone agreed on the goal and simply had to row towards it.

In view of the available documentation, it should be noted that the planning process was initially non-existent, or very limited. In fact, the name, as we have indicated, given to the period between 1971 and 1977, "wild insertion", reflects the low level of planning of the initiative. The measures to support *Integrazione* came later, with Law 517, in 1977 and with other lower-level regulatory measures that were formulated after that as a result of accumulated experience and the needs felt by the schools and professionals.

In the opinion of Vianello, Lanfranchi and Onger, it was a process characterized by flexibility, in which "not planning" or "planning too little" at the beginning allowed for greater flexibility to the needs at each stage in the process. They note that the Integrazione was, and is, a process that was fed by, and today feeds, thanks to the daily practice in schools, the weaknesses and strengths of the measures they are taking.

In any case, the legislation has given so much leeway to schools that it does not seem that it can be said that there was a single strategy for all of them. Our informants indicate that the obligation of all schools is / was to offer an effective intervention, but that not all have approached the problems related to integration in the same way.

As for the communication strategy for closing the SECs, everything indicates that the community was mentally prepared for it and convinced. Thus, the governments of the day seem to have limited themselves to listening and formulating laws that responded to the demands and needs felt by society. In this sense, the governments involved did not have to be particularly careful about how to communicate their decisions, since they all understood that the proposed change was a human rights issue.

From another point of view, it can also be said that the integration process promoted a highly participatory and collaborative strategy, which led to, among other actions, the establishment of different networks of *interprofessional* and *interinstitutional*

collaboration (schools, social services, health services, universities, …), which contributed to the strength of the process (for example, through the preparation and monitoring of so-called IEPs, in which health services and schools are involved*)*. These networks -sometimes formal and others more informal-, beyond supporting the process, have fulfilled a beneficial observation and monitoring function.

Considering that almost fifty years later Integration has not been questioned in Italy (in terms of what it entails to educate students with more extensive or complex support needs in mainstream schools), it clearly says, regardless of successes or failures in their planning and development that it has not just been a passing initiative. Even so, as we will point out later, it still requires new and important advances to deepen its quality.

4.4. *Integrazione scolastica:* "full inclusion"?

For many years, Italy has reported almost 99% of students with special educational needs are educated in mainstream classes with the support of support teachers "insegnante di sostegno". The sources consulted indicate that approximately 1 or 2% of students who are not integrated in mainstream schools are, mainly, students who are deaf, blind or with very extensive and generalized support needs, associated with multiple cognitive, sensory and physical *impairments*. In any case, families seem to have *the last word* regarding the type of schooling they want for their sons or daughters with *disabilities*.

In Italian schools they do not have anything similar to our support classrooms for the schooling of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in preferential schools, nor does it seem that there are, *officially*, special classrooms in mainstream schools. We highlight *officially*, because some researchers (Anastasiou, Kaufman and Di Nuovo, 2015), have pointed out that they *do exist as a practice in use*, at least, in some schools, a fact that raises again the discussion about the quality of the process of integration / inclusion.

The presence of the few existing special schools is linked, in most cases, to the existence of *foundations* that, traditionally, played a role in the care of students who, at the time, could not attend mainstream state schools. They are foundations that also have considerable real estate assets. We understand that, of these schools, some maintain their schooling (welcoming 1/2% of students with *disabilities* who are not educated in mainstream schools) while others carry out, above all, rehabilitation activities (attending to students with disabilities the entire time they are not in mainstream classrooms).

Be that as it may, this fact is not of minor consideration, since it serves to raise in all starkness the question of whether the right to an inclusive education may have limits depending on the circumstances and / or personal characteristics of certain students (depending on the degree, type and intensity of the supports required). These cases, which we could call "extreme", reflect *the border* of our deepest beliefs and values, which have to do with the equal dignity and rights of all people, regardless of the help that some may need for their maximum development. It is a dilemmatic and complex issue that, for that very reason, does not have a simple answer, nor should it be based solely on convictions. It must also be remembered that rights are not absolute and that they may have limits, for example, when they interfere with other rights or due to

non-positive consequences, for the person or for others, as a result of their strict application.

These statistics should also serve to ask us what happens over the time when 98% of Italian students with *certified disabilities* (approximately 2% of the school-age population) are in schools and mainstream classes. The first question is to know what *percentage of the* school day *is* spent together by students *with and without* special educational needs. In this regard, it is important to highlight, as often as necessary, that for students with special educational needs, to be together, to access or be present where other students *without* special educational needs are and learn (classrooms, rest spaces, dining room, or sports spaces, as well as in complementary and extracurricular activities), it is a *necessary condition, although not sufficient* to begin to build an authentic inclusive educational experience. It is also obvious that in that school day you also have to consider the time that some students with *disabilities* need (probably outside the common spaces), alone or with others, to receive specialized / therapeutic support (physiotherapy, speech therapy, cognitive stimulation, etc.).

The truth is that in countries like the US, this percentage of *timeshare* is being used as an objective indicator of the quality of the inclusion process. In this sense, we speak of *full inclusion* when this shared time is at least 80% of the school day (Giangreco, Doyle and Suter, 2012). In the case at hand, some research (Canevaro, D´Alonzo, Ianes and Caldin, 2011, cited in Giangreco and Doyle, 2012), has begun to clarify that *only* 80% of the students with special educational needs (compared to 99 / 98% who are integrated), spend most of their day in mainstream classrooms. These data are based on a sample of 3,200 teachers who submitted self-reports.

4.5. Supports, resources and some curriculum development measure

Schools were not prepared before "transferring" the students from the special education schools to mainstream schools, but only once the students were already there. Some support measures taken to prepare mainstream schools and the educational system as a whole included the following:

a. Insegnante di Sostegno and other supports

- The *Insegnante di Sostegno* is a *specialized support teacher* who is assigned to support one or more mainstream classrooms where students with *certified disabilities*[58] are present. After the initial phase of the *wild insertion* (from 1977, because in previous years no measures were taken in terms of human resources support in schools), specialization courses were established for new *insegnante di sostegno,* who would welcome students with *disabilities*. Nowadays, the training of these teachers is the same as that of the rest of the teachers (graduates), with an extra period of training added.

[58] This expression of "students with certified disabilities" is somewhat gross and uncomfortable for us, in any case, we use it as a reminder that not all students considered to have special educational needs. ("Bisogni Educativi Speciali", BES), have a recognized disability "certified" by the health team in charge of that function. On the other hand, the ratio for the endowment of these insegnanti de sostegno, at least in the beginning, is (or was) conditioned to the number of students with disabilities and not to that of BES.

- By design, the intention is for the *insegnante di sostegno to* be a support for the entire classroom where there is a student with a *disability* and, in a broader sense, for the entire school, rather than being exclusively assigned to an individual student.
- These professionals, as noted in the first section of this case study, are assigned the same amount of instructional time as their general education counterparts. The remainder of their working hours is spent planning, preparing educational resources, collaborating with team members, and doing other tasks.
- Although their main role is to support the classroom teacher in teaching, as well as taking special care that the student with *disabilities* is included*,* they also (usually) provide support to other students, such as those considered to have special educational needs without a "certified disability" (Giangreco and Doyle, 2012). D´Alessio (2008), denounces that, in reality, teachers frequently rely too much on *insegnante di sostegno*, and don't take responsibility for students with *disabilities.*
- The central government distributes to each province one *insegnante di sostegno* for every 138 students (1/138) or one for every two students with disabilities (1/2), which is the national average. These *insignante di sostegno* are redistributed among the schools in a province by the Provincial Office. For this, the Provincial Office takes into account both the type and degree of support required by students with *disabilities* enrolled in their schools, as well as the general needs of each of the schools (taking into account their cultures, policies, practices, architectural conditions, sociocultural level of the population they serve, etc.).
- Vianello, Lanfranchi and Onger point out that these professionals have been and are the main point of support for the *Integrazione Scolastica,* having approximately one *insegnante di sostegno* for every seven mainstream teachers.
- It's significant to note that in Italy there *is no* professional figure like our "orientadores" (*counselors),* because, among other reasons, the evaluation for the recognition of *disability* for educational purposes is carried out by health centers. In any case, our sources pointed out that, according to our explanations about their functions, they would be a very welcome asset in Italy, provided that they were focused on the tasks of psycho-pedagogical counseling. In this sense, there's no need for more diagnostic evaluation outside the school system.

b. Educators (Educadores)[59]: This is a *non-teaching* professional profile whose role is to provide direct support to a student with the aim of improving their personal autonomy (not only do they work in the school environment, but they can accompany the student after the school day).

- It is important to bear in mind, once again, that in Italy political decisions regarding education are centralized by the State and, therefore, all Italian regions have the same professional profiles to support the *Integrazione Scolastica*. The biggest difference in relation to the support profiles has to do with the number of *educators,* because while the *insegnante di sostegno* are hired by the state, *the educators* are hired from the different Italian regions. There are regions that hire a great many educators and others that do not.

