Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe

EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe

2nd Annual Conference in South East Europe
"Inclusive Education in Practice"
28-29 October 2014, Zagreb, Croatia

Lana Jurko
NEPC

Project componenet:
schoolNET

Implemented by:
Platform of Organizations

The Platform of Organizations

Network of Education Policy Centers

ALBANIA
Children are the future

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA,
proMENTE Social Research
COI Step by Step

CROATIA
Forum for Freedom in Education

KOSOVO
Kosovo Education Center

MACEDONIA
Macedonian Civic Education Center

MONTENEGRO
Forum MNE

SERBIA
Centre for Education Policy

Network of Education Policy Centers - NEPC is an international nongovernmental membership organization of education policy centers. NEPC (www.edupolicy.net) in cooperation with 8 organizations from 7 countries from SEE is implementing the project *Support to Pilot Schools for implementing inclusive education policies and practices.*

The role of NEPC and partners organization (Platform) is to support 49 pilot schools (7 from each country)

- in design and the implementation of **school projects. .**

- in designing and implementing **individually tailored development plans** using Index for Inclusion methodology.

Pillars of Inclusive Schools

COOPERATION

VALUES

School as an engine of change to achieve Inclusive Society

Pillars of Projects

Focus Groups

Where we think we are?

School Projects

How to address burning issues?

Tailored School Development plans

How we will achieve what we want to be?

Sustainability Plans

How to ensure that inclusive education remians in the focus in our school?

Focus Groups – Where we are?

The perception of inclusive education among students, school staff, parents and local community

196 focus groups

1751 participants

357 Parents

506 School Staff

558 Students

330 Local community

Culture

The overall perception of most stakeholders is that the culture in their schools is either predominantly open and welcoming or on the whole inclusive and open, with some issues (barriers):

- Gender stereotypes
- Violence
- Mocking of students with special needs in school
- Students not sent to school because of socio-economic situation
- Perception of VET schools as 'unimportant'
- Low proficiency in the language of instruction
- Mocking of students who do not attend religion classes
- Resistance of parents of students with no special needs against having students with special needs in school

policy

Even when the existence of a policy is reported in FG this does not imply that a generally agreed written policy exists in the school.

A policy at school level requires some prior discussion or needs assessment, and some form of general agreement/ awareness that a given approach/set of measures constitutes a school policy and should be observed/ implemented by all concerned parties.

The presence of policies has only been reported where special project activities have taken place.

practice

Many schools have reported targeted inclusive education measures:

- Individual learning plans;

- Remedial classes and additional tutorials for students with learning difficulties or at risk of dropping out;

- Subsidizing the access of students at risk of socio-economic exclusion to school and to extra-curricular activities;

- Organizing inclusive extra-curricular activities;

- Involvement of students in providing support to peers;

- Other measures.

At the same time, most FG reveal a **lack of a holistic, consistent and articulate strategy for inclusion** that would be based in **awareness shared by all groups in the school community** – teachers, students, parents and administration.

Non-inclusive practices were often reported by stakeholders in a large proportion of schools. The following practices in particular were highlighted by stakeholders:

▪Teachers are selective or partial and do not support all students equally or according to their needs. Nepotism, prejudice, students' faith or political sympathies playing a role in how support is given (or not given) by teachers;

▪The school applying the same assessment criteria to students with disabilities in areas where they need individualised approach, lack of adjustments in curriculum and teaching;

▪Lack of transparency in assessment;

▪Separate schooling of ethnic minority students in 'satellite' schools that are seen as less important/ prestigious, or in 'schools under one roof' which in fact do not communicate or cooperate;

▪Sitting Roma students separately from other students in class;

▪Lack of a strong stand on violence or bullying, lack of security measures to make the school a safe place for students;

▪Top-down decision making without soliciting opinion of staff, students and parents;

▪Lack of measures to improve accessibility of school to students with special needs and students from poor families, lack of practices that would confirm the school's openness or accessibility towards marginalised groups;

▪Lack of support for students at risk of dropping out.

from FG to project proposals

School based approach has enhanced relevant discussions tailored on schools context

The FG represented for schools and Platform an awareness process regarding the understanding of inclusive education

The FG results represented a significant mapping of school issues to be addressed

All projects were designed according to the FG results

The project proposals designing contributed to better understanding of 'project-language'

