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Risks in the social inclusion of children with special learning educational needs in the Republic of Bulgaria

Zagrożenia inkluzji społecznej dzieci ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w Bułgarii

Abstract: In the article are outlined a number of issues which are risky about the social inclusion of children with the closure of specialized schools. These risks are: the closure of specialized schools and the inclusion of all children with special educational needs in the mass school; with the unpreparedness of the mass teacher to work with these children; with the lack of sufficient number of resourceful teachers to work with each individual child with special educational needs; with the unpreparedness of the mainstream pupil to tolerate the children with special educational needs; with the existence of negative public opinion on children with special educational needs.

Keywords: social inclusion, risks, children with special educational needs.

Streszczenie: W artykule przedstawiono szereg zagadnień, dotyczących zagrożeń inkluzji społecznej dzieci ze SPE, związanych z zamykaniem szkół specjalnych. Zagrożenia związane z włączeniem wszystkich dzieci ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi do szkoły masowej wynikają z: nieprzygotowania nauczyciela szkoły masowej do pracy z dziećmi ze SPE, brakiem wystarczającej liczby nauczycieli, którzy są przygotowani do takiej pracy, ogólnym problemem tolerancji i postrzegania dzieci ze SPE.

Słowa kluczowe: inkluzja społeczna, zagrożenia, dzieci ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi

The phenomenon of social inclusion is a process whose purpose is both the integration of a person into the micro and the macro environment, as well as its real subjective participation in it. This process "contributes for realization of the tendency about inclusion in the common educational environment of all children, independently of the disruptions which they have..." [Smantser, 2016, p. 585]. The idea of social inclusion of children with special educational needs in the 21st century is humane and necessary to be solved in the practice of any self-respecting country. It creates the conditions for affirming the civil rights of every member of a society, regardless of his or her state of health.

With respect to the children with special educational needs, the social inclusion is a process which helps the child to adapt and to join the group and

the class of the mass school and to participate in the whole life, according to its own capabilities.

Social inclusion of children with special educational needs is a continuous and complex process which requires, on one hand, the pedagogue to be specially prepared in the inclusion area. "Inclusive education rejects old solutions and provides new opportunities for people with disabilities to develop. The foundations for the realization of the idea of including people with disabilities can be found in humanist thinking. The humanistic approach is at the heart of the theory and practice of education" [Zaharuc, 2012, p. 350]. A special place in the educator's training takes health education and upbringing. "Health education is a very important link in the didactic and educational process, as it draws from many areas of science, explains the conditioning of various phenomena and human preservation associated with health and illness" [Uvko, 2014, p. 251]. The preparation of a pedagogue for working with children with special educational needs requires the development of a comprehensive system for mastering practical pedagogical skills, both at the university as well as in the post-graduate qualification of the pedagogue. [Nievgelovska, Vishnevskaja, 2015, p. 29-32].

On the other hand, the process of social inclusion implies systematic, specialized, individualized corrective education with each child separately from specialists - pedagogues in the respective field. This process requires creating a positive emotional environment in the children's community where the child with special educational needs is, for example showing tolerance both to the physical disadvantages of the child by the children in the class and to stimulate their desire to help him to feel comfortable. „Accompanying the child leads to positive results when it stimulates the child's activity, his belief in his own strengths and abilities“ [Fedotenko, 2014, p. 216].

Furthermore, it is necessary for the parents of the child with special educational needs and the parents of the other children in the class to be a part in the process of social inclusion. This interaction helps to create conditions to also help the teachers and the students to accept the child, with the closure of specialized schools and the inclusion of all children with special educational needs in the mass schools; with the unpreparedness of the mass teacher to work with these children; with the lack of a sufficient number of resource teachers to work with each individual child with special educational needs; with the existence of a negative public opinion on children with special educational needs.

The analysis of the practice related to the social inclusion of children with special educational needs in the Republic of Bulgaria shows that there

are a number of open problems, which are inherently risky and do not allow their optimal realization.

One of the main risks is the closure by law of the existing state institutions for working with children with special educational needs, the removal of children from them and their sending to the mainstream school and to family-type institutions.

Another risk is in the mass school. A child with special educational needs going to a class with a minimum of 20-25 students places the it and all the other pupils in a special situation. The students are not prepared to accept the child with special educational needs. Not rarely they make fun of their shortcomings, show verbal or physical aggression. That is to say a real risk of the unpreparedness of the mass student to accept the child with special educational needs.

This position of the children is a result, on one hand, of the unpreparedness of the mass teacher and the class supervisor to work simultaneously and with all students for the creation of humane relationships, and with children with special educational needs. Although there is already a compulsory discipline in the Teacher Training Standard "Working with children with special educational needs", it is insufficient to master the minimum information and skills and habits of the teacher.

On the other hand, the negative attitude of the mainstream pupil towards children with special educational needs is also the result of their parents' negative attitude towards these children. It is the result of the negative public opinion regarding the children with special educational needs, which is transferred to the Bulgarian family as well.

To this we have to add the lack of resource teachers, ie. of teachers who are specialists and who have to work daily with the child with special educational needs, both at school and outside. In the existing Bulgarian practice, with the child with special educational needs, the resource teacher works only 2 hours a week. The rest of the time is given to the mass teacher who must work simultaneously with all pupils in the class and with the student with special educational needs.

In conclusion, we can say that the open questions regarding the social inclusion of children with special educational problems in the Republic of Bulgaria are related to: the closure of specialized schools and the inclusion of all children with special educational needs in the mainstream school; with the unpreparedness of the mass teacher to work with these children; with the lack of a sufficient number of resource teachers to work with each individual child with special educational needs; with the unpreparedness of the mainst-

ream pupil to tolerate the child with special educational needs; with the existence of negative public opinion on children with special educational needs.

These open problems are also the real risks that exist and have a negative impact on the process of social inclusion of children with special educational needs. Their overcoming will allow the optimal realization of the social inclusion of children with special educational needs.

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