

Educational Structure

Education in Belgium is a right for children from the age of three and is a duty for children aged between 6 to 18 years old. So, school is there for all children and is organised in a way that every single child can find its place.

The level of learning in the ordinary education system is based on the abilities and capacities of the average student. There is however a specific group of children who is not able to follow this average level of education because of several reasons like behavioural problems, learning problems and/or physical disabilities. Ordinary education is not sufficient enough for this group of children. They need a special education program in which there is place to adjust the learning methods to the abilities of each single child. The emphasis of the ordinary education system mainly lies on acquiring knowledge and insights.

In contradiction, special education focuses more on the development of mental and motor abilities and on the encouragement of their social skills. This way they try to integrate these children in the society and to prepare them for their future life and work surroundings.

However, special education might not be a protected environment. The ultimate goal of special education is to try to integrate some of their pupils in the ordinary education system. This is a very hard process, which sometimes takes a long time and sometimes it even isn't possible. Though it's important not to forget this goal! In Belgium special education is a right, not an obligation.