---

[59] We understand that it is a professional profile similar to the Educational Assistant in Spain. http://auxiliareducativo.com/

c. *Special Educational Needs Teacher Coordinator:* This is a mainstream teacher from the school who, in addition to teaching, is assigned the task of coordinating responses for students with the greatest support needs. The sources consulted indicate that it has had a positive impact on the integration process of students with *disabilities*.

d. Law 104/1992 promoted the creation of school integration work groups "Gruppi di lavoro per l'integrazione scolastica". These are *informal support teams or networks*, made up of a wide variety of people with different levels of responsibility (class, school, local administration, representatives of the Ministry of Public Instruction), which were created to work collaboratively in order to improve education, the integration of students with *disabilities,* as well as with other external entities (health agencies, etc.) to achieve program agreements "accordi di programma". The functioning and vitality of these support groups is uneven between the different provinces.

e. *Reducing the ratio, financing and improving accessibility*
- Law 517/1977 established the measure of "no more than 20 students in a class that includes a student with a *disability"*.
- More funding was mobilized for schools based on a) the project proposal to improve the *integration* process, and b) on agreements between the local network of support organizations, NGOs, and other schools.
- Plans were put in place to improve the accessibility of buildings, classrooms and educational services, with the aim of eliminating existing architectural barriers.

f. *Some measures in institutional and professional development*
- Initially funds were given to schools to organize *training courses* for mainstream teachers, however, the sources consulted indicate a significant improvement in the *initial training* of new teachers (both mainstream and support), when conducted by their university.
- In addition, *Territorial Centers for Integration* (CTI) were created to provide advice and training to individual schools and teachers on issues related to the development of inclusive policies and practices. These are local centers that serve large areas. They are made up mainly of *insegnante di sostegno* who dedicate themselves exclusively to this work - without hours of direct teaching with the students.
- Also *Technology Center for Provincial Territorial Support*. (CTI). Like the CTIs, they offer training and provide advice to schools, but in this case, in relation to the purchase and use of specific technology (for communication, mobility or independent living) for the students who need them.

g. *Curriculum development measures*
- We do not appreciate that singular curricular measures have been taken for students with special educational needs, but it seems that, as in Spain, *the curriculum for these students is rather parallel to the mainstream one.*
- In any case, to ensure that their educational needs are met, students with a *disability certificate* must have an *Individualized Educational Plan* (IEP).[60] As we

[60] https://www.superabile.it/cs/superabile/istruzione/scuola/piani-educativi/piano-educativo-individualizzato-pei.html

understand it, the IEP is a document that contains all the educational and didactic activities planned by the operational disability work group "*Gruppo di lavoro per l´handicap operatio*", made up of professionals devoted to different services (e.g., social services, teachers, etc.), in collaboration with the family. This plan, which is actually a collaborative commitment of the educational stakeholders involved, is reviewed and updated each school year. The IEP takes special care of the *transition to adult life* through internships, which are initiated at the end of the first level of secondary school, specifically oriented to help the student in making decisions about the academic or professional training path that best suits their potential and interests.

b. In addition to the measures mentioned, which were taken over time, there were various initiatives organized independently by many schools, which served as a stimulus and example for others. A point of reference over the years has been the *National Office of Specialized Teachers* (CNIS),[61] a non-governmental association that was created in 1983. Since then, they have developed and published multiple resources, organized seminars and training courses, and implemented many other activities aimed at supporting teachers and schools to provide a better education to all students.

4.6. Monitoring, evaluation and results

In 2005 the *National Office of Student Registration* was established[62] (a national observatory), which began working in 2010. It is a platform in which schools record data related to their students. It serves the Ministry to evaluate the school system and make decisions at the political level. Each school only has access to the information related to its students. Experts in this *Office* use this data, to establish demographic statistics related to the development of school integration.[63]

The Agnelli Foundation[64] is a non-profit independent research institute that works in the area of social sciences. Since 2008, the foundation has concentrated its resources and activities on education (school, university, lifelong learning) as a decisive factor for economic progress, innovation, social cohesion and personal development.

This foundation is concerned with improving public education and studies its three fundamental dimensions: *equity* - in terms of everyone's right to education; *effectiveness* -in terms of quality of learning-; and *efficiency* - in terms of better use of resources. It proposes to contribute to the renewal of teaching through experimental projects involving schools, students and teachers. In addition, it dialogues with families to provide information to support their educational choices. Finally, it promotes a closer relationship between the world of education and work.

Obviously, the subject of "*Integrazione Scolastica"* has been the focus of interest and attention of a large group of university researchers. To give an account of the work

---

61 http://www.cnis.it/

62 https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/anagrafe-nazionale-studenti

63 https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/sostegno-alla-disabilita

64 https://www.fondazioneagnelli.it/2014/03/01/rapporto-sulla-scuola/

of all of them exceeds the possibilities and purposes of this report, a good part of which has a focus on the analysis and evaluation of this important educational policy in Italy. In any case, it is worth noting that we are talking about a very difficult research task, since the multiplicity of variables involved in any educational process makes the design of rigorous and representative studies, that could yield comparative and concise results, very complex, if not almost impossible.

Without wishing to be exhaustive, in addition to the references already made throughout this report, we note the book edited by Vianello and Di Nuovo (2015), entitled "*What is an inclusive school in Italy?*".[65] It denounces that there has been no scientific verification of the validity of the Italian initiative and presents some of the most significant research carried out in this regard. Without intending to make a broad statement, we present some of the contributions presented throughout its different chapters, which present opinions of teachers, classmates and families about integration / inclusion and that, in some way, inform us on the impact, results and value of this policy:

– The vast majority of participants expressed very favorable opinions regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream schools and classrooms.
– Regarding the effects of inclusion, compared to segregation in special education schools, the data shows that the former improves school performance, development and social acceptance of students with *disabilities*. This situation is preferred by both people with *disabilities and* students without *disabilities*.
– *Incidentally,* the book also includes some research that highlights the ideal characteristics of an inclusive class, including:
  • A welcoming attitude from the teachers.
  • The presence of support professionals.
  • The development of flexible, participatory and active methodologies.
  • Evaluation planning that evaluates the progress of all students.
  • Talk about needs for educational support and not diagnostic labels.
  • Support teachers should *not* be solely responsible for the students with *disabilities*. Mainstream teachers should count on their support and must feel responsible for all their students.
  • It is not enough to only intervene in the school. Families must have the support of external professionals and interventions must be coordinated.
  • It is necessary to adopt a perspective that involves families and takes into account the future of students after school.
– As expected, the research also reveals the existence of critical elements or barriers that, in Italy, hinder progress towards *quality inclusion*. Five of them are reviewed:
  • The exclusion of students with *disabilities* from mainstream classrooms, for some hours.
  • The experiences of *micro exclusion* within the mainstream classroom.
  • The presence of so-called "support classrooms" or "workshops" for students with *disabilities,* a euphemism that seems to hide the "reappearance" of segregation schemes within mainstream schools, through what would become quasi "special education classrooms".

[65] https://www.erickson.it/it/quale-scuola-inclusiva-in-italia

- The restrictive role that the support teacher sometimes takes (when focusing exclusively on supporting students with *disabilities*).
- Opinions and attitudes of some teachers still in favor of segregation.

There are also studies that would point in the opposite direction. Such as, the work of Begency and Martens (2007), cited by Anastassiou, Kauffman and Di Nuovo (2015), which points out that "the studies analyzed show that educating students with disabilities, totally or partially outside of mainstream schools, has had a positive impact on these students in most of the measurements of the dependent variables evaluated" (the translation is ours p. 89).

Delving into the positive assessment of this process, Vianello and Lanfranchi (2015), on the occasion of their participation as authors who replicated ("di *scussants")* the work of Anastassiou, Kauffman and Di Nuovo (2015) - which proposed an analysis very critical and with many *shadows* regarding the policy of *full inclusion* carried out in Italy -[66], have synthesized the results of the debate between prominent Italian researchers, sponsored by the Italian magazine, "*Life Span and Disability*",[67] on special education or mainstream education. Next, here are the main conclusions:

– The *academic results* in inclusive contexts are better or equal to those achieved in segregated contexts
– The *social development* (social interaction, friendships, self - concept, happiness, and social acceptance) is greater in inclusive classes.
– In no case did the peers of students with intellectual and developmental *disabilities* learn less.

In addition, they indicate that studies carried out in Italy since 1977, in relation to *the attitudes* of peers, teachers and parents towards the inclusion of students with disabilities, highlighted the following (p.455):

– Teachers who have had direct experience of working with students with *disabilities* tend to have more positive attitudes toward inclusion than teachers who have not had such experiences.
– In relation to the attitudes among students without *disabilities,* the studies tend to highlight that the experience of inclusion helps them, insofar as it enables them to have a better understanding and acceptance of individual differences.
– The studies carried out with the families of children and adolescents with *disabilities* confirm that inclusion brings more advantages than disadvantages for students without *disabilities* and that their own children have more to gain than lose. Consequently, they judge their education in mainstream schools as preferable to education in special schools.

In Italy, as in the rest of the countries that are seriously committed to developing more inclusive educational systems, with a vision to ensure this process, *much remains to be*

---

66 "The case of Italy suggests to us that there may be some level at which the focus on full inclusion become ineffective, if not counterproductive, in providing appropriate education to students with disabilities" (p. 440)

67 http://www.lifespan.it/

done (D'Alessio, 2008; de Anna, 2010). Results that, obviously, go much further than mere *integration or placement* in mainstream schools and classrooms of a student body traditionally segregated in special education schools and classrooms. In Italy we have seen the beginning and development of a process with almost fifty years of history behind it, but, far from, its successful end (Soresi, et al., 2013).

Nobody questions this analysis. What is appreciated are very different perspectives regarding the future and the steps to follow. On the one hand, there are those who seem to imply that *it has gone too far*, and that the option of inclusive schooling, especially for students with the most severe intellectual and developmental *disabilities*, is counterproductive. In this opinion, what should be done is a *recalibration of* this commitment towards less radical proposals. Those who think this way seem to rely on the great distance they consider existing between the ideology of inclusive education and the available empirical evidence.

It should not surprise anyone that those responsible for education in countries that have barely advanced in this direction see these reflections - let us say *criticism of inclusion* - as a relief and a justification for the maintenance of a *status quo* of segregation and discrimination that does not seem to bother them. What others would say (Powell, Edeistein and Blanck, 2015), is that these reactions clearly show the *resistance* of those who have established the law on their side and *the power* that emanates from it to *not change an exclusive educational system* towards, basically, a greater *democratization* of school education.

On the other hand, there are those who are also *critical,* but not of the vision of an educational system that is committed to "*full inclusion"*, but critical of the lukewarm policies of investment, support and existing curricular development, in their respective countries, which keep the mainstream educational system far from being adequate to offering a quality response for *all* students.

Analyzing the case of Italy, we have been able to verify, in the consulted sources, both positions among Italian colleagues. This leads us to deduce, a lesson learned, that each country, region or district with responsibilities in this process will have to take a position on the matter; place themselves somewhere on the spectrum defined by the opposite poles of this dilemma according to their convictions and the reality of their social, political and economic context. For this, the case of Italy has provided, in our opinion, important elements of judgment, taking into account its history, circumstances and the scale and continuity of its *Integrazione Scolastica* policy.

Everything would seem to point out that this process, in Italy, is *irreversible,* but in view of the economic and social crisis that the country is going through, it is not unreasonable to think otherwise. The rise of racist, supremacist and exclusionary positions (for example, towards the migrant population that we see in Italy and other European and non-European countries) does not bode well for simply trusting that progress towards a more inclusive and fair society (which is the goal towards which inclusive education systems are oriented) is linear and cannot go backwards. On the other hand, the paradox of a system that can be quite inclusive with respect to its *nationals students* with *disabilities* can also be, at the same time, much more reluctant and distant, educationally and socially speaking, with respect to the situation in recent years as a consequence of the large contingents of migrants (children and adolescents among them) who arrived in Italy from Middle Eastern countries such as Syria.

