

# Links between Policy and Practice

**Initial pilot school projects and  
policy recommendations**

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What data did we have about pilot schools prior to the pilot projects beginning?

- ***Baseline study by LSE Enterprise:*** the core objective of the work was to provide a synthetic numerical measure of the level of inclusion of each school (Inclusion Index).
- ***Focus groups report by the Support Network (NEPC):*** focus groups with key stakeholders conducted in order to provide evidence for a more targeted and needs-based support for the creation of the school development plan and development of school projects.

- Beneficiary reports (country based);
- 49 pilot school project applications.

# Background to the challenges of inclusive education in Western Balkans

- slow pace of the introduction of learner-centred approaches;
- lack of awareness of inclusive values and practices;
- policies not preparing teachers sufficiently to introduce inclusive education (lack of emphasis on promoting inclusive practices).

N. Pantic, A. Closs and V. Ivošević (2010), Teachers for the Future. Teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans; A. Duda, M. Golubeva, T. Clifford-Amos (2013) Teacher education and Training in the Western Balkans.

# What do preliminary reports say?

- The more senior the school, the less inclusive:  
Primary schools on the whole scored higher than VET schools and gymnasium-type schools. Gymnasiums have scored the lowest in two areas: inclusive practices for entry to school and inclusion within the school.

# What do preliminary reports say?

- VET schools' stakeholders live with a sense of marginality, VET is not seen as important.
- Gymnasium-type schools score lowest in Inclusive practices for entry to school and Inclusion within the school.
- All types of schools fail to familiarise families and students with school prior to enrollment.
- Special support is needed for students from underprivileged background.
- Schools lack policies. School-level inclusive policies need to be developed, and it has to be an inclusive process.

# Recommendations based on preliminary reports

## Primary schools:

- Teachers in primary schools serving disadvantaged communities **should become more aware of the values of inclusive education and practice them** in their work;
- **Support for students living in underprivileged socio-economic conditions;**
- Inclusive school is a welcoming school. Develop activities and procedures for **familiarisation of families with school** prior to enrolment;
- Special attention should be given to **building school's partnership with parents**, including parents coming from underprivileged social backgrounds. This requires both cross-cutting and targeted measures. School can offer parents **learning opportunities**. Parents can also be the **source** of learning.

# Recommendations based on preliminary reports

## VET:

- VET is perceived in society as a ‘lower’ strand of educational attainment. This challenge should be addressed through **a change of discourse about VET, a change in the attitudes, values and practices of school staff.**
- **Leadership training and mentoring** (both for the school administration, teachers and for students) is necessary in order to empower VET community.
- Develop activities for **familiarisation of students and their families with school** prior to enrolment;
- Adopt **special measures for supporting students from socially disadvantaged background.**



# Recommendations based on preliminary reports

## Gymnasium and Secondary Schools

- **Gymnasium-type schools need to build relationships with the communities they serve**, both close community (students and their families) and wider community.
- There is also a need for **developing inclusive policies** in gymnasium-type schools – e.g. policies and procedures for supporting students who start developing learning difficulties.
- **Special support to students from socially disadvantaged groups** is necessary also in gymnasium-type schools.

# Initial school projects: clustering interventions

## Cross-cutting measures:

- Training of school staff to improve inclusive values and approach;
- Creating partnerships with parents (includes training for parents on inclusion);
- Awareness raising;
- Encouraging peer support and peer learning on inclusion among students;
- Improving cooperation and coordination among school staff;
- Creating school policies on inclusion;
- Using creative workshops and arts to promote inclusion;
- Improvement of learning infrastructure (teaching aids, library, multimedia);
- Using sport and trips/ excursions to promote inclusion;
- Establishing & training of Inclusion Support Team.

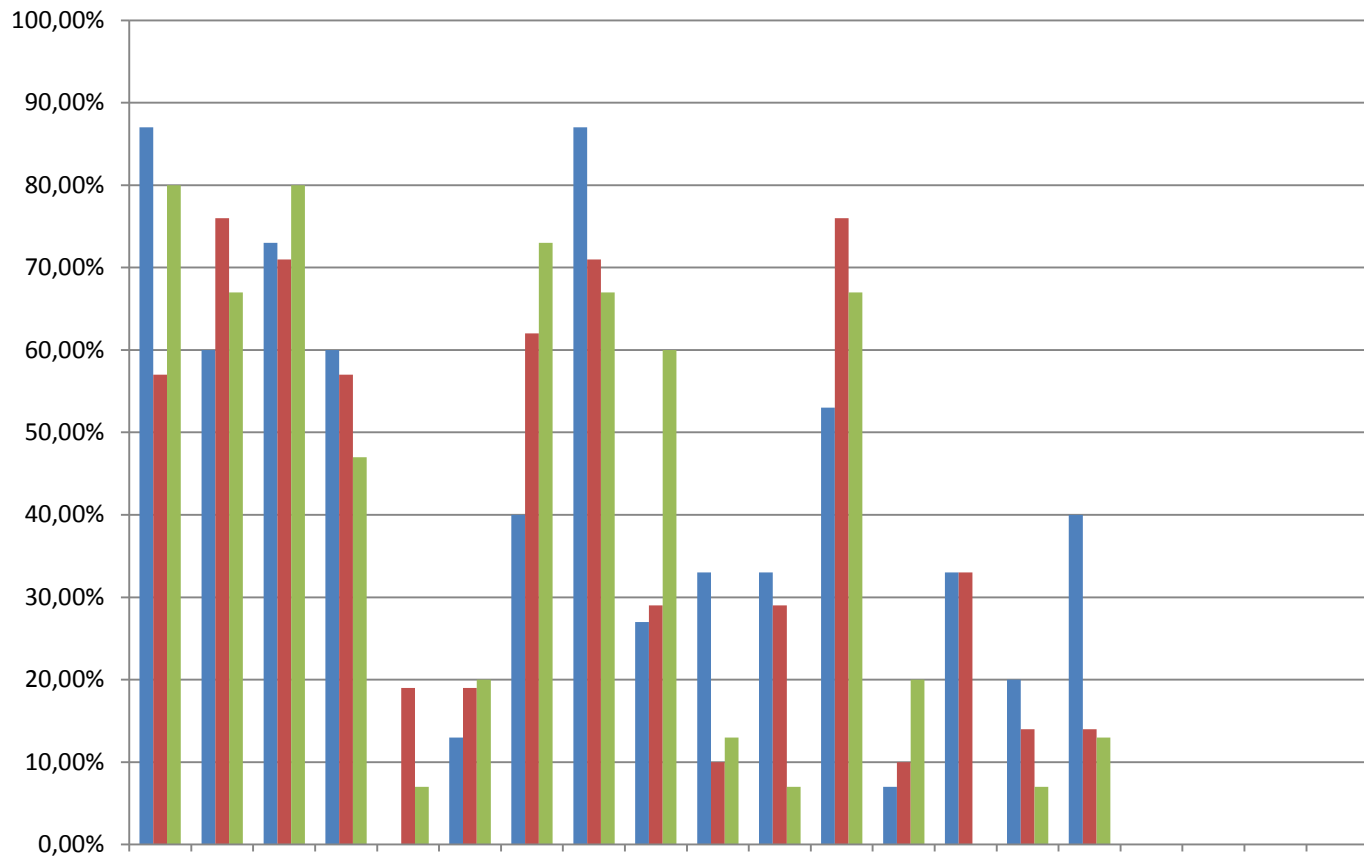
# Initial school projects: clustering interventions

