

Legislation about Inclusion

(by Prof. Jerzy Grossman)

The first steps towards integration began at the beginning of the 90's. In 1991 the first legislation was introduced. It said that all Special Educational Needs (SEN) children should have the opportunity to gain an education. This education should be adjusted to their special education needs. In 1993, the legislation was updated (i.e. in kindergarten there should be 15-18 students in a class. In each class should be between 3-5 SEN students per class). Schools can also hire an additional SEN teacher. The school should organise the program and the local department of education should accept or reject the curriculum put forward by the school. This legislation helped to increase the number of kindergarten and basic schools.

From 1994, schools were under the Local Authorities, which also helped to improve integration within schools. From 1998 the central government gave larger grants for SEN students to local authorities who in turn gave the grants to the schools. In integration classes the SEN students are given four times more money than regular students. From 1998, local authorities became responsible for creating additional integration schools, also being responsible for programs, facilities and for transport.

The law at the moment says that every child between the age of 6 and at least 17 must receive an education. The support for regular schools is organised at a local level. Central government gives the local authorities grants and in turn the local authorities subsidise the schools. The money per SEN student is used for equipment and facilities to enhance the learning environment. P.F.R.O.N. (Public Foundation for people with disabilities) also can support schools in financing additional equipment and facilities. Each child is financially supported by Central Government.