All of this highlights the need for a *systemic perspective* - that is, to review the school system as a whole to move through inclusion-, within factors of the *new ecology*

of learning (Coll, 2016). However, an *ecological perspective* is also essential (the "ecology of equity" that Ainscow, Dyson, West, and Goldrick 2013 tell us about), which should lead us to pay attention (and make proposals for change), regarding what is happening "beyond the school gates"; that is, in the social, economic, political and cultural framework in which it exists.

4.7. References

Ainscow, M, Dyson, A., West, M. and Goldrick, S. (2013). Promoting equity in the school. *Journal of Educational Research*. Monographic issue, 11 (3), 44-56.

Anna, L. (2010). School integration in Italy. *Journal of Inclusive Education,* 3 (1), 111-117.

Anastasiou, D., Kauffman, JM and Di Nuovo, S. (2015). Inclusive education in Italy: description and reflections on full inclusion. *European Journal of Special Needs Education,* 30 (4), 429-443.

Begency, J, C. and Martens, B.K. (2007). Inclusionary education in Italy: a literature review and call for more empirical research. *Remedial and Special Education,* 28, 80-94.

Canevaro, A. and de Anna, L. (2010). The historical evolution of integration in Italy: some witnesses and considerations. *European Journal of Disability Research,* 4, 203-216.

Canevaro, A., D'Alonzo, L., Ianes D. and Caldin, R. (2011). *L'integrazione Scolastica nella Percezione degli Insegnanti.* Trento: Erickson.

Coll. C. (2016). The personalization of school learning. What, why and how of an unavoidable challenge. (La personalización del aprendizaje escolar. El qué, el por qué y el cómo de un reto insoslayable). In J, M, Vilalta *Challenges of education in Catalonia* Barcelona: Jaume Bofill Foundation.

D´Alessio, S. (2008). "Made in Italy". *Integrazione Scolastica* and the new vision of inclusive Education. In L. Barton and F. Armstrong, (Eds). *Policy, Experience and Change.* (p.53-72). Baltimore V: Springer.

Echeita. G. (2016). *Education for inclusion or education without exclusions.* (*Educación para la inclusión o educación sin exclusiones*). Madrid: Narcea.

Ferrari, L., and Soresi, S. (2006). Facilitating school inclusion. *International Journal on Disability and Human Development,* 5, 323-332. doi: 10.1515 / IJDHD.2006.5.4.323

Ferrari, L., Sgaramella, TM, Ginevra, MC and Santilli, S. (2013). Inclusion in Italy: from numbers to ideas… that is from "special" vision to the promotion of inclusion for all persons. *Life Span and Disability* XVI, 2, 187-217.

Giangreco, MF (2009). Opportunities for children and youth with intellectual developmental disabilities: Beyond genetics. *Life Span and Disability,* XII (2), 129-139.

Giangreco, MF and Doyle, MB (2012). Integrazione Scolastica in Italy: a compilation of English-Language Resources. *International journal of whole schooling, 8* (1), 63-105.

Giangreco, MF; Doyle, MB, and Suter, JC (2012). Demographics and personnel service delivery data: implications for including students with disabilities in Italian schools. *Life Span and Disability,* XV, (1), 97-123.

World Health Organization, WHO (2007). *International Classification of Functioning, Health and Disability.* Geneva; WHO.

Powell, J. Edeistein B. and Blanck, JM (2015). Awareness-raising, legitimation or backlash? Effects of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on education systems in Germany, *Globalization, Societies and Education,* DOI: 10.1080 / 14767724.2014.982076

Reversi, S., Langher, V., Crisafulli, V., and Ferri, R. (2007). The quality of disabled students' school integration. *School Psychology International,* 28, 403-418. doi: 10.1177 / 0143034307084132

Soresi, S. Nota, L. Ferrari, L., Sgaramella, TM Ginevra, MC and Santilli, S. (2013). Inclusion in Italy: From numbers to ideas… that is from "special" visions to the promotion or inclusion for all persons. *Life Span and Disability,* XVI, (2), 187-217.

Scruggs, TE, and Michaud, K. (2009). The "surplus" effect in developmental disability: A function of setting or training (or both)? *Life Span and Disability,* XII (2), 141-149.

Tanti Burlò, E. (2010). Inclusive education: a qualitative leap. *Life Span and Disability,* XIII (2), 203-221.

Vianello, R., and Lanfranchi, S. (2009). Genetic syndromes causing mental retardation: Deficit and surplus in school performance and social adaptability compared to cognitive functioning. *Life Span and Disability.* XII, 41-52.

Vianello, R., and Lanfranchi, S. (2011). Positive effects of the placement of students with intellectual developmental disabilities in typical class. *Life Span and Disability:* XIV, 75-84.

Vianello, R. and Lanfranchi, S. (2015). Looking beyond the alibi that not everything functions perfectly in Italy: a response to Anastassiou, Kauffman and Di Nuovo. *European Journal of Special Needs Education,* 30 (4), 454-456.

Vianello, R. and Di Nuovo, S. (2015). *Quale inclusive school in Italy?* Trento: Erickson.

Waldron, NL, and McLeskey, J. (2010). Inclusive school placement and surplus / deficit in performance for students with intellectual disabilities: Is there a connection? *Life Span and Disability,* XII (1), 29-42.

Zambelli, F., and Bonni, R. (2003). Beliefs of teachers in Italian schools concerning the inclusion of disabled students: A Q-sort analysis. *European Journal of Special Needs Education,* 19, 351-366.

5. *Case 4*. Portugal. A national process that began in the 21th century

5.1. Introduction

As indicated in the introduction, the report corresponding to this case study has been carried out mainly through information provided to the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Spain by those responsible for the Ministry of Education in Portugal. Likewise, the participation of *FENACERCI*, *Federaçao Nacional de Cooperativas de Solidariedade Social*,[68] which convenes associations for the defense of the rights of people with intellectual *disabilities*. The official documents and the rest of the sources used appear in the text itself.

Some relevant aspects of the social and educational context of the country

Portugal, officially the Portuguese Republic, is a member country of the European Union, whose form of government is a parliamentary republic. Portugal is ranked 42nd on the Human Development Index (HDI) and is ranked 19th for the best quality of life.

The administrative organization of Portugal is structured around its 18 continental districts and its two autonomous regions (Azores and Madeira). These are subdivided in turn into 308 *concelhos* or municipalities. It is a centralized administrative structure.

The population of Portugal in 2017 reached 10.31 million inhabitants. Portugal was a country of emigrants until 1970, which made the population barely grow. However, the arrival of democracy and the loss of the colonies turned the situation around and Portugal experienced a demographic boom. Since then, the number of immigrants has not stopped increasing and thus, between 1980 and 2001, the number of legal immigrants on Portuguese soil has multiplied by 6. This has meant that the population has not aged as much as in other northern countries and the center of Europe. The average life expectancy, in 2016, was 81.13 years. Immigrants account for 8.55% of the population. The main countries of origin being Angola (18.19%), Brazil (15.62%) and France (10.57%).

As for the approval of the *Organic Law of the Educational System* in 1986, pre-university studies in the Portuguese educational system are organized into three levels: Preschool Education (3-6 years old) which is not compulsory; Basic Education, which comprises three cycles, the first four years (ages 6-10), the second two years (ages 10-12) and the third two years (ages 12-15); Three-year Upper Secondary Education (ages 15-18) which includes different types of studies:

– Humanities and Social Sciences
– Science and Technology
– Arts
– Professional training

[68] https://www.fenacerci.pt/

Education in Portugal is compulsory and free for the school age group between 6 and 18 years of age, which is one of the longest periods among OECD countries. Investment in education reaches 5.1% of GDP. State funded education is attended by the majority (82.5%) and is well valued by society.

Initial teacher training lasts five years. Support teachers must subsequently complete two more years of specialization (Esteves and López, 2005). Likewise, a wide variety of on-going training activities have been established, as well as initiatives to evaluate teachers' performance. Portugal has undergone continuous improvement in the PISA assessments, ranking above the OECD average in all tests, and it is worth highlighting the fact that the differences between the scores of students of immigrant and indigenous origin have decreased from 59 to 17 points, the OECD average being 43 points.

One of the most interesting initiatives that the Education Administration launched in 2012 was the *Program to Combat School Failure and Drop-out,* which focuses on students at higher risk and is implemented, among other actions, through individualized programs. The dropout rate was 34% in 2008 and decreased to 14% in 2016.[69]

The Ministry also introduced an important change to make the curriculum and methodologies more flexible in order to innovate teaching and learning processes and provide a better response to all students. The definition of the *student's profile* at the end of compulsory education focuses learning on essential competencies and retaining the curriculum. On the other hand, throughout all schooling there is a special emphasis on training for autonomous, committed and critical citizenship.

5.2. The periods of inclusion in Portugal

During the 1960s, students with *special educational needs* were enrolled in care institutions that depended on the Ministry of Social Affairs. For historical reasons, in the 1970s, parent associations created a large number of non-profit special education schools, fully funded by the state. Despite this, Portugal has had extensive experience, since the 1970s, in integrating students with hearing and physical disabilities into mainstream schools.

The 1980s marked a change of course. The *1986 Education Law* established that special education should preferably be organized according to different integration models in mainstream schools, responding to specific needs and with the support of specialized professionals.

In 1991, *Law 319/91 of August 23,* which regulates integration, extended compulsory education to all students, including those with a *disability.* In 1994, Portugal signed the Salamanca Declaration promoted by UNESCO.

In the 2000s, several important laws promoting inclusion were passed: *The Accessibility Law* (2006), *the Anti-Discrimination Law* (2006), *the Law on Special Individualized Support* (2008) and the *Early Childhood Intervention Law* (2009). Likewise, Portugal joined as a state party to the international Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006, ratified it in 2009 and reaffirmed it in the "Lisbon Declaration on Educational Equity" in 2015.

---

[69] https://www.elconfidencial.com/alma-corazon-vida/2018-03-15/exito-educacion-portugal-espana_1535548/

But the final milestone is the 2018 *Inclusive Education Law*, which was drawn up in a long four-year process. In 2014 Parliament created a commission that was responsible for a report on the situation of Special Education. In 2016, Parliament created a new commission to prepare a report, in this case to draft an *Inclusion Law*, which was debated in 2017 and approved on July 6, 2018. The involvement of Parliament in this process allowed for a general commitment of all parties to the project.