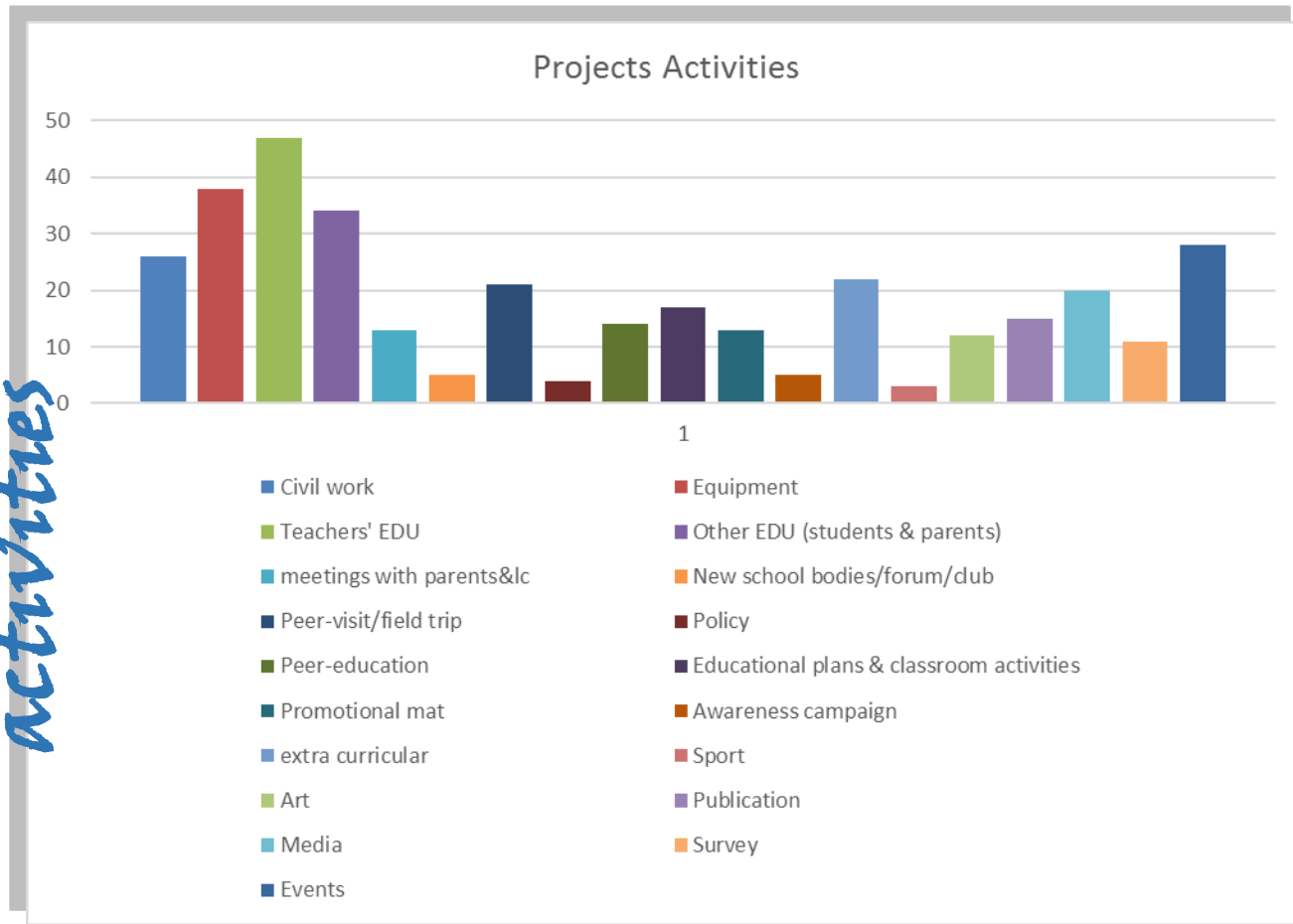# Project Proposals

Projects aim

To support schools in development and/or improvement their inclusive practices related to children at higher risk of marginalisation and exclusion.

SpecialNeeds
SocioEconomicStatus
Minorities Rural-Urban
Gifted/Talented

Projects goals

teachers
students
school
parents
improve
improving
awareness
increase
practices
inclusive
inclusion
learning
cooperation
education
involvement
create
community
children
teaching
competences
development
among
risk
support
capacity
raise
improvement
develop
communication
level
conditions
enviroment

Projects activities

The understanding of Inclusion

✓Why students with special needs are perceived as the most vulnerable groups because of lower achievement or because of lack of participation in school life?

✓Does this data show the perception of **inclusive** education is still confined to students with special needs?

✓Are other barriers to inclusion less visible, less critical or perceived as less relevant?

The (ab)use of categories

✓Are we sure, we need a category to make our school more inclusive environment?
✓The use of those categories is acceptable and in some case politically correct, but is it emotionally correct towards children?
✓Is the use of categories somehow connected with the need of selection?

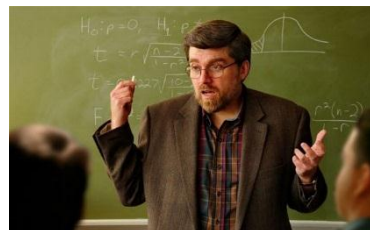# Teachers' capacity building

Most of projects underlined the lack of teachers competencies in working approach with children/students with special needs.
In a wider perspective the capacity building for teachers should aim at their personal development – *How we transmit set of values and which set of values we transmit?*

The quality education

Structural and processing indicators define the quality of education. While structural indicators are tools, the processing ones determine the quality.
How we can ensure that civil works and equipment generate learning outcomes?

Open Questions

What we should not forget...

Teachers are the core agents of all **real changes** at the grassroots level and without **highly professional** and **motivated teachers** a quality education system cannot be built, nor can effectiveness in learning be achieved without proactive teacher(s) (policies).

(NEPC Strategy 2013-2015)

Thank you!

nepc@edupolicy.net