## Targetted measures

- Training staff and parents to support students with special needs in mainstream classroom E.g. *Remedial and additional teaching*;
- Improving access for students with limited mobility through infrastructure;
- Targetted measures for involving disadvantaged or minority parents in school life. E.g. *IT literacy workshops with 30 parents from socially disadvantaged families*;
- Group-based additional training or summer schools for children with special needs;
- Providing targeted support to students facing socio-economic marginalization risks. E.g. *Workshops for students at higher risk of marginalization and exclusion*.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Albania</b>	<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Kosovo</b>	<b>Macedonia</b>	<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>Serbia</b>
<i>Cross-cutting interventions</i>							
Training of school staff to improve inclusive values and approach	6	6	7	6	4	4	3
Creating partnerships with parents (includes training for parents on inclusion)	5	4	6	0	6	6	6
Awareness raising	7	3	7	6	5	5	3
Encouraging peer support and peer learning on inclusion among students	6	5	5	1	4	3	2
Improving cooperation and coordination among school staff	2	0	1	0	0	0	2
Creating school policies on inclusion	2	0	2	1	1	1	2
Using creative workshops and arts to promote inclusion	5	4	3	2	3	7	3
Improvement of learning infrastructure (teaching aids, library, multimedia)	4	6	4	4	6	5	7
Experience exchange trips/ excursions/ sports events to promote inclusion	3	1	1	3	4	3	2
Establishing & training of Inclusion Support Team	2	0	2	0	3	1	1
Other	7	2	3	1	6	7	2

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<i>Targetted interventions</i>							
Individual measures for students with special needs	3	3	1	1	2	1	2
Training staff and parents to support students with special needs in mainstream classroom	4	5	7	1	6	4	4
Improving access for students with limited mobility through infrastructure	2	3	1	0	0	0	1
Targeted measures for involving disadvantaged or minority parents in school life	1	1	2	1	3	2	3
Group-based additional training for children with special needs	2	0	2	1	2	1	0
Targeted support to students facing socio-economic risks	2	2	0	1	0	2	3



# How do schools envisage change?

- “...Collaboration of the students from different religious and ethnic backgrounds or of different faith... we (would like to) trigger something a lot bigger and more important – a positive change and a step forward in inclusion practices”

*Vasil Glavinov Primary School – Veles, Macedonia*

- “Although our school is committed to the values of diversity and accepting inclusive principles, we haven’t worked enough on informing the public about our activities and efforts. Focus group research results within the project Regional Support for Inclusive Education show that students, parents and the local community are not sufficiently informed about school rules and documents ...Focus group research also shows insufficient involvement of parents in school life.”

*Gymnasium TanasijePejatović, Montenegro*

# How do schools envisage change?

- “A large number of the population of this area belong to marginalized groups as well as a large number of students in our school, so they are in inconvenient position, and further efforts and resources are needed which enable us to ensure the best possible inclusion in the educational system.”

*Primary school Okučani, Croatia*



# Creative approaches: some examples

- Using museum visits to discuss common heritage of different ethnic communities, to socialise and overcome prejudices between communities (Macedonia);
- Encouraging students with limited access to 'cultural infrastructure' to enjoy arts and creative activities (B&H);
- Engaging visiting experts (art professors, local artists, etc.) to work with talented students (Montenegro).

# Suggestion for further inspirations

## Creative Partnerships (UK)

“The programme has developed the skills of young people across England, raising their aspirations and achievements, and opening up more opportunities for their futures. It has supported thousands of innovative, long term partnerships between schools and creative professionals including artists, performers, architects, multimedia developers and scientists.”

- Emphasis on creative practices within the school;
- Improvement of learning outcomes for underperforming students and overall ;
- Impact on social inclusion: introducing more students to the potential of arts to improve their learning and life.

<http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/creative-partnerships>

# Thank you!

Time for discussion.