5.3. Strategy and planning

After the ratification of the CRPD, one of the key aspects of the process from a global improvement and school innovation perspective, was the investment made in inclusion measures in benefit of all students.

On the other hand, families and the associations that represent them have always played and continue to play a fundamental role in the process and have been very active in demanding more resources for their children. These families and associations also supported the transformation of Special Education Schools into *Resource Centers for Inclusion*.

The progress made is largely based on the assumption that inclusion is not only a principle but a right, as proposed by international organizations, and is framed within the more general right to education and equity as essential elements.

The principles that guide current educational policy in Portugal are based on three dimensions:

– The ethical dimension related to the principles and values that are in its genesis.
– The dimension related to the implementation of educational policy measures that promote and shape the action of schools and their communities.
– The dimension of educational practices.

The 2018 law is based both on the children´s rights and on research and practice. Inclusion is defined in terms of values, policies and practices that substantiate the right of each child and each family, regardless of their abilities, to participate in a wide variety of activities and contexts, as active members of the family, the community and society. The goal of inclusion is supported by a sense of belonging and affiliation, positive social relationships and friendships, as well as the learning and development of each child's full potential.

The Inclusion Law is a piece of a broader policy that affects the entire system and all students. It is specified in the student body profile at the end of compulsory education, as per the new curricular regulations, also published in 2018, which recognize the autonomy of teachers and schools and the necessary flexibility to develop the national curriculum. The extension of compulsory education to 12 years is postulated as a key element to achieve an educational level that facilitates social integration for all students. Incorporating the principles of equity and inclusion into educational policies implies recognizing the benefits of student diversity, regardless of their personal characteristics and family circumstances. For this reason, *the systems of categorizing students were abandoned,* including the label of *special educational needs* and the educational system was cleansed of discrimination and segregation based on diagnosis or clinical labels. The Law establishes the necessary measures to respond to all students (students

whose mother tongue is not Portuguese; students with social problems; students with emotional problems; students with very complex needs). Among the basic objectives of the system is increasing the capacity of the system to improve early identification and intervention, greater confidence in the capacity of schools and teachers to offer greater support to students who require it and the provision of resources in inclusive contexts and cost-efficient education.

The 2018 Law adopts an approach focused on the school and its overall improvement, which means giving them autonomy, ensuring adequate leadership and placing most of the material and personal resources at school. It also implies incorporating families into school decisions and activities, as a fundamental part of the learning of their sons and daughters.

Universal stakeholder participation is also considered one of the key factors in the process. Families and their associations played a fundamental role, as has already been pointed out, and the Ministry maintained an on-going dialogue with them. In the Commission created by Parliament in 2014, inclusion specialists, representatives of Higher Education, private institutions, cooperatives, teachers, school management teams, people with *disabilities* and other representatives of recognized prestige in the world of education were also present. Likewise, the debate on the bill that took place between July and September 2017 had high participation of all these groups. Many of the contributions from this debate were actually incorporated into the final version of the Law.

On the other hand, many seminars, conferences and workshops were held, promoted by the Ministry, municipalities, schools and parents' associations. In addition, the Ministry launched an extensive ongoing training program throughout the country, with the aim of preparing professionals for the implementation of the inclusion process.

These measures, together with the provision of the resources to mainstream schools, detailed in the following section, and the establishment of sector resources that are also referred to in this section, helped develop and consolidate the objectives of the Law.

On the other hand, actions were carried out with the special schools, which in 2008 became *Resource Centers for Inclusion (RCI)*. A national network of RCIs was established through an accreditation process, thereby making specialized resources available to mainstream schools. Before 2008, approximately 11,000 male and female students were enrolled in special education schools. Currently this number has been reduced to less than 500 and these students are older (near 18 years old) and have serious health problems.

A majority accepted the process, however that does not mean that there hasn't been some resistance from some special education schools with "specific interests".

Those at the top in the Ministry of Education in Portugal issued a positive assessment of the progress made since the 1990s. They consider that the process, although it has not been easy, has had a majority social acceptance, which does not mean that there has not been some resistance by some special education schools. They also point out that the legitimate discomfort of families of children with special educational needs, as well as that of certain educators who have invested a large part of their lives and efforts in this area and have had to adapt to change, has produced certain resistance. However, they conclude by emphasizing that the will of the Portuguese Government is clear: the right to inclusive education must prevail.

5.4. Curricular measures

Remember that the process in Portugal has moved towards mainstreaming inclusive education and is based on an educational approach in which the whole school is responsible for attending all the students, opposite to the medical-rehabilitative model. It is therefore *a model focused on the dynamics of the classroom, on the flexibility of teaching and learning methods and involving families and the community.* Specific measures are framed within this approach to guarantee students with *disabilities* the right to inclusive education. One of the fundamental characteristics is the initial assumption that any student may need, throughout their school journey, support learning measures.

First, it is important to highlight that the student needs evaluation is based on *defining the type and degree of support that each student needs* and therefore goes beyond the medical-rehabilitative approach based on the definition of the impairment. It is about establishing a continuum in the measures to adjust teaching for all students. However, the regulations distinguish two types of *adaptations* that can affect the different elements of the curriculum and that have a clear similarity with the existing model in Spain (Martín and Mauri, 2011).

– *Non-significant curricular adaptations*. These refer to curricular management measures that do not compromise the foreseen learning of the curriculum. They may involve adaptations in the objectives and contents, prioritizing or sequencing them, or introducing specific intermediate-level objectives that allow achieving the global objectives and the essential learning necessary for the development of the competences listed in the student's *Exit Profile* upon completion of compulsory education.
– *Significant curricular adaptations*. These refer to the curricular management measures that have an impact on the foreseen learning of the curriculum, which require the introduction of other substitute learning and global objectives that allow the development of the necessary competences to improve autonomy, personal development and interpersonal relationships.

To make this inclusive approach possible, certain methodological strategies are implemented, such as *multilevel curriculum* and *Universal Learning Design* (ULD), which constitute complementary tools that attend to the diversity of the students.

In the *multilevel curriculum,* different intervention levels are distinguished varying in the type, intensity and frequency and are established by the students' response to them.

Level 1, universal measures, refers to practices and services available that promote successful learning of all students. Therefore, they do not depend on the identification of specific intervention needs, but instead are general measures for all students. Screening-type actions would be specific to this level since they allow for identifying students at risk and priority areas of intervention. Universal measures refer to actions such as:

– The pedagogical differentiation
– Curriculum enrichment
– Promotion of prosocial behavior
– Intervention in academic or behavioral goals in a small group.

Level 2, targeted measures, including practices or targeted services to students at high risk of school failure or who show a need for additional support. These measures may

involve, for example, small group or short duration interventions. Examples of this level of support would be:

– Non-significant curricular adaptations
– Psycho pedagogical support
– The anticipation or reinforcement of apprenticeships
– Tutorial support

Level 3, additional measures, refers to more frequent and intensive measures that take into account the specific needs and potential of each student, and are to be carried out individually or in small groups and which generally require longer periods of intervention. This level may require specialized assessments. Such actions could be:

– The adaptation of the time to learn the subjects
– Significant curricular adaptations
– The Individual Transition Plan
– The development of structured teaching methodologies and strategies
– The development of personal and social autonomy skills

Regarding Universal Design Learning, the administration gives guidance to teaching staff and those responsible for the school's general planning, to apply the three principles of universal access to motivate, represent and express knowledge.

Defining support measures for learning and inclusion has to be carried out by teachers, with input from students' parents or guardians, as well as other professionals who intervene directly with them. The final decision on the type of measures to be implemented is the responsibility of a *Multidisciplinary Team,* which must analyze the results of monitoring and evaluating each student. The *Multidisciplinary Team* presents the Management Team with a proposal that has to be accepted by the latter.

In the case that only universal support measures are needed, it is not necessary to prepare any document. The information is returned to the tutor of the group in which the student is enrolled, who will then inform the parents or guardians and coordinate the implementation of the planned measures.

When the *Multidisciplinary Team* considers it is necessary to carry out selective or additional measures, a *technical pedagogical report must be prepared* and if the adaptations are significant, an *Individual Educational Program (IEP)* is also necessary. The *rapporteur* will have to submit it to the parents or guardians for approval and signature and when possible, to the student too for their approval and signature.

For students with special physical or mental health needs, whose success is compromised in the learning process, in addition to the *Report* and the *Individual Educational Program, an Individual Health Plan is developed in coordination with* the IEP, by the school health team, a resource of the National School Health Program.

Likewise, when significant curricular adaptations are carried out, an *Individual Plan for Transition to Active Life (IPT),* which compliments the *IEP* and must be defined three years before the end of schooling, also needs to be prepared. It is an open document, constantly updated based on the student's experiences and on the principle of self-determination. The *Multidisciplinary Team,* in collaboration with the family, has to establish this plan. The time spent by teachers and other professionals in the preparation of all these documents is considered non-teaching work time.

The regulations based on the 2018 *Inclusion Law* also devote much attention to the way in which the assessment of learning, promotion and graduation decisions should be carried out. As such, tests can also have curricular adaptations to make them accessible to all students who must first be aware of these adaptations. However, these adaptations must be applied to all subjects.

In the case of students with additional support measures, their learning progress will be referenced according to what is outlined in the *Report* or in the *IEP.*

Upon completion of school, all students have the right to receive a certificate and diploma on which their qualification level is noted according to the National Qualifications Framework and its equivalent in the European Qualifications Framework. In the case of students who have significant curricular adaptations, the certificate must state the completed cycle or level of education and relevant curricular information such as the areas or experiences developed in the Individualized Transition Plan.

5.5. Endowment of Resources

Within the focus on the school, adopted by the reform towards inclusive education in Portugal, most of the personnel resources are located in the mainstream schools themselves, although these also have external sectoral resources.

Resources in each school

Every school has a *Multidisciplinary Support Team for Inclusive Education (EMAEI)* that is responsible for guiding teachers in the implementation of inclusive practices; detecting possible learning difficulties (screening); and planning the schooling solutions for the students

The EMAEI is made up of the following professionals:

– *Permanent Members:*
  A member of the management team
  A Special Education Teacher
  Three members of the school's Academic Council representing different grade levels
  A psychologist

– *Non-permanent Members:*
  The tutor
  The student's other teachers
  Technicians from the Resource Center for Inclusion
  Other professionals who intervene with the student

The *EMAEI* coordinator decides the non-permanent members of the team and coordinates all the team's processes, guaranteeing the families' participation in the actions detailed in the *Technical Pedagogical Report.*

Each school also has a *Learning Support Center*, which is an organizational structure that brings together all the schools' human and material resources, their knowledge and skills. It is not, therefore, a physical space, although it may include places where

students, who require it, can work when needed, but rather the coordinated grouping means that the school, classroom groups, including the special education teacher, all have to help each of the students. Great care is taken that the student does not spend more than 50% in spaces and activities outside the mainstream classroom.

The objective is to guarantee the maximum *participation* of students with significant curricular adaptations, in both classroom activities and those that take place in other spaces and times, including extracurricular activities and play time. This support is carried out through direct work in the classroom, with the support of the teachers responsible for the group using necessary specific materials.

This support must be provided throughout the student's school life and therefore includes access to higher education and the transition to working life and autonomous life.

External resources

In addition to the schools' resources, there are other specialized external resources that support all the schools in the corresponding sector. These are:

1. *Reference schools for Early Childhood Intervention*. In the Decree-*Law No. 281/2009 of 6 October, the National Early Intervention System was created,* articulating interventions by the Ministry of Labor, Solidarity and Social Security, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education (SNIPI). These interventions are aimed at caring for boys and girls aged 0-6 with impairments in bodily functions or structures that limit their participation in age-appropriate activities with their families, or who have serious risk of delayed development.
   Support for these groups is carried out through the *Local Intervention Teams* (LIT) and the *Reference Schools*. LITs are made up of health, education, and social service professionals, therapists, and psychologists. They carry out the evaluation and the *Individual Early Intervention Plan*.
   The reference schools have to ensure the articulation of work with the LITs. They have resources that, in collaboration with health and social services, establish the mechanisms that guarantee the universality of Early Intervention.
2. Reference schools for vision (visual impairments). They constitute a specialized response by concentrating human and material resources that allow access to the curriculum and the introduction of specific curricular areas when necessary (vision training; orientation and mobility; activities of daily living). For this, these schools have special education teachers specialized in visual impairments.
3. Reference schools for bilingual education. These schools are intended to contribute to the development of Portuguese Sign Language (PSL) as a first language and the development of written Portuguese as a second language (L2). On the other hand, they offer spaces for reflection and training in PSL, from a collaborative work perspective between different professionals, families and the school community in general.
   In these schools there are groups specifically made up of deaf students, which makes it possible to create a linguistic community reference from early childhood education to the end of the compulsory stage. The aim is to ensure that, like their hearing peers, these students can grow linguistically through communicative interactions with their significant others, in natural bilingual contexts, allowing them to assume their linguistic and cultural identity with them.

By delivering a specialized response, these schools have specific human and material resources. Thus, PSL is taught by PSL teachers, who are also in charge of developing interactive activities and disseminating PSL in the school community. The Portuguese Language course, L2, is taught by authorized hearing teachers. Special education teachers, with training in the field of hearing impairments, teach groups of deaf students, according to their professional training and their level of language proficiency in PSL. Finally, the PSL interpreter is a communication mediator who does not have teaching functions. Their role is to translate the oral Portuguese language into PSL or vice versa.

4. Information, Communication and Technology Resource Centers (ICTRC). ICTRCs are specialized services whose function is to support schools to achieve school success for students whenever support materials are required for this.
   The ICTRCs carry out the needs evaluation for students, at the request of the mainstream schools, and supply the materials listed in the evaluation. Support materials are understood to be any device or system that allows students to carry out a school activity, which they could not carry out otherwise. ICTRC professionals also offer information, training and guidance services in the use of these materials.
5. *Inclusion Resource Centers (IRC)*. The *IRC*s are specialized services, accredited by the Ministry of Education, that have the function of supporting mainstream schools, from a collaborative support approach to inclusive education, to achieve the school success of students who have additional measures defined in their *Report* or *Individualized Education Program*. The *IRC* technicians, insofar as they are non-permanent members of the Center's *Multidisciplinary Team*, collaborate in the processes of identifying support measures, in the transition processes to active life, in the development of actions to support the families and in the provision of specialized support in educational contexts. The specific type of professional intervention must appear in the *Report or* in the *Individualized Educational Program*.

5.6. Process evaluation

The sequence of progress towards inclusive education, reported above, reveals a long process in which measures have been introduced, reviewed and modified in an on-going cycle of improvement and innovation. On the other hand, the participation of all sectors that have characterized this process and the strategy of creating commissions that developed proposals that were later debated and improved, and only later approved, has contributed to the carefully weighed actions.

It is illustrative to read the report "Legal framework of inclusive education in the scope of pre-school education for basic and secondary schools", published by the National Council of Education in April 2018[70] to see how the ideas proposed there were included in the subsequent Law of July of that same year.

Beyond, however, this general focus on the strategy for change, the National Education Council, the General Inspectorate for Education and Science, and the UN Human Rights Committee monitored the process.

[70] http://www.cnedu.pt/content/deliberacoes/pareceres/Parecer7_2018.pdf

The data on the flow of students from special education schools to mainstream schools is an important indicator, although not sufficient, of the success of this educational policy. As mentioned above, before 2008 there were approximately 11,000 male and female students enrolled in special education schools. Currently this number has been reduced to less than 500 and these students have serious health problems and are older (about 18 years).

On the other hand, the data on the reduction of school failure and early drop-out (34% in 2008, which was reduced to 14% in 2016), also shows the progress of the Portuguese educational system in terms of inclusive quality education.

In addition to these general indicators, some specific reports have been carried out on certain elements of the new regulations. One of the most interesting is the one that evaluated the operation of the Inclusion Resource Centers. This study carried out by the Professional Rehabilitation Center of Gaia and published by the *General Administration of Education in 2015*, analyzes the evolution of the IRCs since their creation in 2008.[71] The conclusion of the study is a positive assessment of these support structures for mainstream schools based on the expert knowledge of professionals from previous special education schools. The opinions of the different groups involved, collected in the study, show that families are the most satisfied, followed by teachers from mainstream schools and that the group of professionals from the IRC show the most reservations. Nevertheless, its overall assessment at a macro level is positive. The report draws attention to the risk sometimes observed when extrapolating a model still anchored in the medical-rehabilitative approach. It also pointed out that the intervention is still sometimes too focused on the student and not so much on the school as a whole and emphasizes the need to give a lot of flexibility in the regulations to the specific operation of coordinating between schools and IRCs in order to adjust to the characteristics of each context.

In addition, in the same period, a second report was drafted by the same institution on the collaboration between schools and IRCs, *School and IRC partnership: a strategy for inclusion*.[72] The study analyzes the collaboration between both parties around the elaboration of *the Individualized Educational Program* and the *Transition Plan*. The overall assessment is positive, but it was recommended to set protocols in terms of the collaboration with more precision since coordination is always complex, defining more clearly the role of each professional and the timing of each step in the process. Likewise, the report stresses the need to continue training all professionals involved in decision-making.

The recommendations of these reports are in fact reflected in the 2018 Law. It therefore appears that the monitoring of the process has been useful in gradually introducing necessary improvements.

Apart from the evaluations carried out by the education administration itself, many academic studies have, of course, been carried out by university teachers and associations in the world of *disability*. It is not possible to collect all this bibliography here, but it is worth referring to an analysis of the Reference Schools for bilingual education, since it is one of the most complex issues to this day. The study carried out by Ramos da Costa, Coelho and Correia in 2016, in which the operation of two of these schools

---

[71] https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EEspecial/estudo_cri_mar2015.pdf

[72] https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EEspecial/necessidades_especiais_de_educacao_parceria_entre_a_escola_e_o_cri_uma_estrategia_para_a_inclusao.pdf

is analyzed in depth, points out, from a perspective of full inclusion, the limitations of these institutions when maintaining groups of exclusively deaf students. Likewise, it shows that the levels of Portuguese language proficiency of these male and female students were in many cases, not very good.

In order to obtain information regarding the process evaluation, together with the published documents, an assessment has been done by FENACERCI, *Federaçao Nacional de Cooperativas de Solidariedade Social*, which groups together the associations for the defense of the rights of people with intellectual *disabilities*. This federation shared a positive assessment of the process towards inclusive education by the Portuguese educational system. It points out that there are still many needs to be covered and that more funding is therefore needed, but it is believed that the experience is very valuable and contributes to improving the quality of teaching.

In more concrete aspects, they consider the Early Intervention System and IRCs useful resources providing essential help. They also point out that most families are in favor of inclusive schools, but that there are still difficulties in the response offered to students with intellectual *disabilities* when they finish their schooling and that special education schools provide more security to the families of children with severe *disabilities,* who sometimes do not find the adequate answer in mainstream schools. The federation also makes a positive assessment of the role of families in the elaboration of the Individual Educational Program of their children. It points out that there have been few discrepancies in the decisions made and that these have been resolved through dialogue. However, families could be more involved in the planning phase. Finally, great emphasis is placed on the need to achieve a balance between the different tendencies of the groups involved in the process. Resistance to change is an inherent part of the process, but it must certainly advance, even though not all conditions are assured from the beginning.

5.7. Final reflections

As the leaders of the Ministry of Education themselves concluded, developing inclusive education requires a defined framework for policy implementation in different dimensions: political consensus and with civil society, curricular design and school activities with teachers, family collaboration and their organizations, local community engagement, the mobilization of human and financial resource and the ability to share knowledge to respond to complex problems. Therefore, a complex process has to be assumed as a global educational policy.

In the smooth running of the process, in addition to this global approach, other key factors include:

1. A firm commitment to inclusive education as a *right* of students with disabilities and a key element to quality teaching that benefits all students.
2. The *participation* of all the sectors involved and *on-going dialogue* with the associations that represent the families of these students.
3. Understand that this is *a long-term process,* which is going to be prolonged and therefore must maintain the support needed to consolidate change
4. Adopt a *school-centered approach*, endowing it with autonomy, solid leadership and assuming a support perspective for the whole school rather than for each student.

5. *Provide specialized personnel resources to mainstream schools* and establish collaborative procedures between teachers and these professionals.
6. *Take advantage of all the professional expert knowledge at special education schools* by incorporating special education teachers into mainstream schools and support the IRCs.
7. *Adopt a model of levels of support* and abolish the rehabilitative approach, both in the needs assessment and Individualized Educational Plans
8. Encourage family *participation in shaping educational practices* for their sons and daughters and resolve possible discrepancies through dialogue and mediation.
9. Assume that a process of this nature is going to generate certain *tensions* and pay special attention to the sectors that present the most resistance.
10. *Carry out monitoring* throughout its implementation.

5.8. References

Direção-Geral de Educação (2018). *For uma Educação Inclusiva. Practical support manual.* Lisbon: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from, https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EEspecial/manual_de_apoio_a_pratica.pdf

CRPG (2015). *AvaliaÇao das Policies Public. Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: O Case of Resource Centers for Inclusion.* Lisbon: Direção-Geral de Educaçao.

GRP (2015). *Special Needs of Educaçao. Partnership between the school and the CRI: A Strategy for Inclusion.* Lisbon: Direção-Geral de Educaçao.

Esteves, A. and López Torrijo, M. (2005). Educational integration in Portugal. An analysis of compulsory education. *Spanish Journal of Comparative Education,* 11, 315-356.

Martín, E. and Mauri, T. (2011) Attention to diversity in the inclusive school. En, E. Martin and T. Mauri (coord.). *Educational orientation, attention to diversity and inclusive education.* (pp. 29-49) Barcelona: Grao.

Ramos da Costa Beyer, KP, Coelho, 0. and Correia, JA (2016). Reference schools for a bilingual education of some deaf people in Portugal: A practical and theoretical discourse does not teach the Portuguese language as a second language. *Virtual magazine of deaf culture*, 19, 1-33.

Rodrigues, D., Casao, R. and Leite, t. (2018). *Seem. Legal regime for inclusive education not within the scope of pre-school education in two basic and secondary schools.* Lisbon: National Council of Education.

6. Commonalities and some lessons learned

Considering the four case studies and putting aside the distances and different circumstances in which each of them began and were developed, it is possible to extract some commonalities, by way of *lessons learned*, that can help Spain the most in its own process.

a) Paradoxically, the first of these lessons is none other than the recognition that *Spain will have to find its own path,* in light of current circumstances, the specific context of our country, our resources and the capacity to mobilize systemic change deep within our own educational system. An educational system that, in reality, is configured in many ways, as 17 (+1) partial school systems under a basic and common legislative framework.

b) The second lesson, and undoubtedly the most important, is that this inclusion policy is not only fair and necessary (because it is a matter of human rights), but it is also *possible to* promote changes so that the mainstream school system is able to provide quality education to the entire student body in all its diversity. That is, to move from a dual model of schooling, towards a single model, close to the ambition of full inclusion. The examples of the four case studies analyzed are there to tell all those who doubt or brand this approach as something *utopian* or unrealizable, that they are wrong. As we have seen, they have been able to implement this process from very different levels (local, regional or national) and from very different cultural, economic and social traditions and realities.

c) But for progress to be possible and effective, some *indispensable conditions* linked to the process itself must be present:

- A *vision* strongly rooted in the ethics of human rights.
- The political *will and determination* to carry it out, sustained over time and not at the risk of partisan political changes, undertaking this process with *grit and courage.*
- The translation of this vision and will into *coherent laws and regulations,* which create a new legitimacy, together with public and easily understood documents that make things explicit.
- The creation of *alliances and the collaboration of the main educational actors and operators* built precisely around that firm and unequivocal vision, but also with the necessary pragmatism so that the long process that needs to be implemented was *sustainable.*
- *Flexible short- and medium-term planning* -to be able to adjust to changing circumstances and local conditions - but safe and unambiguous regarding the ultimate goal, leading to the mobilization of a participatory and collaborative strategy with key educational stakeholders involved.
- An *effective public communication strategy for* the entire population, focused mainly on the idea of *(re) building* a higher quality educational system *for all*, where that *all*

is now interpreted as referring to the entire student body, that is, with and without special educational needs.
– If the transmitted message is the opposite, that is, that it is a positive change, but only for a minority (students with *special educational needs* or other equally vulnerable students), it will be difficult to reach a consensus and find the necessary support to implement the required changes, and to withstand the turbulence, difficulties and foreseeable specific roadblocks that will appear sooner or later.
– *Sustained supervision / evaluation of the process* over time, which allows for effective and timely feedback, not only at a macro level (by educational administrations), but also at a micro or local level (at the school level), through fluent and close communication with the families and the associations or organizations that represent them.
– The recognition that the existence of *a dual system of education (mainstream and special) is much more expensive than an inclusive system*. In a context like that of NB (a small, rural province, with fewer resources than others), this duality was not an economically sustainable option. It is important to highlight that this economic analysis is not prior to or a substitute for the clear vision and conviction that we are facing a human rights issue; we are not facing a question of *profitability of an expense*, but of a *future investment* for society that the community wants for itself.
– All this converges and requires *clear leadership*, in which the *authorities* who emanate from the conviction and passion in their moral strength links with the *power and the legitimacy* to bring about the required changes. Something essential, as pointed out above, is that new state laws are consistent with the goal.
– As the case studies show, in the long run *distributed leadership,* maintained over time, or at least long enough for major changes to be institutionalized, is important and necessary.

d) If possible, an abrupt integration of students with *disabilities* into mainstream schools, who are currently in special education schools is not encouraged, not without quick and sustainable substantive changes directly impacting the educational policies and practices of mainstream schools, from early childhood education to secondary education (and beyond):

– First, a *prioritization of policies for the detection and Early Attention* of cases of psychosocial risk, to prevent and intervene in them where appropriate. This entails the imperative need for an efficient and effective inter-institutional, coordination of the health, social and educational administrations and services that operate precisely in the field of early childhood. An in-depth study about the best models to carry out this important *intra- and interagency* coordination / cooperation work is urgent and strategic.[73]
– A generous supply of *support* teachers and educators so that teachers in mainstream schools do not feel helpless in the face of the educational needs, some of them complex, of a student body with whom they have not worked with before, and in front of whom they may unleash many fears and uncertainties.

---

[73] Daniels, H., Thompson, I., & Tawell, A. (2019). Practices of exclusion in cultures of inclusive schooling in the United Kingdom. *Publications,* 49(3), 23–36. doi:10.30827/publications. v49i3.11402

– Reinforcing internal support coordination, mediates the creation of a coordination figure, such as *SENCO* in Newham, as well as the establishment of a *reference person* for regular contact among teachers (regular and support) and families with children with special educational needs.
– Guarantee the teachers, specialists and educators of the SEC, keep their jobs in the mainstream school system, in accordance with their training and qualifications.
– Maintain specific supports (speech therapy, physiotherapy, cognitive/ occupational rehabilitation, etc.) for students who need them, proportionately to what they were receiving in SEC.
– Ensure physical, cognitive and sensory accessibility in mainstream schools across the board (spaces, classrooms, dining rooms, services, library, etc.), as well as the creation of specific spaces that may be needed for the specialized support that some students may need.
– Provide adapted furniture and technology according to the specific needs of the students who need them.

e) Now, in this regard, the case studies analyzed show that *the strategy followed has NOT been to wait for all these resources to be in mainstream schools before implementing the inclusion policy for students in SECs.* In the best scenario, it seems that the supports (understood broadly), were made available, more or less, in parallel to the process. Italy was the exception to this premise but considering the teachers and families patience and ability to endure the emerging situation, this would not likely be repeated today. Much less in our country, in view of the suspicions among families with children in special education schools that the announcement of this policy has already generated.

f) Of much more depth and, in the long run, of more importance, in our opinion, are the *necessary changes to the curriculum*, particularly in everything related to the procedures of learning *assessment, promotion and accreditation / qualification*.

– Regarding the curriculum, the cases of *Newham, New Brunswick* and *Portugal* clearly point to the need for a much more open and flexible curricular framework than the one we now have in Spain; with a greater capacity to personalize the curriculum and implement practices based on the principles of *Universal Design of Learning, Curricular Differentiation,* and *Multilevel Teaching,* depending on both the interests, motivations and preferences of the students, as well as on their skills.
  • It is in this framework where the proposal *of Individualized or Personalized Educational Plans* (with this or another analogous name) would gain more meaning and value, which could be, if necessary, adequate and mandatory for all students, and not only for those considered with special educational needs
– This more personalized curriculum requires a *system of competency-based accreditation*, where students work within the framework of common programming, each one according to their own abilities. In this regard, the example of the English BTECs is very inspiring.
  • It is true, in any case, that the Italy case study shows that this policy can also be implemented with what has seemed to us a very insubstantial modification of the curriculum, assessing and accrediting learning. It is possible, however, that this criticism was inaccurate, and a consequence of the documentation used in the Italian case study and the time available for its analysis.

g) The previous observations will remain simply good intentions if not accompanied by a clear, consistent and sustained *curriculum development policy,* in all its possible facets: on-going teacher training, advice for educational improvement and innovation, and preparation and dissemination of curricular materials. Special attention should be paid to the use of all digital technologies, due to their enormous potential to promote *more personalized learning that is also much more connected* with respect to how they help those learning in formal, non-formal and informal educational spaces. We have not been able to go into as deep detail of these policies as we would have liked, which have seemed broader in the case studies of *NB* and *Newham* than in Italy (take this statement with caution).

h) A curriculum with *higher levels of discretion* by the teaching teams in its implementation, requires in unison, a thorough review of multiple aspects of educational planning. In particular, flexibility in everything related to the use of learning times and spaces, as well as spaces for optional curriculum.

i) Rethinking the curriculum, lightening it around the most basic and essential competencies, and also rethinking the way of accrediting these competencies acquired during compulsory education, is essential so that a *better and more coherent link and continuity can be achieved* between what is learned during the compulsory stages, and what should continue to be learned in the preparatory scenario for *adulthood and working life.*

j) For young people with more extensive and generalized support needs (those who today are mainly found in the SECs), the *plans for transition to adult life* have to find an adequate preparatory context in secondary schools. Today there are few, if none at all, secondary schools in Spain that take the Educational Transition Plans seriously, which reinforces the disadvantage and discrimination against these young people with respect to their peers. The four case studies have shown the concern that these transition processes lead to an improvement in the dimensions that contribute to the later *quality of life* of these people. This implies the need to establish strategies, among other issues, to promote their relationships with the community, personal autonomy, social relationships and work. The *Newham* case seems the most *inspiring* in this regard and it would be pertinent to return to this issue in more detail when the time comes for proposals in our country.

k) These demands make us think that this would inevitably require undertaking the urgent task of rethinking the functions entrusted and coordinated *by Guidance Departments* in secondary schools in our country. But it is not only a matter of adding new functions to these teams but, perhaps, the time to also incorporate new professional profiles (for example, the equivalent of the English "Job Coaches"), which they could undertake, in a collaborative way with the counselors, the tasks related to a better transition and preparation for adult life, which continues as soon as compulsory education is finished. In this regard, the figure of "social integrators" could be a profile very close to these functions.

l) It is necessary to think about what does mean the policy regarding the *transformation* of special schools. As we have seen, the first three case studies present processes in which mainstream schools began to educate students who were previously in their respective SEC, while *gradually closing* (or abruptly as in Italy), the vast majority

of the latter. In the case of Portugal, there has been a *reinvention* of these schools, which have practically stopped enrolling students with special educational needs. It is also true that, in the four cases, a minimal number of these types of centers has been maintained. In a few cases of students with extensive and generalized educational support needs - and for this very unique reason - it seems that the educational authorities left the decision to the families as to where their sons and daughters with special education needs should go to school. It is important to notices that this remains a highly controversial issue, since *the right to an inclusive education* is, for many jurists and in accordance with what is also stated in *OHCRH General Observation* #4, a right of the child and not of their family.

m) In the case studies, we are not aware of the existence of modalities of what we have come to call *combined schooling*. In any case, this team is very critical of this option, the application of which, if it made any sense in any circumstances, needs to be highly justified and, above all, intensely supervised.

n) In this context, the case of *Newham*, in particular, shows that the alternative of *preferential education schools* could be used as a functional measure. We understand that the """Resourced Schools""" have allowed a few schools, among other things, to concentrate on certain accessibility measures and the provision of special resources (personnel and material). Some specific lessons that we can draw in this regard are the following:

– If this measure is applied, it would be necessary to be extraordinarily vigilant so that such *preferred centers* do not become something like *disguised special education schools*, where many more students with extensive and generalized support needs are enrolled than the natural corresponding number.
– Likewise, special care should be taken in its implementation in order to avoid the dangerous stigma that could be associated with the centers that undertake this work; a stigma that would reinforce the implicit message that inclusion is reserved for a few schools (with more resources than most) and is not everyone's responsibility.

o) The four case studies tell us about a *process over time* that is far from being finished. Without a doubt, *the first years of this process were, and will be for Spain, the most difficult*. In the case of Spain, this first implementation period will be, in our opinion, critical, because if the difficulties and concerns exceed expectations, it is most likely that the process will slow down or stop. This possibility would not only detract from the ambitious goal of this process but would make it very difficult for it to be resumed later. In this sense, it seems essential, during this initial period, to intensify the support efforts and the measures mentioned above.

p) All the consulted sources said that the great pending challenge is the *quality of inclusion,* that is, of the schooling offered to all students, with and without special educational needs, in mainstream schools. This quality, in terms of more inclusive education, happens, under the following considerations, just to name a few (some of which have already been noted):

– Guarantee *a greater and better participation* of students with special educational needs in daily school life. Keep in mind that *participation* is also a multifaceted pro-

cess that requires, on the one hand, fostering meaningful opportunities that promote the creation and maintenance *of quality social relationships*. This will lead the members of the school community to feel recognized and part of the group, far from the marginalization or mistreatment that students with special needs experience with worrying frequency. On the other hand, advancing participation also requires offering opportunities that allow people to *take part, to be heard,* and ensure that their voice is taken into consideration in educational decisions that affect them, a tenant (listening to *the voice* of the students) protected by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989)

i. This happens by trusting more in the support *capacity and mutual help that students can provide each* other. In the short, medium and long term, this is the *main social capital that schools have,* and the most important achievement (lasting social relationships), for the future of students with and without special needs. Some of our informants have been especially incisive in this regard.
ii. These networks and schemes of mutual student support, although they may arise naturally among students, require the intentional implementation of a planned strategy. If this were not done, not only would powerful support for more inclusive education be lost, but conditions for marginalization and / or mistreatment among equals would be, indirectly, promoted.

– Guarantee *competency learning* that must have higher quality than the current one. It is advisable to move, once and for all, from the content-centered approach to that of the *competencies* necessary for adult life and work. This need becomes even more urgent, in an increasingly complex and uncertain world regarding employment. This change is not expected if it does not come hand in hand with a generalized change in the use of teaching and learning strategies that promote the mobilization of complex competencies. This is what happens, for example, with the methodology of project teaching, service learning or problem-based teaching.
– Be vigilant so *that the old schemes of school segregation are not reproduced within mainstream schools*, even in classrooms, workshops or special groups for students with special educational needs; euphemistic names that mask the *status quo that* exists today.
– Related to the previous point, it is necessary to be equally alert, as well as to take appropriate measures, so *support teachers* assigned to collaborate with tutor teachers, do not become solely responsible for the educational activities of the students with *special educational needs*. These professionals can both be a fundamental support and a barrier to the participation of some students. Establishing clear regulations, such as the one in *NB,* is an essential component.
– In this sense, it seems equally essential to promote the idea of these supports as school resources (in accordance with the concept of "institutional development" and "school-centered improvement") and not for specific students. This requires, on the other hand, reflecting on the way in which specialized resources are organized, distributed or arranged among schools (or the variables that are taken into consideration to resolve this issue).
– In this regard, the case studies point out the possibility of locating all resources in the schools from the beginning, taking into account the *natural proportion* of students and satisfying all their educational needs.
– Another possibility, surely complementary to the previous one, has to do with the creation of collaborative structures between schools or "clusters". In them, the mem-

bers of the different educational communities, who are the ones who know their realities best, share their situations and needs, reflect on them, exchange good practices and, consequently, distribute resources effectively and efficiently?
– On the other hand, the goal of having support teachers as facilitators for the participation of the students, again points to the need to promote specific training plans for these professionals.
– Significantly increase the quality of the processes and plans aimed at facilitating the *transition to adult and working life*. These processes require *close connection and collaboration between schools and the existing socio-labor mechanisms in the local community.* This measure, in addition to promoting respect for the self-determination of all students, would promote inclusion in the world of work. In this area, the incipient experiences of *Person Centered Planning* (PCP) that are being implemented in some places in Spain can be an important support mechanism to reconfigure these tasks and functions today. Unfortunately, they are neglected in educational centers, particularly in secondary schools.

q) The four case studies also offer us some *lessons* in relation to the controversial question about the best way to act with families who do not trust that the mainstream school can adequately respond to the specific needs of their sons and daughters. Perhaps the most significant thing to bear in mind is that, far from pressuring the families or acting against them, is working with them in collaboration and in response to their needs, trying to appease concerns and maintain their *alliance* in the most complicated cases. In this regard, it is convenient to focus on three fundamental truths, common to the four cases studied.

– First, the policy towards full inclusion has been a response to a social demand often driven by families.
– Secondly, despite the enormous conviction of the leaders of change, on multiple occasions the decisions taken have adopted strategic visions with the aim of "not forcing", but rather "convincing / persuading" the families, that the policy is trying to respond to their concerns. For this, the establishment *of reference figures* in the schools (people or teams) mentioned above, which can be quickly and closely accessed, has been a well-received measure by families insofar as it has helped them not feel abandoned once the shift towards inclusive schooling has begun.
– Finally, as we have already pointed out, in all of the case studies, families have had, and continue to have, the option of choosing the type of schooling for their sons and daughters (either within the district / country itself or outside it).

With these three points we do not intend, far from it, to appease the energies for change, but to highlight, once again, the need to act with the concerns of families top of mind. This position is consistent with the *Quality of Family Life approach*,[74] according to which, the quality of life of students is a function of the well-being of their families. This approach is also in line with the goal to secure the culture and support necessary for change.

---

[74] Poston, D., Turnbull, A., Park, J., Mannan, H., Marquis, J. y Wang, M. (2004). Calidad de vida familiar: Un estudio cualitativo. *Siglo Cero*, 35 (3), 211, 31-48.

r) The commitment formally acquired by Spain and many other countries to move towards a more inclusive educational system is, in our opinion, *the greatest challenge of all that can be raised today* because it entails a profound transformation of the current "*grammar of schooling"* and, with it, the existing power and privilege dynamics, which benefit some and exclude others. Without a doubt, *our educational system is much more inclusive today than it was thirty years ago,* for example, when LOGSE was implemented (1990); the first major educational reform in the then recently established Spanish democracy. To ensure that this process reaches the students who have been and continue to be the most excluded and discriminated against in our system (students with *disabilities*, and, above all, those with more extensive and generalized support needs), this is a task of unmatched magnitude.

s) The *resistance* that this ambition generates is, by all accounts, superlative, especially when it competes with an international agenda that promotes competitiveness between regions, countries and schools through the current accountability policies.

t) For this reason, and because of what was pointed out in point r), *the risk* that inclusive education will become a rhetorical matter or limited to some partial changes linked to certain groups of more vulnerable students is enormous.

u) The task of transforming the SECs, and their students enrolled in mainstream schools, receiving together with their peers a quality education, can be seen as *a unique opportunity to motivate and stimulate a great transformation of our educational system*, something quite necessary.

v) On the contrary, it could also become a *limited matter with a short-term impact* that fundamentally maintains the old models of understanding and action for these students, inherited from special education.

Hopefully, *the lessons* from the case studies can contribute, at least modestly, to being better informed and prepared to face such an important challenge. In our country there are other research teams and reliable organizations with much to contribute. For this reason, and to conclude, we want to point out that action by the MEFP should be aimed precisely at articulating the synergies of those who, in Spain, due to their trajectory and commitment, have been showing and demonstrating their commitment to inclusive education for some time. Your support, be it critical or favorable to the principles and proposals that the MEFP has put forward in its proposal for a new inclusive education law (LOMLOE), will be much needed.

References

Daniels, H., Thompson, I. y Tawell, A. (2019). Practices of exclusion in cultures of inclusive schooling in the United Kingdom. *Publicaciones,* 49(3), 23-36. doi:10.30827/publicaciones.v49i3.11402

Poston, D., Turnbull, A., Park, J., Mannan, H., Marquis, J. y Wang, M. (2004). Calidad de vida familiar: Un estudio cualitativo. *Siglo Cero*, 35 (3), 211, 31-48.

7. Annexes

GUIÓN CUALITATIVO PARA ENTREVISTAS CON INFORMANTES CLAVE

En español:

1. ¿Qué aspectos clave del CONTEXTO SOCIOPOLÍTICO / CULTURAL / HISTÓRICO fueron influyentes en la iniciativa tomada?

2. ¿La iniciativa ha estado ASOCIADA A UN PARTIDO / POSICIÓN POLÍTICA en particular (conservador/liberal/progresista) o ha sido una iniciativa globalmente aceptada por todos?

3. ¿Cuál ha sido la VISIÓN O PRINCIPAL FUNDAMENTO que ha dirigido el proceso de transformación que se inició en su día?
   a. ¿Un asunto de derechos humanos?
   b. ¿La respuesta a una presión de familias / ONGs?
   c. ¿Otro?

4. ¿Cuál(es) fueron los principales «DESENCADENANTES» de la iniciativa?
   a. ¿Una nueva ley? ¿Convención internacional?…
   b. ¿Presión de los grupos defensores de las PCD (personas con *discapacidad*)
   c. ¿Una posición política del partido gobernante?
   d. ¿Varios simultáneamente?
   e. ¿Otro (s)?

5. A tenor de lo anterior, ¿podría decirse que fue una INICIATIVA DE ARRIBA / ABAJO (TOP / DOWN) O VICEVERSA (BOTTON / UP)? ¿Con la perspectiva del tiempo, ¿el esquema adoptado se valora como acertado o no?
   a. Ventajas observadas
   b. Principales dificultades

6. ¿Quién (es) LIDERARON, o fueron muy influyentes en la puesta en marcha y desarrollo de la iniciativa?
   a. ¿El gobierno? ¿A qué nivel?
   b. ¿Su rango les permitía tener «poder para influir, decidir»?
   c. ¿Otros?

7. ¿Qué grado (hasta qué punto se llevó) tuvo la PLANIFICACIÓN, del proceso?
   a. Exhaustiva a corto, medio y largo plazo
   b. ¿En qué aspectos se puso especial énfasis o cuidado?
   c. Flexible

8. ¿Qué estrategias de COMUNICACIÓN A LA OPINIÓN PÚBLICA en general respecto a la iniciativa fueron especialmente relevantes y/o útiles?
   a. ¿Hubo campañas a este respecto?
   b. ¿Hubo documentos de tipo «posicionamiento público» que se utilizaron?

9. ¿A quién (actores principales) se involucró en el proceso para que fuera PARTICIPATIVO (si es que lo fue, como presumimos que ocurrió)?
   a. ONG de PCD
   b. Profesorado / Sindicatos
   c. Servicios «psicopedagógicos»
   d. Universidad
   e. ¿Otros?

10. ¿Qué tipo de CONSULTAS se llevaron a cabo (si es que se hicieron)?
    a. ¿Se consideraron «vinculantes» o «informativas»

11. ¿La iniciativa adoptada PERMITE/permitió A LOS PADRES ELEGIR el tipo de escolarización para sus hij@s (lo que supondría que hubo o que ¿HAY todavía ALGÚN TIPO DE CEE QUE PERMANECE «ABIERTO»?
    a. ¿Si hay alguno tipo de CEE «abierto», a qué población atiende? ¿Cuál es su carácter; regional/provincial, local, «privado»)
    b. ¿Cómo se valora esta situación en el contexto global del proceso llevado a cabo?

12. ¿Qué aspectos fueron centrales/relevantes en la ESTRATEGIA DE IMPLEMENTACIÓN?
    a. ¿Cuánto tiempo llevó?
    b. ¿Cómo se «prepararon» a los Centros Ordinarios (CO)? Principales medidas de desarrollo /mejora para que los CO pudieran llevar a cabo de la mejor manera posible una enseñanza de calidad con el alumnado de los CEE?
    c. ¿Fue una estrategia «a la carta» según el tipo, características o ubicación del centro o fue una estrategia relativamente común /homogénea en casi todos los casos?
    d. ¿Cómo se apoyó a los CO? ¿Más recursos / dinero? ¿Nuevas figuras profesionales (p. ejemplo, «coordinador de NEE»)? ¿Redes de centros?
    e. ¿Otras?

13. ¿Hubo, hay un GRUPO DE ALUMNOS/AS QUE PREOCUPÓ O PREOCUPA ESPECIALMENTE a los responsables del proceso?
    a. ¿Cómo se ha manejado / llevado esa situación?

14. ¿Ha habido procesos de EVALUACIÓN Y SEGUIMIENTO del proceso?
    a. ¿Por parte de quién? ¿El propio gobierno? ¿Agencias independientes?
    b. ¿Con que finalidad; ¿validar, mejorar o cuestionar la iniciativa?

15. Como resultado, en parte de lo anterior, ¿hay EVIDENCIAS SÓLIDAS de los RESULTADOS / efectos /impacto de la iniciativa?
    a. ¿En relación a la satisfacción / grado de acuerdo con lo logrado?
    b. ¿En relación con la «calidad de la inclusión» (participación + aprendizaje/rendimiento del alumnado CON Y SIN NEE?

16. A la vista de esos procesos de evaluación, seguimiento, consulta y análisis realizados, ¿cuáles han sido, a modo de SÍNTESIS, los principales FACILITADORES DEL PROCESO?, ¿y cuáles las principales BARRERAS del mimo?

17. ¿Alguna SUGERENCIA O RECOMENDACIÓN, que se desprenda de su experiencia y que no se deduzca de todo lo dicho anteriormente?

QUALITATIVE OUTLINE FOR KEY INFORMANTS' INTERVIEWS

In English

1. What key aspects from the SOCIO/POLITICAL/CULTURAL/HISTORICAL context were influential in this initiative?

2. Has the initiative been associated with a particular political party (conservative/liberal/progressive)? Or has it been a globally accepted initiative?

3. What has been the VISION OR MAIN FOUNDATION driving the transformation process from the beginning?
   a. A human rights issue?
   b. A response to family/NGOs pressure?
   c. Other?

4. Which were the KEY DETERMINANTS of the initiative?
   a. A new law/policy? An international convention?
   b. Pressure from PWD (People with disabilities) supporting groups?
   c. A political position/statement of the ruling party?
   d. Several simultaneously?
   e. Other?

5. Based on the above, COULD IT BE DESCRIBED AS A TOP-DOWN INITIATIVE OR VICEVERSA (BOTTOM-UP initiative)?
   a. Observed advantages
   b. Observed disadvantages
   c. Looking back to the decision taken; was it good, appropriate, or not?

6. Who LEAD or were very influential in the start-up and development of the initiative?
   a. The government? To what extent?
   b. Did their position allow them to have the power to influence/make decisions?

7. To what extent was the PLANNING process carried out?
   a. Exhaustive? In the short/medium or long term?
   b. In which aspects was the emphasis/focus placed?
   c. Was it flexible?

8. Regarding the initiative, what were the most RELEVANT/USEFUL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES taken towards public opinion?
   a. Were there campaigns?
   b. Were "public positioning" documents used?

9. What MAIN ACTORS were involved in the process TO MAKE IT PARTICIPATORY? And if that was the case, how?
   a. PWD's (People with Disabilities) NGOs?
   b. Teachers/Trade Unions?

   c. School psych pedagogy services? District psychological services?
   d. Universities?
   e. Others?

10. What kind of CONSULTATIONS were carried out (if they were made at all)?
    a. Were the consultations considered binding or just informative?

11. Did the adopted initiative allow the parents/legal guardians to CHOOSE the type of schooling for their children? (Which would mean that were or still are any type of Special Schools (SS) open)?
    a. In the event that there are still operating Special Schools, what population do they serve? And are they regional/local/private?
    b. How is this situation valued in the overall context of transitioning to inclusive education?

12. What aspects were key/relevant in the IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY?
    a. How much time did it take?
    b. How were the Mainstream Schools prepared? (I.e. main developments or improvement measures taken to best teach quality education to students coming from SE?
    c. Was it an individually tailored strategy, sensitive to the type, characteristics or location of the school? Or was it a relatively homogeneous process in all cases?
    d. How were the Mainstream schools supported? More resources/funding? New professional profiles included, such as a SEN (Special Educational Needs) coordinator/manager? Through a school network?
    e. Others?

13. Were/are there ANY GROUP OF STUDENTS THAT WORRIED the people in charge of the process?
    a. How was that situation handled?

14. Has was the MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS executed?
    a. By whom? The government itself? Independent agencies?

15. Are there any solid PIECES OF EVIDENCE of the initiative's results/effect/impact?
    a. In relation to the level of satisfaction/ agreement to the achievements?
    b. In relation to the "inclusion quality" (access + participation + learning/achievement of the students with and without SEN (Special Educational Needs)?

16. In view of the monitoring & evaluation processes conducted, what were the MAIN FACILITATORS of the process and what were the MAIN BARRIERS?

17. Are there any other RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS, not previously mentioned, that may be drawn from your experience?

ISBN 978-84-369-6040-2

Diferentes organismos, incluida la *Convención de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad* (CDPCD) ratificada por España en 2008, han recomendado avanzar en el abandono de las modalidades de escolarización segregada del Alumnado con Necesidades Educativas Especiales.

En este proceso de transformación, el Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional ha desarrollado una serie de medidas entre las que se incluye el presente trabajo. Este tiene por objeto avanzar en la definición de sistemas educativos cada vez más inclusivos que ofrezcan respuesta adecuada a las necesidades de todos los estudiantes.

Para ello se analizan diferentes experiencias que cuentan con una amplia trayectoria en procesos similares desarrollados bajo diferentes enfoques. Su riqueza deriva de la solidez de los proyectos desarrollados y de la diversidad de casos. En este sentido se articula un óptica local (*Newhanm* en Reino Unido), provincial (*New Brunswick* en Canadá) y nacional (Italia y Portugal). Del mismo modo las prácticas estudiadas hacen referencia a realidades con trayectorias históricas, sociales, económicas y culturales muy diferentes. Este hecho sugiere la existencia de múltiples alternativas a la hora de abordar la escolarización inclusiva del alumnado.

A través de la exposición de los casos objeto de análisis, se identifican claves significativas e inspiradoras que servirán para planificar e implementar políticas educativas y medidas concretas adaptadas a la realidad española. Asimismo se recoge una serie de conclusiones generales que esbozan las líneas o ámbitos de intervención prioritaria.

GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA
MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN Y FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL