



**CREATION OF DOCUMENT FOR ESTABLISHING OF LONG-TERM STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP AMONG ORGANISATIONS FROM MUNICIPALITIES OF SANTA
MARIA DA FEIRA, KOCHANI, PIRAEUS AND DARUVAR**

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT IO3





Content

1. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROCESSES IN REGIONS OF SANTA MARIA DA FEIRA, KOCHANI, PIRAEUS AND DARUVAR	4
1.1. Overview of the Educational System in Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal	4
1.1.1. Educational system in Portugal	4
1.1.1. Education in Santa Maria da Feira	5
1.2. Educational System in Kochani, North Macedonia	7
1.2.1. Educational system in North Macedonia	7
1.2.2. Educational System in Kochani	13
1.3. Overview of the Educational System in Piraeus , Greece	17
1.3.1. Educational system in Greece	17
1.3.2 Educational system in Piraeus	18
1.4 Overview of the Educational System in Daruvar , Croatia	25
1.4.1. Educational system in Croatia	25
1.4.2 Educational system in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County and Daruvar	28
1.4.3. Inclusion and education of pupils with developmental disabilities in Croatia and Daruvar	32
2. EXISTING LOCAL POLICIES/STRATEGIES IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE EU DISABILITY RIGHTS STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR THEIR IMPROVEMENT ADDRESSING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	38
Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies in Portugal – Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira	38
Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies in North Macedonia-Kochani	40
Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies Greece -Piraeus	44
Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies in Croatia-Daruvar	49
3. SELECTION OF BEST APPROACHES (BEST PRACTICES AND RISING AWARENESS ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.....	54
Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in Portugal and Santa Maria da Feira Municipality	54
Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in North Macedonia and Kochani	55



Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in Greece and Piraeus	57
Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in Croatia and Daruvar	60
4. ACTION PLAN.....	64
Refereces.....	76



1. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROCESSES IN
REGIONS OF SANTA MARIA DA FEIRA, KOCHANI, PIRAEUS AND DARUVAR

1.1. Overview of the Educational System in Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal

1.1.1. Educational system in Portugal

The Portuguese education system is centralized and governed by the **Ministry of Education, Science, and Innovation**, which regulates all levels of schooling. The system is designed to ensure universal access and equal opportunities, emphasizing social inclusion and the integration of migrant populations.

Education in Portugal is predominantly public and **tuition-free** during the compulsory years, with the state providing textbooks to students in public schools through a voucher system (*Manuais Escolares Gratuitos*). Private and cooperative schools exist alongside the public system, with approximately **14% to 17% of students** enrolled in private institutions, depending on the region and level of education.

The education system consists of the following levels:

- **Pre-school Education (*Ensino Pré-escolar*):** Ages 3–6 (optional, though the state must provide a place for all children from age 3).
- **Basic Education (*Ensino Básico*):** Ages 6–15 (compulsory), divided into three cycles:
 - **1st Cycle:** Ages 6–10 (1st to 4th grade).
 - **2nd Cycle:** Ages 10–12 (5th to 6th grade).
 - **3rd Cycle:** Ages 12–15 (7th to 9th grade).
- **Secondary Education (*Ensino Secundário*):** Ages 15–18 (compulsory). Students choose between science-humanities pathways, specialized artistic courses, or professional/vocational paths.

The school year typically runs from **mid-September to late June**, divided into three terms (*períodos*). While public schools follow a national curriculum, the "National Program for the Promotion of Success at School" grants schools some autonomy to adapt teaching methods. Similar to Greece, many secondary students attend private tutoring centers (*Explicações*) to prepare for the rigorous national exams (*Exames Nacionais*).

Higher Education is provided by public and private universities and polytechnic institutes. While public higher education is not entirely free, tuition fees (*propinas*) are capped by law for undergraduate degrees (currently around **€697 per year**). Admission is highly competitive and based on a combination of secondary school grades and national entrance exam scores.

Education System Structure

Education Level	Ages	Cycles / Grades
Pre-School Education	3 – 6 years	Optional (universal from age 3)
Basic Education (1st Cycle)	6 – 10 years	1st to 4th grade



Basic Education (2nd Cycle)	10	–	12	5th to 6th grade years
Basic Education (3rd Cycle)	12	–	15	7th to 9th grade years
Secondary Education	15	–	18	10th to 12th grade (Scientific-Humanistic or Vocational Courses)

1.1.1. Education in Santa Maria da Feira

The Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira presents (according to the 2021 CENSUS) a geographic area of 215.67 KM2 with a population of 136,715 inhabitants, distributed across 21 parishes. The population is divided as follow:

- 12.6 % - young population (aged 0-14)
- 66.5 % - active population (aged 15-64)
- 20,9 % elderly population (+ 65)

EDUCATION

Number of public schools

Group of Schools	Number of Schools	Pre- schools	1st Basic Education	PS and 1st Cycle	PS and 1st, 2nd, 3 rd Basic Education	2 nd , 3 rd Basic Education	2,3 rd BE and Secondary Education	3 rd BE and Secondary School
9	85	25	19	30	1	7	3	1

Number of students attending public schools

Grade Levels	Pre school	- 1 st Cycle	2 nd BE	3 rd BE	Vocational Education (level 4)	Secondary Education	Adult Education
Total	1982	4160	1855	3095	458	1083	18

Currently, Portugal is internationally recognized for its pioneering approach to Inclusive Education, based on the premise that the school must adapt to each student, and not the other way around.

Below is the general structure and detailed operation of support for children with special needs.



2. Inclusive Education and Special Needs

Since 2018 (Decree-Law No. 54/2018), Portugal has moved away from the concept of segregated "Special Education" to adopt an **Inclusive Education** model. The focus is no longer on the "disability" or the "diagnosis," but rather on the **barriers to learning**.

How support works (Support Measures)

The school mobilizes measures organized into three levels of intervention:

- Universal Measures: Intended for all students (e.g., pedagogical differentiation, curricular enrichment).
- Selective Measures: For students whose needs were not met by universal measures. These include psycho-pedagogical support, non-significant curricular adaptations, and tutorial support.
- Additional Measures: For students with severe and permanent difficulties. These include:
 - Significant curricular adaptations (profound changes to content).
 - Attendance in specific curricular areas (e.g., Braille, Portuguese Sign Language).
 - Individual Transition Plan (ITP/PIT): Prepared 3 years before the end of schooling to prepare for post-school life (employment or independent living).

Resources and Support Structures

- EMAEI (Multidisciplinary Team for Inclusive Education Support): A group of teachers, psychologists, and technicians who assess each case and define the Technical-Pedagogical Report (RTP).
- CAA (Learning Support Center): A space within the school that pools human resources (special education teachers, therapists) and materials to support inclusion.
- Reference Schools: Specific schools equipped for students who are blind, deaf (bilingual education), or have severe multiple disabilities.

Early Intervention (0 to 6 years)

For children with changes in body functions or structures, there is SNIPI (National Early Childhood Intervention System). It operates through local teams (ELI) that support the child and family within the context of the home or preschool/kindergarten.

3. Benefits and Financial Support

Families can apply for specific support through Social Security:

- Disability Allowance (Bonificação por Deficiência): An increase in the family allowance.
- Special Education Grant: Intended to cover monthly fees in special education establishments or therapies (physiotherapy, speech therapy, etc.) when the public network cannot fully provide them.

Municipal Initiatives: Santa Maria da Feira



The primary mission of the Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira in the field of Education is to promote inclusive education. Consequently, it applied for Portugal 2030 funding, specifically the Intermunicipal Program for the Promotion of School Success, which provides for two major activities:

1 – Multidisciplinary Team

The intervention of this team complements the work developed by the EMAEIs. It:

- Promotes student well-being and mental health through a specialized multidisciplinary team.
- Facilitates school inclusion, ensuring all students access the resources necessary for academic success.
- Offers specific therapeutic responses (psychology, speech therapy, occupational therapy) to children with special learning needs or emotional difficulties.
- Promotes self-awareness and emotional self-regulation, helping children recognize and control their emotions in challenging situations.
- Fosters empathy and the ability to practice perspective-taking.
- Develops interpersonal relationship skills, promoting healthy and collaborative connections.

2 – Literacy for Inclusion and Academic Success Promotion

This activity promotes academic success and social inclusion through programs that screen the cognitive and non-cognitive skills of each child. It identifies underdeveloped areas and promotes, in a personalized way, the development of basic executive functions and essential skills for academic and social progress.

The intervention model aims to provide preschool-aged children with the neurocognitive foundations necessary for successful learning. It targets not only children with below-expected development or those requiring reinforcement in neurocognitive stimulation but also educators and families, offering targeted training so they can become catalysts for the child's recovery and improvement.

1.2. Educational System in Kochani, North Macedonia

1.2.1. Educational system in North Macedonia

The educational system in the Republic of North Macedonia reflects the needs of the society for educational, scientific and permanent role of the education and science for the economic, social, technological and cultural development of the society as a whole. Consequently, the Ministry of Education and Science facilitates the continuous development of the system of education, moral education and science in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The teaching in Macedonian schools is conveyed in four languages. Apart of the Macedonian language as official language in the country, the pupils have option to select studying in Albanian, Turkish or Serbian. In some schools the students also have the option to select non-compulsory (elective) subjects for learning about the culture and language of Aromanians or Roma people.

The curricula for the subjects in the primary and general secondary education and for the general subjects in the vocational education are prepared by the Bureau for Development of Education and for the vocational subjects by the Centre for Vocational Education and Training. The quality assurance in the educational institutions is under supervision of the State Educational Inspectorate.

There are 21 higher education institutions in the country, out of which seven are public universities. In the recent years the number of students (regular and part-time) studying at Macedonian universities is steadily increasing.

The Republic of North Macedonia is participating in the Erasmus+ programme as a Programme Country. The country completed the referencing of the National Qualifications Framework to the European Qualification Framework, a process which was implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science with support from the ETF.

Levels of schooling in North Macedonia are:

Education is compulsory between the ages of six to 19 for general secondary education, or from six to 17, 18 or 19 for vocational education and training depending on the selected VET track, and from 0 to 6 for pre-primary education.

The educational system in the Republic of North Macedonia consists of:

- **Pre-Primary Education**

Early learning and development are at the center of attention in preschool education. Children from age 0-6 are attending public kindergartens or other forms of child care and education services. Pre-primary education is optional, but it has become increasingly important due to its role in early childhood development. Children attend kindergartens, which are managed by local municipalities. Pre-primary education focuses on early learning, socialization, and preparing children for primary school. There have been efforts to increase access to kindergartens, especially in rural areas, to ensure all children receive a solid early education. Preschool education in Republic of North Macedonia is regulated by the Law on Child Protection adopted in 2013.

- **Primary education (ISCED 1 and ISCED 2)**

In duration of nine years, free of charge and compulsory for all children aged 6 to 15, with no regards to the gender, religion and nationality. The primary education activities are defined and regulated by the Law on the Primary Education and with the Concept for Nine-years Primary Education. The mission of this sub-system is to raise, educate and guide. In the first three grades the assessment of the pupils is descriptive, and for the rest of the grades is numeric (marks 1 to 5). Private primary education schools are not recognized in Macedonian education system. However, private primary schools exist and their pupils are mainly of foreign citizenship.

The Law on Primary Education guarantees free access to this level of education for all children aged 6-15, in particular by providing free textbooks and transportation for those students whose permanent residence is more than 2 km from the nearest school.

Primary education lasts for **9 years**, divided into two cycles:



- **First Cycle:** Grades 1–3 (ages 6–9)
- **Second Cycle:** Grades 4–6 (ages 9–12)

Primary education is delivered through public schools, though there are private options available in larger cities. The system also aims to integrate minority groups and promote inclusivity.

While the formal primary education system is generally divided into two cycles (Grades 1–3 and Grades 4–6), students continue their education after primary school in **secondary education**, which includes:

- Grades 7–9 (ages 12–15)

Part of **lower secondary education** or sometimes viewed as the continuation of primary education in some systems. This stage still serves as part of compulsory education but moves beyond the first two cycles to provide a broader curriculum that prepares students for further education or vocational training.

- **Secondary education (ISCED 3)**

General secondary education (Gymnasium) in duration of four years and vocational education (Vocational Schools) in duration of two (vocational education of two years), three (vocational education for professions) or four years (vocational technical education). The secondary education is compulsory and comprises all children in the age cohort 15 to 19 years for the general secondary education, and for the age cohort 15 to 17, 18 or 19 in the VET depending on the selected track. The activities and responsibilities of the secondary education are defined and regulated with the Law on the Secondary Education and the Law for Vocational Education and Training. The secondary education is free of charge in the public secondary schools. The pupils also have the legal option to enroll into the private secondary schools which are officially recognized by the Macedonian educational system; there are 16 private secondary schools in the country. In several schools in the country there are bilingual classes in which the teaching of non-language subjects is performed in foreign language (French or English);

Secondary education is **compulsory**, and is an important stage for students seeking to further their education and enter the workforce.

- **Vocational education**

In order to provide career guidance to students in vocational schools, career centers have been opened, staffed by trained career counselors who are part of the school teaching staff. Their work is supported by a developed and standardized tool – the Battery of Professional Orientation Instruments (BIPO). Not all vocational schools have career centers and career counselors. Teachers who work as career counselors are teachers from schools that have been trained through the USAID project.

In four-year vocational education, English is taught as the first foreign language, and German, French and Russian are offered as a second foreign language in some professions. New curricula have been introduced for them for the I, II, III and IV years of secondary education. The starting point for the development of the new curricula is the Common European Framework of

Reference for Languages, as an orientation in terms of the levels of language competence that students should acquire at the end of each year of secondary education.

- **Higher education (ISCED 5, 6 and 7)**

Implements under-graduate, master and doctoral studies in the higher educational institutions and institutes which are autonomous and independent. There are seven state universities and 14 private universities in the Republic of North Macedonia. The activities are defined and regulated by the Law on the Higher Education. In accordance to the national policy for provision of equal access to the higher education, social cohesion and lifelong learning, the state introduced the Project 35/45, which promotes enrollment of the students from the age cohort 35 to 45 years.

North Macedonia has a variety of public and private universities, the largest being **Ss. Cyril and Methodius University** in Skopje. Other public universities include:

- University of St. Clement of Ohrid (Bitola)
- University of Tetovo
- Goce Delčev University of Štip
- University of Information Sciences and Technologies of Ohrid
- University "Mother Teresa" of Skopje

Higher education follows the Bologna Process, which standardizes higher education in Europe, ensuring compatibility of degree structures. Higher education is divided into:

- Bachelor's Degree: Typically 3 years (180 ECTS credits).
- Master's Degree: Typically 1 to 2 years (90 to 120 ECTS credits).
- Doctoral Degree: Typically 3 years (180 ECTS credits).

- **Special Education**

North Macedonia provides special education services for students with disabilities and those requiring additional educational support. Special education institutions are available, and mainstream schools are also encouraged to adopt inclusive education practices. There is a strong focus on integrating students with disabilities into the regular educational system whenever possible. The educational system comprises also the children with special needs and who are enrolled in the schools for special education or within the regular teaching process depending on the preferences of the students and their parents. There is separate curriculum for these schools.

- **Adult Education and Lifelong Learning**

The country encourages lifelong learning through adult education programs, especially for adults seeking to improve their literacy skills, vocational qualifications, or digital literacy. Adult Education Centers offer courses aimed at improving employability and skill development.



The Law on Adult Education was adopted in 2008, followed by the adoption (or amendments) of several by-laws regulating the procedures for verification of adult education programs (non-formal education), standards for premises, equipment and staff for adult education institutions.

- **Inclusive Education**

Inclusive education in the Republic of North Macedonia represents an educational system in which all children, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, ethnic or social background, have the right to equal access to education in mainstream schools. The goal is for students to learn together, with appropriate support and adapted teaching according to their individual needs.

In North Macedonia, inclusive education is legally regulated by the Law on Primary Education adopted in 2019. The law promotes the principles of equality, non-discrimination, accessibility, and respect for diversity in education. It guarantees that students with disabilities and special educational needs have the right to attend regular schools with adequate professional and educational support.

According to the law, schools are required to establish inclusive teams composed of teachers, professional associates, parents, and experts who work together to support the student's educational development. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are prepared for students who require adapted teaching methods and learning outcomes. The law also provides for the engagement of educational assistants who support students during classroom activities and communication with teachers and peers.

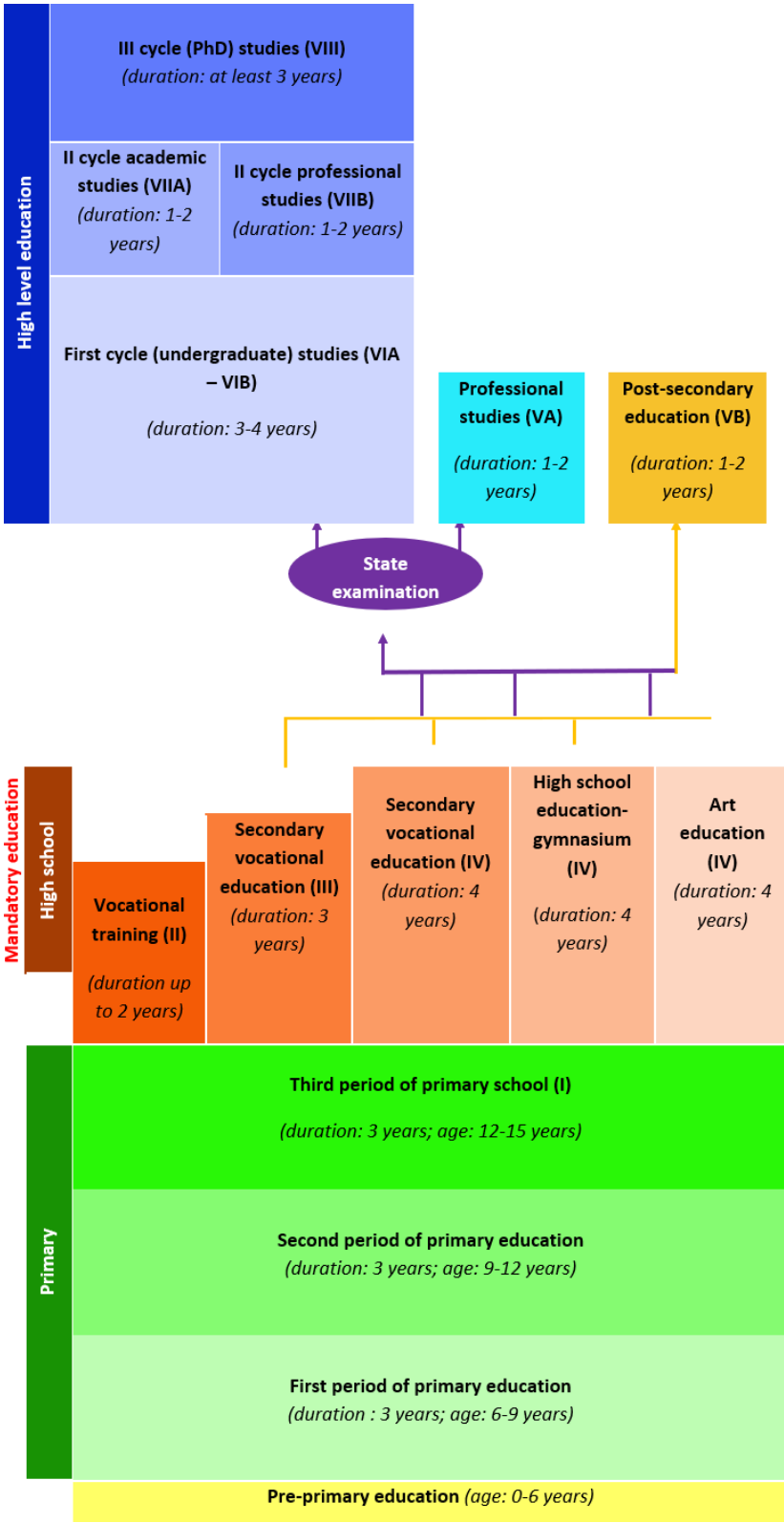
In addition, resource centers and professional support services provide guidance, counseling, and specialized assistance for both students and teaching staff. Schools are encouraged to create accessible learning environments and remove physical and social barriers that may prevent children from fully participating in education. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for implementing policies and monitoring the inclusion process in schools.

According to the latest data:

- in the 2025/2026 school year, North Macedonia has 927 regular primary schools and 128 secondary schools;
- around 174,040 students attend primary schools, while approximately 67,540 students attend secondary schools;
- more than 5,000 children with special educational needs are included in mainstream education;
- in 2025/2026, 1,346 educational assistants were engaged in primary education and, for the first time, 120 assistants in secondary education.

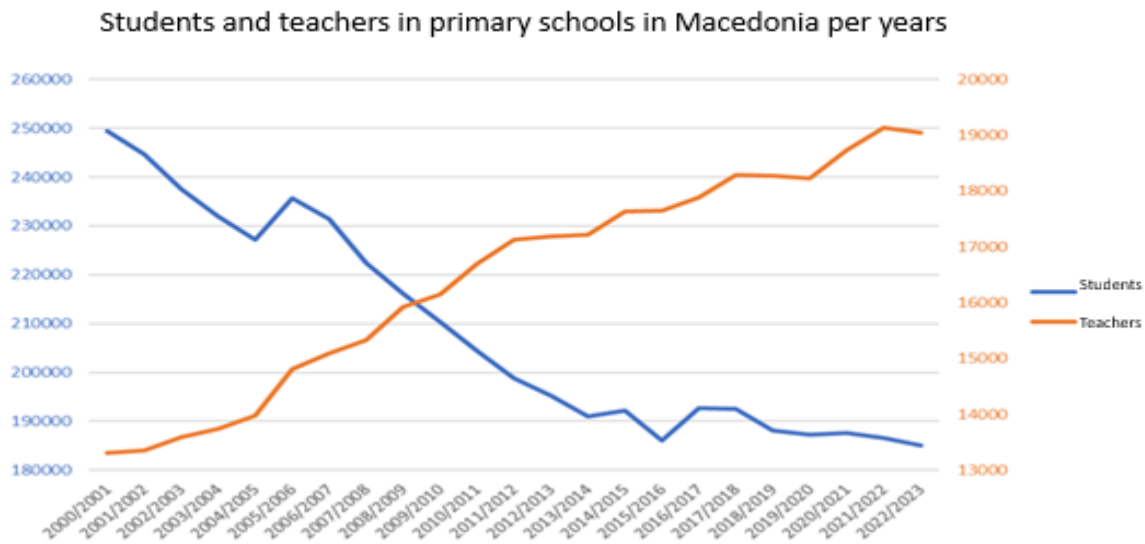
UNICEF states that around 96% of primary schools have a school inclusion team, while 93% have teams for students with individual educational needs. In addition, the number of educational assistants is continuously increasing, which indicates progress in the development of inclusive education.

Table 1. Structure of the educational system in North Macedonia



Source: Strategy for education 2018-2025

Table 2: Number of teachers and students through the school years



Source: State Statistical Office

1.2.2.Educational System in Kochani

Preschool education

In the city of Kocani, preschool education is implemented through the public preschool institution "YOU DG "Pavlinka Veljanova". This institution has five facilities, with a total capacity of about 700 children and almost 100 employees. The facilities are distributed as follows:

- The "Bambi" facility: one group for children up to 3 years old and four groups for preschool age.
- The "Zvezdichki" facility: two groups for children from 9 to 24 months and six groups for preschool age.
- The "Sunflowers" facility: two groups for children up to 3 years old and six groups for preschool age.
- The "Flowers" facility: two groups for children up to 3 years old and five groups for preschool age.
- The "Kokichinja" facility: only two groups for preschool age.

Near the city, in one of the smaller villages, there is also a day care center that serves children from that region. In the near future, a new, modern facility is planned to be built that will be in accordance with European standards and will be able to accommodate more than 100 children.

In addition, in the period from 2019 to 2022, UNICEF implemented a program for social and emotional learning (SEL) that was implemented among all preschool educators in public preschool institutions in the country, including educators in Kocani. This program aims to develop social and emotional skills in children, which is of crucial importance for their further development and success in education.



The number and capacity (including the number of places and groups) of kindergartens are determined based on the number of children aged 3 to 6 years and the current regulations regarding the minimum number of children required to form a group.

The situation in the school year 2024/25 for the pre-school institutions-kindergartens in Municipality of Kochani is as follows:

Table1: Kindergarten facilities in the municipality of Kochani

Kindergarten facilities	Kids from 1-3 years old	Kids from 3-6 years old	Female	Male	Groups	Total
Bambi	62	89	72	79	6	151
Zvezdicki	52	123	81	94	8	175
Sonchogledi	65	145	97	113	8	210
Cvetovi	45	108	67	86	7	153
Kokichinja	11	32	20	23	2	43
Total	235	497	337	395	31	732

Source: Kochani Kindergarten Administration

Table 2: Changes in the number and capacity of kindergartens in the Municipality of Kochani

School year	Kindergartens	Children	Places in kindergartens		School teachers	School groups
		Total	Total	Per 100 children		
2021/2022	5	570	685		63	30
2022/2023	5	696	685		61	30
2023/2024	5	689	685		62	30
2024/2025	5	732	685		62	31

Source: Kochani Kindergarten Administration

For the analyzed period there is no drastic change in the kindergarten facilities in the Municipality. The capacity of the kindergartens is in accordance with the number of children covered. The average occupancy of 1 group in the kindergarten is within the current standards. Maximum number of children in one school group is 30 children.

Primary education

Primary education in Kochani is implemented through several primary schools that offer quality education for children from 6 to 14 years old. Education is divided into two cycles:

1. First cycle (from 1st to 4th grade)
2. Second cycle (from 5th to 9th grade)

In these schools compulsory education process is implemented according to national education curriculum which includes subjects such as mathematics, Macedonian language, natural science, social sciences, art, sport education and others.

Education is organized from Monday to Friday, and classes usually start early in the morning and last until the afternoon. Kochani has several primary schools, some of which have branch schools in the villages. School places are provided with the necessary resources and infrastructure. Students have access to various activities and extracurricular programs, such as sports competitions, music and art activities.

In municipality of Kochani there are six primary schools, one of which is a musical school.

The situation in the primary schools in the school year 2023/24 is as follows in the table below:

Table 3: Territorial distribution of general educational schools in the Municipality of Kochani

Primary school	Number of students	Number of classes	Average number of students per class
PS "Krste P. Misirkov"	197	19	10
PS "St. Cyril and Methodius"	954	48	20
PS "Rade Kratovche"	425	28	15
PS "Malina Popivanova"	482	29	17
PS "Nikola Karev"	500	37	13
Music school "Risto Jurukov" Kochani	164	20	8
TOTAL	2722	181	15

Source: Kochani Municipal Administration

Secondary education



In municipality of Kochani are established and work 2 secondary schools- secondary school for general education and economics and 1 Vocational school.

SOU "Ljupčo Santov" offers both general education (gymnasium) and specialized programs in economics. There are approximately 503 students enrolled and approximately 70 employees.

SOU "Gošo Vikentiev" provides education in three technical fields:

- Machine Engineering: Profiles include electrical energy, mechanical technician, and technical specialist for production machinery.
- Electrical Engineering: Profiles include computer technology and automation, electronics and telecommunications, electrical energy, and electromechanics.
- Traffic Engineering: Offers training in traffic-related fields, including opportunities to obtain a driver's license.

There are approximately 559 students across 34 classes ,and 104 staff members.

The situation in the secondary schools in the school year 2023/24 is as follows in the table below:

Table 4: Territorial distribution of secondary educational schools in the Municipality of Kochani

Secondary school	Number of students	Number of classes	Average number of students per class
SS "Ljupcho Santov"	503	31	16
SS "Gosho Vikentiev"	559	34	16
TOTAL	1062	65	16

Source: Kochani Municipal Administration

Inclusive education

Inclusive education in Kochani is part of the national inclusive education system implemented in the Republic of North Macedonia after the adoption of the 2019 Law on Primary Education. Primary and secondary schools in Kochani follow the national policy for inclusion by integrating children with special educational needs into mainstream classrooms with professional support and adapted learning methods.

Schools in Kochani establish inclusive school teams composed of teachers, psychologists, pedagogues, parents, and special educators. These teams prepare Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and monitor the educational progress of students with disabilities and learning difficulties. Educational assistants are also engaged to support students during classes and school activities.

In 2025/2026 school year, only three primary schools in Municipality of Kochani engaged educational assistants as following:

- In primary school OOU „Nikola Karev" Kochani were engaged 4 education assistants, and registered 6 children with different spectrums of disabilities.
- In primary school OOU Cyril and Methodius" Kochani were engaged 5 education assistants, and registered 10 children with different spectrums of disabilities.
- In primary school Malina Pop Ivanova" Kochani were engaged 7 education assistants, and were registered 10 children with different spectrums of disabilities.

From the information given above, schools need more education assistants with aim to be able to support more children with disabilities.

Support for children and families is also provided through local institutions and organizations such as Inter-Municipal Centre for Social Work - Kochani and Solidarity Center "I Want Life in Kochani", which assist in social inclusion, counseling, and support for vulnerable groups and children with special needs.

From August 5th, 2019 (National gazette 161 of Republic of North Macedonia), there are changes in the national Law for education that emphasize the inclusion of the children with special needs and working systematically with the gifted and talented children.

At the national level, inclusive education reforms transformed special schools into resource centers that support mainstream schools, teachers, and parents. UNICEF and the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education report that inclusive education in North Macedonia continues to improve through increased teacher training, educational assistants, and stronger institutional support.

1.3. Overview of the Educational System in Piraeus , Greece

1.3.1. Educational system in Greece

1.3.1.1. General Overview of the Education System in Greece

The education system in Greece is **public, centrally administered, and regulated** by the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports. **Compulsory education spans from the age of 4 to 15** and encompasses **pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education**, ensuring a unified and coherent educational pathway for all learners.

Pre-primary education (ages 4–6) is provided through kindergartens and focuses on the early development of children's cognitive, social, and emotional skills. **Primary education (ages 6–12)** is delivered in primary schools (Dimotiko) and aims at the acquisition of fundamental knowledge, basic competences, and key learning skills. **Lower secondary education (ages 12–15)** is offered in Gymnasiums and represents the final stage of compulsory schooling.

Upper secondary education, which is **non-compulsory**, is addressed to students **aged 15–18** and is provided through **General Lyceums and Vocational Lyceums**. This level constitutes a crucial transitional phase, preparing learners for **higher education, vocational education and training (VET)**, and **integration into the labour market**.

Higher education in Greece is provided exclusively by **public universities and higher education institutions** and is offered **free of charge**, in accordance with constitutional provisions. Access is mainly regulated through **national entrance examinations**, and programmes are primarily attended by students **aged 18 and above**.



In parallel with formal education, **non-formal and informal learning structures**—such as lifelong learning centres, second chance schools, and youth programmes—play a complementary role in the educational landscape. These structures contribute significantly to the promotion of **lifelong learning, social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal and professional development** across different population groups.

The Greek education system is founded on the principles of **equity, universal access to education, and social cohesion**, aiming to support learners’ **holistic development** and their effective participation in **social, cultural, and professional life**. Systematic, comparative, and policy-oriented information on the organisation, governance, and reforms of the Greek education system is provided through the **Eurydice Network**, which functions as the official European information network on education systems and policies.

1.3.2 Educational system in Piraeus

The Piraeus area represents an important educational center within the wider Attica region, serving a large and diverse student population across all levels of education. The educational system operates under the national centralized framework and is implemented through a network of public and private institutions covering pre-school, primary, secondary, vocational, and higher education.

At the same time, special education services constitute an essential part of the educational structure, ensuring equal access to education for students with disabilities and special educational needs. Educational provision is supported through specialized schools, inclusive education structures, vocational training laboratories, and interdisciplinary support services.

The following sections present an overview of general education provision in Piraeus, followed by the presentation of special education structures and services operating in the region.

1.3.2.1. General Education in Piraeus, Greece

General education in the Piraeus area is implemented through a dense network of public and private educational institutions covering all levels of education, from pre-school to higher education. The educational system follows the national centralized structure and curriculum defined by the Ministry of Education.

Piraeus, as one of the largest urban and port areas in Greece, serves a large student population from the wider metropolitan area of Attica. The educational infrastructure includes pre-primary education units, primary schools, lower and upper secondary schools, vocational schools, and higher education institutions.

1.3.2.1.1. Pre-school Education in Piraeus

Pre-school education covers children aged 4–6 and is compulsory. Provision is offered through public and private kindergartens distributed across the municipalities of Piraeus, Keratsini, Drapetsona, Nikaia, Korydallos, Perama, and Salamina. The number of units is adjusted according to population density and local needs.

Table 1: Pre-school Education Infrastructure in Piraeus Category

Pre-school Education Infrastructure in Piraeus Category	Units	Children Enrolled	Teachers	Classes	Support Staff

Public Kindergartens	95	3,800	420	190	60
Private Kindergartens	35	1,150	140	70	25
Total	130	4,950	560	260	85

Table 2: Primary Schools in Piraeus School Type

Primary Schools in Piraeus School Type	Units	Students	Teachers	Classes	Support Staff
Public Primary Schools	80	14,500	1,150	720	180
Private Primary Schools	15	2,200	210	120	40
Total	95	16,700	1,360	840	220

1.3.2.1.2. Secondary Education (Gymnasium – Lyceum – Vocational Education)

Secondary education includes General Lower Secondary Schools (Gymnasia), General Upper Secondary Schools (Lyceums), and Vocational Schools (EPAL).

Directories of educational units confirm the presence of multiple Gymnasia and Lyceums across the municipality and surrounding areas. Additionally, local listings show dozens of Lyceum-level units across the wider Piraeus urban area.

Table 3: Secondary Education Schools in Piraeus School Type

Secondary Education Schools in Piraeus School Type	Units	Students	Teachers	Classes	Support Staff
Gymnasiums	42	9,800	820	420	110
General Lyceums	28	6,400	600	280	90
Vocational High Schools (EPAL)	14	4,100	380	190	75
Private Secondary Schools	10	1,900	210	95	35
Total	94	22,200	2,010	985	310

1.3.2.1.3. Higher Education in Piraeus Area

Higher education in the Piraeus region is represented mainly by the University of Piraeus and branches of the University of West Attica, covering fields such as economics, business administration, maritime studies, and engineering.

Table 4: Higher Education Institutions in Piraeus Area Institution

Higher Education Institutions in Piraeus Area Institution	Type	Students	Faculties Departments	Academic Staff	Administrative Staff
University of Piraeus	Public University	13,500	10	420	260
University of West Attica (Piraeus Facilities)	Public University	8,000	6	320	210
Private Colleges / HE Providers	Private	3,500	Various	180	140
Total	—	25,000	—	920	610

Higher education institutions in Piraeus are closely connected with maritime economy, logistics, business studies, and digital technologies.

1.3.2.1.4. Overall General Education Capacity in Piraeus

Table 5: Summary of General Education Provision in Piraeus Level

Summary of General Education Provision in Piraeus Level	Units	Students	Teachers	Support Staff
Pre-school	130	4,950	560	85
Primary	95	16,700	1,360	220
Secondary	94	22,200	2,010	310
Higher Education	8+	25,000	920	610
Total	327+	68,850	4,850	1,225

1.3.2.2. Special Education in Piraeus, Greece

Special education in the Piraeus area is an integral part of the public educational system and is implemented under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. The provision of special education services aims to ensure equal access to education for children and students with disabilities or special educational needs (SEN), in line with national inclusive education policies.

Educational provision covers all levels of compulsory and post-compulsory education, including pre-school education, primary education, and secondary vocational education, through a structured network of special schools, integration classes, and vocational laboratories. Assessment, placement, and support are coordinated by the Centers for Interdisciplinary Assessment, Counselling and Support (KEDASY).

1.3.2.2.1. Pre-school Special Education

Pre-school special education in Piraeus addresses children aged 4 to 6 who present developmental delays, disabilities, or complex educational needs. Educational provision is delivered through Special Kindergartens and Integration Classes operating within general kindergartens. Attendance in pre-school education is compulsory, and children with special educational needs may attend either inclusive settings or specialized units, depending on individual assessment outcomes and parental choice. Early intervention is a key priority at this level. During the school year 2022/2023, the pre-school special education network in the wider Piraeus area included the following units:

Table 1: Pre-school Special Education Units in Piraeus

School Name	Municipality	Type of Unit	Students	Teachers	Special Staff	Support Personnel
1st Special Kindergarten of Piraeus	Piraeus	Special Kindergarten	28	8	5	4
2nd Special Kindergarten of Keratsini	Keratsini-Drapetsona	Special Kindergarten	24	7	4	3
Special	Nikaia	Special	26	8	5	4

School Name	Municipality	Type of Unit	Students	Teachers	Special Staff	Support Personnel
Kindergarten of Nikaia		Kindergarten				
Integration Classes (various units)	Wider Piraeus	Integration Classes	67	18	6	5
Total	—	—	145	41	20	16

The average number of children per class in special kindergartens ranges from 6 to 8, ensuring individualized educational planning and intensive support.

1.3.2.2.2. Primary Special Education

Primary special education in Piraeus serves students aged 6 to 12 and focuses on literacy, numeracy, social development, and functional autonomy. Educational provision is ensured through Special Primary Schools and Integration Classes embedded in mainstream primary schools. The special primary education network in Piraeus during the school year 2022/2023 is presented below:

Table 2: Primary Special Education Units in Piraeus

School Name	Municipality	Students	Classes	Teachers	Special Staff	Support Personnel
1st Special Primary School of Piraeus	Piraeus	48	7	18	8	6
2nd Special Primary School of Piraeus	Piraeus	44	6	16	7	5
Special Primary School of Keratsini	Keratsini-Drapetsona	39	6	14	6	5
Special Primary School of Nikaia	Nikaia	42	6	15	7	5
Special Primary School of Perama	Perama	33	5	12	5	4
Integration Classes (Primary Level)	Wider Piraeus	174	—	62	21	12
Total	—	380	—	137	54	37

1.3.2.2.3. Secondary Special Education – ENEEGYL

Special Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (ENEEGYL) provide education for students aged 15 to 22 with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities or multiple educational needs. These schools combine general education, vocational training, and life-skills development, aiming to promote social inclusion and transition to employment or supported vocational pathways. The Piraeus area hosts two ENEEGYL units with diversified vocational orientation:

Table 3: ENEEGYL Schools in Piraeus

School Name	Municipality	Students	Vocational Sectors	Teachers	Special Scientific Staff	Special Helping Staff
ENEEGYL Piraeus	Piraeus	110	Catering, Gardening, Handicrafts, IT Support	21	13	3
ENEEGYL Keratsini	Keratsini-Drapetsona	92	Hairdressing and Barberrring	40	15	12
Total	—	202	—	61	28	15

Vocational sectors are aligned with local labor market characteristics and emphasize practical skills, autonomy, and employability.

1.3.2.2.4. Special Vocational Education and Training Laboratories (EEEEK)

EEEEK units serve students aged 14 to 22 with more severe disabilities, focusing on vocational preparation, daily living skills, and social participation. Education is structured around specialized workshops and individualized support.

Table 4: EEEEEK Units in Piraeus

School Name	Municipality	Students	Workshops	Teachers	Special Staff	Support Personnel
EEEEK Piraeus	Piraeus	58	Cooking, Gardening, Handicrafts, Recycling	26	10	9
EEEEK Nikaia	Nikaia	54	Woodcraft, Packaging, Auxiliary Services	24	9	8
EEEEK Keratsini	Keratsini-Drapetsona	53	Catering Support, Creative Workshops	20	8	7

Total	—	165	11	70	27	24
-------	---	-----	----	----	----	----

1.3.2.2.5. Overall Capacity of Special Education in Piraeus

Table 5: Summary of Special Education Provision in Piraeus Educational Level

Summary of Special Education Provision in Piraeus Educational Level	Units	Students	Teachers	Special Staff	Support Personnel
Pre-school	10	145	41	20	16
Primary	14	380	137	54	37
ENEEGYL	2	210	92	33	26
EEEEK	3	165	70	27	24
Total	29	900	340	134	103

1.3.2.3. Educational Challenges and Overall Conclusion

General and special education in the Piraeus area face common structural challenges related to the characteristics of a large urban and port region. High student population density places continuous pressure on school infrastructure, while several school buildings require modernization and improvement of accessibility standards. At the same time, schools are increasingly called to respond to diverse social and economic needs, requiring enhanced psychosocial support services, digital infrastructure, and continuous professional development for educational staff. In special education, additional challenges include the need for more specialized support personnel, expansion of inclusive education structures, and stronger transition pathways from education to employment and independent living.

Overall, education in Piraeus is supported by a strong and well-established network of educational institutions across all levels. Continuous investment in infrastructure, inclusive education practices, technological development, and interdisciplinary support services is essential in order to respond effectively to future educational and social needs. Strengthening cooperation between educational institutions, local authorities, and community services will further contribute to improving educational quality, reducing inequalities, and promoting social inclusion in the wider Piraeus region.

1.3.3. Inclusive Education in Greece

Inclusive education is a core pillar of educational policy in Greece and is aligned with European and international frameworks promoting inclusion, equal opportunities, and non-discrimination for persons with disabilities. The main legislative framework is defined by Law 3699/2008 and its subsequent amendments, which regulate Special Education and Training and promote the participation of students and young people with disabilities and/or special educational needs within mainstream education whenever possible.

Inclusive education in Greece is implemented through a **dual approach**, combining inclusion within mainstream schools with the operation of **Special Education Schools** at both **primary and secondary levels**. Mainstream schools are supported through integration (support) classes, parallel support provided by specialised teachers, curriculum differentiation, and individualized educational plans.

At the same time, **Special Primary Schools and Special Secondary Schools (lower and upper secondary)** operate nationwide, providing tailored educational programmes for students with more complex or multiple support needs. These schools employ specialised educational staff and apply adapted curricula, with a strong focus on life skills, social development, and preparation for independent living and vocational pathways.



The Centres for Interdisciplinary Assessment, Counselling and Support (KEDASY) play a key role in assessing students' needs, recommending appropriate educational placements (mainstream or special education settings), and ensuring cooperation between schools, families, and support services.

Particular emphasis is placed on supporting young people with special educational needs during key transition phases, especially from primary to secondary education and from secondary education to higher education, vocational training, or employment. Despite significant progress, inclusive education in Greece continues to face challenges, including limited availability of specialised staff, regional inequalities, and the need for stronger coordination among educational institutions, local authorities, and youth and social services.

Within this context, inclusive education in Greece is gradually evolving towards a more holistic and youth-centred model, combining formal education, special education structures, and non-formal learning activities, as well as awareness-raising and community-based initiatives that promote diversity, participation, and social inclusion.

1.3.3.1. Inclusive Education Practices

Inclusive education aims to ensure that all students, regardless of disability, background, or individual characteristics, have equal access to quality education and full participation in school life. It focuses on removing barriers to learning and creating school environments that respect diversity, promote equity, and support the holistic development of every learner.

Inclusive education is based on the principle that education systems should adapt to learners' needs and not the opposite. Diversity is considered a strength, and all students are viewed as active members of the school community. Through appropriate support measures and collaboration among educators, families, and specialists, inclusive education contributes to improved academic outcomes, social participation, and emotional well-being.

Well-designed inclusive educational environments promote positive interaction among students and foster mutual respect and understanding. Students with disabilities benefit from increased academic engagement and social inclusion, while all learners develop empathy, cooperation skills, and respect for diversity. Inclusive education also supports smoother transitions to further education and lifelong learning when combined with appropriate support.

1.3.3.2. Inclusive Education Practices

- **Positive Attitudes and Teacher Competences:** Educators adopt inclusive values, embrace diversity, and develop the skills required to support all learners through flexible and student-centred teaching approaches.
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Teaching is designed from the outset to be accessible to all students, offering multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Teaching methods, materials, and tasks are adapted to meet the different abilities, learning styles, and needs of students, enabling meaningful participation for all.
- **Collaborative and Cooperative Learning:** Learning activities promote teamwork, peer support, and co-teaching models, encouraging social interaction and shared responsibility for learning.
- **Supportive Classroom Climate:** Classrooms provide a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment that fosters a sense of belonging, acceptance of diversity, and positive relationships among students.
- **Use of Assistive Technology:** Educational and digital tools are used to enhance accessibility, communication, and active participation in learning processes.

- **Individualized Education Programs (IEP):** Personalized learning goals are developed and implemented for students with special educational needs, with continuous monitoring and adjustment of support strategies.
- **Collaboration with Families and Specialists:** Ongoing cooperation with parents, special educators, psychologists, and other professionals ensures comprehensive and coordinated support for students.

In conclusion, inclusive education promotes equal opportunities, social cohesion, and full participation in education by valuing diversity and responding effectively to the needs of all learners.

1.4 Overview of the Educational System in Daruvar , Croatia

1.4.1. Educational system in Croatia

Croatia has a **coherent, vertically structured** education system extending from early childhood education and care to higher education and adult learning. **National legislation and curricula** establish common standards, while cities, municipalities, counties and education institutions organise provision locally.

The Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM) is the central public authority for education policy, legislation, national curricula and major system-level standards. Local and regional authorities act as founders of many kindergartens and schools and are responsible for important operational, infrastructural and financing functions. Specialist national bodies support implementation and quality: **the Education and Teacher Training Agency (AZOO), the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (ASOO), the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (NCVVO), and the Agency for Science and Higher Education (AZVO).**

The system is highly digitalized administratively. **e-Matica** is the central school data register, while ŠeR – School e-Rudnik provides public statistical views of schools, pupils, programmes, achievement, attendance, secondary-school admissions, national school-leaving examination results and transition to higher education.

Structure and progression

Stage	Typical age	Main status / provision	Typical progression
Early childhood education and care (ECEC)	6 months to school entry	Mostly non-compulsory; compulsory preschool programme in the year before primary school	ECEC / preschool → primary school
Primary education	Usually 6–15	Compulsory and free; 8 years (Grades 1–8)	Primary → general, vocational or arts secondary education
Secondary education	Usually 15–18/19	Gymnasia (general academic), vocational and arts pathways	Employment and/or national school-leaving examinations → higher education

Stage	Typical age	Main status / provision	Typical progression
Higher education	Usually 18+	University and professional studies; ECTS-based	Undergraduate → graduate / integrated → postgraduate / doctoral routes
Adult and lifelong learning	15+ for adult-education participant status	Formal, non-formal, informal and self-directed learning	Qualifications, partial qualifications, micro-qualifications, retraining and upskilling

Framework: Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM), Education; School Education Act; Higher Education and Scientific Activity Act; Adult Education Act.

Early childhood and preschool education

ECEC covers children **from six months of age until entry to primary school** and combines **education, care, health protection, nutrition and social care**. Provision is mainly organised by **kindergartens**, often founded by municipalities or cities. Attendance before the compulsory preschool programme is not generally compulsory. The preschool programme in the year immediately preceding primary-school entry is compulsory for all children; for children who are not already enrolled in a regular kindergarten programme it is provided as a separate, publicly funded programme. It typically lasts **a minimum of 250 hours** to prepare children for the transition to formal schooling. Preschool provision is expected to identify developmental needs early and to organise reasonable adjustments and professional support where required.

Primary education

Primary education lasts **eight years** and is **compulsory** and **free**. Children normally start around age six and complete Grade 8 at about age fourteen or fifteen. The first four grades emphasise integrated class teaching; Grades 5–8 move to subject-specialist teaching. Schools deliver regular and special programmes, may provide parallel arts education, and organise additional support for pupils who need it as well as enrichment for gifted pupils. Entry to secondary education is based mainly on primary-school achievement and, for certain programmes, additional criteria such as aptitude, health requirements or special admissions procedures.

Secondary education

Secondary education is **not universally compulsory**, but participation is high. The principal routes are: (1) **four-year gymnasias** programmes providing broad general academic education; (2) **vocational education and training (VET)**, most commonly **three- or four-year** programmes, with shorter or longer programmes in specific cases; and (3) **arts education**. Four- or five-year vocational schools (e.g. technical and medical schools) provide specialised vocational education and lead to recognised **vocational qualifications**. Three-year vocational and craft schools focus primarily on **practical training for specific trades and occupations**, such as chefs, mechanics and hairdressers. They conclude with an apprenticeship and a final vocational exam. A **major VET**



reform began to be implemented from 2025/2026, introducing modular, learning- outcome - based vocational curricula and a stronger role for work-based learning.

For pupils in **gymnasia**, the standard completion route includes the National secondary school-leaving examinations (**Državna matura**). Students who complete at least a four-year vocational programme may also sit these examinations when they wish to compete for higher-education places. The examination system is nationally standardised and administered by **NCVVO**; compulsory subjects include **Croatian language, Mathematics and a foreign language**, with elective subjects available according to the examination catalogue.

Higher education

Croatia has a **binary higher-education** system based on **Bologna Process principles**: **university studies** are more academically and research oriented, while **professional studies** are more directly labour-market oriented. Higher education is delivered by universities, faculties, art academies and universities of applied sciences (*Veleučilišta*). Studies use the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (**ECTS**): **undergraduate programmes** normally carry 180–240 ECTS credits, **graduate programmes** 60–120 ECTS, and the **combined** undergraduate- plus -graduate route at least 300 ECTS; some regulated fields use integrated programmes. Applications to undergraduate and integrated programmes are largely managed through a national electronic application system.

Adult education and lifelong learning

Adult education is a formal part of the Croatian education system and is based on the principles of **lifelong learning, accessibility, inclusion and freedom of choice**. An adult-education participant may generally be a person **aged 15 or over** who meets the entry requirements of the programme. Provision includes completion of basic or secondary education, acquisition of qualifications or partial qualifications, retraining, upskilling and micro-qualifications. **Non-formal and informal learning, workplace learning and self-directed learning form the wider lifelong-learning environment.**

Minority-language education and horizontal mobility

Croatia also guarantees education in the **languages and scripts of national minorities**. Depending on the legally defined model, teaching may be delivered **predominantly** in the minority language, **bilingually**, or through **additional minority-language and culture classes**. This is particularly **relevant to Daruvar**, where **Czech-language education** provides a continuous pathway from preschool through primary education and into secondary provision. Horizontal mobility between general, vocational and arts routes is possible, subject to programme requirements, recognition of previous learning and any required difference examinations.

School year versus instructional year

Croatian legislation distinguishes the **school year** from the instructional (**teaching**) **year**. The school year formally runs from 1 September to 31 August and is divided into **two semesters**. The Minister issues a separate annual decision setting the exact teaching dates and pupil holidays for primary and secondary schools.

2025/2026 calendar	Dates	What this means
School year	1 September 2025 – 31 August 2026	Administrative school year.
Instructional year	8 September 2025 – 12 June 2026	Minimum 175 teaching days; final-year secondary pupils finish on 22 May 2026 and have at least 160 teaching days.
First semester	8 September – 23 December 2025	Teaching period before the winter holiday.
Winter holiday	24 December 2025 – 9 January 2026	17 calendar days; teaching resumes Monday, 12 January 2026.
Second semester	12 January – 12 June 2026	For final-year secondary pupils: to 22 May 2026.
Spring holiday	30 March – 6 April 2026	8 calendar days; teaching resumes Tuesday, 7 April 2026.
Summer holiday	From 15 June 2026	Begins after the instructional year, subject to examinations, remedial work, final projects, national school-leaving examinations and vocational practice.

Source: MZOM Decision on the beginning and end of the instructional year, number of working days and pupil holidays for 2025/2026 (NN 88/2025). Winter and spring formal holidays total 25 calendar days; weekends and public holidays are additional non-teaching days.

How a school week typically works

- Teaching is normally organised over five working days, Monday to Friday. A standard classroom lesson is usually 45 minutes; practical or work-based learning may follow different time arrangements.
- Primary education is divided into class teaching (Grades 1–4), where a class teacher teaches most subjects, and subject teaching (Grades 5–8), where specialist subject teachers predominate.
- Schools may work in one or more shifts depending on capacity. Each school adopts an annual work plan and a school curriculum setting its timetable, non-teaching days, projects, extracurricular activities, excursions, competitions and other institutional activities.
- Assessment in most school subjects uses a five-point scale: 5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 good, 2 sufficient/pass and 1 insufficient/fail. Conduct is assessed descriptively.

1.4.2 Educational system in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County and Daruvar

Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County and the Daruvar education network

Bjelovar-Bilogora County has a dispersed network serving urban and rural communities. According to the 2021 Census, **Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County had a population of 102,295**

residents. The county comprises five towns: Bjelovar, Čazma, Daruvar, Garešnica and Grubišno Polje. Population data from the 2011 and 2021 censuses indicate a **declining population trend across all five towns**, reflecting the broader demographic challenges faced by the county.

Town	Population in 2011	Population in 2021
<i>Bjelovar</i>	40,443	36,433
<i>Čazma</i>	8,095	6,947
<i>Daruvar</i>	11,612	10,159
<i>Garešnica</i>	10,466	8,672
<i>Grubišno Polje</i>	6,431	5,389

Bjelovar, as the administrative centre of the county, remains by far the largest town, with 36,433 inhabitants in 2021. **Daruvar**, with **10,159 inhabitants**, is the second most populous of the county's five towns. These demographic trends are relevant when considering the organisation and accessibility of educational, social and support services, particularly in smaller communities and rural areas of the county.

The education network in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County comprises **26 primary schools and 15 secondary schools**, distributed across the towns and municipalities of the County. Secondary education institutions are predominantly concentrated in Bjelovar and Daruvar, while primary schools are more widely distributed across the County, ensuring access to education for pupils in both urban and rural areas. At higher-education level, the University of Applied Sciences in Bjelovar (Veleučilište u Bjelovaru) is the principal county-level institution.

Primary Schools

According to the official County list, there are **26 primary schools** operating in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County. Five of these are located in the City of Bjelovar, while the remaining schools are distributed throughout the towns and municipalities of the County.

The County's primary education network also includes two Czech-language primary schools: Češka osnovna škola Jana Amosa Komenskog u Daruvaru i Češka osnovna škola Josipa Ružičke u Končanici. Their presence reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County.

At the beginning of the **2025/2026 school year**, primary schools in County were attended by a total of **7,563 pupils**. Of these, **3,667 students** were enrolled in Grade 1–4, while **3,896 pupils** attended Grade 5–8.

This means that pupils in Grade 1–4 accounted for approximately **48.5%** of the total primary school population, while pupils in Grade 5–8 accounted for approximately **51.5%**. The number of pupils in the upper four years of primary education was therefore slightly higher than the number enrolled in the first four years.

In addition to the mainstream primary education network, Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County has two specialised educational institutions providing primary education under special programmes for pupils with developmental difficulties: Centar za odgoj, obrazovanje i razvojnu podršku Bjelovar and Centar Rudolf Steiner Daruvar. In the 2025/2026 school year, these two institutions **provided education and specialist support** to a total of **146 pupils**.

Secondary Schools



According to the official County list, **15 secondary schools** operate in County. The largest concentration of secondary education institutions is found in Bjelovar, followed by Daruvar, while secondary schools also operate in Čazma, Garešnica and Grubišno Polje.

The County's secondary education network provides a diverse range of general, vocational and arts education programmes, including grammar school education, healthcare, economics, business administration, commerce, tourism and hospitality, food technology, technical and crafts-related education, as well as music education.

In the **2025/2026 school year**, secondary schools in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County were attended by a total of **4,066 students**, distributed across **230 class groups**.

This represents approximately **35% of the total primary and secondary school population** included in this statistical overview, while primary school pupils account for approximately **65%**.

When primary and secondary education are considered together, a total of **11,629 pupils/students** attended schools in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County in the 2025/2026 school year.

Level of Education	Number of Pupils/ Students	Share of Total
Primary schools	7,563	65.0%
Secondary schools	4,066	35.0%
Total	11,629	100.0%

Source: Ministry of Science, Education and Youth of the Republic of Croatia (MZOM), **ŠeR – Školski e-Rudnik** application; official statistical data for the 2025/26 school year.

In the 2025/2026 school year, a total of **1,439 pupils/students** with developmental difficulties were educated in Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska County.

Level of Education	Number of Pupils/Students with Developmental Difficulties
Primary schools	1,061
Secondary schools	378
Total	1,439

Source: Ministry of Science, Education and Youth of the Republic of Croatia (MZOM), **ŠeR – Školski e-Rudnik** application

Education institutions in Daruvar

Level / function	Institutions in Daruvar	Local provision
Preschool	Dječji vrtić “Vladimir Nazor” Daruvar; Češki dječji vrtić Ferde Mravenca Daruvar	2 kindergartens
General primary	Osnovna škola Vladimira Nazora Daruvar; Češka osnovna škola Jana Amosa Komenskog Daruvar	2 general primary schools



Level / function	Institutions in Daruvar	Local provision
Special primary / social-care institution	Centar za odgoj i obrazovanje Rudolf Steiner Daruvar	Special curricula and specialist support; also a social-welfare institution
Arts education	Glazbena škola Brune Bjelinskog Daruvar	Parallel primary and secondary music education
Secondary	Gimnazija Daruvar; Ekonomska i turistička škola Daruvar; Tehnička škola Daruvar	3 mainstream secondary schools
Higher education	No higher-education institution located in Daruvar; county-level option: Veleučilište u Bjelovaru	0 in Daruvar
Adult / lifelong learning	Pučko otvoreno učilište Daruvar and other authorised providers	Local adult-learning provision

Enrolment in Daruvar in 2025./2026. school year

The table below presents institutional headcounts in Daruvar. These are numbers enrolled in institutions located in Daruvar and therefore include some children and pupils who live in surrounding municipalities. They should not be interpreted as the number of children resident only within the administrative boundary of the City of Daruvar.

Level	Institution	Children / pupils	2025./2026. note
Preschool	Dječji vrtić “Vladimir Nazor” Daruvar	264	12 groups: 4 nursery + 8 kindergarten; regular 10-hour programme.
Preschool	Češki dječji vrtić Ferde Mravenca Daruvar	158	Start-of-year figure; the annual plan anticipated expansion to 191 during the year as additional capacity opened.
Primary	Osnovna škola Vladimira Nazora Daruvar	571	38 classes; main-school and branch-school provision.
Primary	Češka osnovna škola Jana Amosa Komenskog Daruvar	231	118 pupils in lower primary and 113 in subject teaching; Czech minority education.
Special education	Centar Rudolf Steiner Daruvar	72	3 classes; 10 educational groups.



Level	Institution	Children / pupils	2025./2026. note
Secondary	Gimnazija Daruvar	166	11 classes; general academic route, including Czech-language provision.
Secondary	Ekonomska i turistička škola Daruvar	325	18 classes; economic, tourism and related vocational programmes.
Secondary	Tehnička škola Daruvar	530	32 classes; technical and vocational programmes, including special vocational curricula.
Arts	Glazbena škola Brune Bjelinskog Daruvar	Not added separately	Parallel arts enrolment; adding it to mainstream school figures could double-count pupils.
422	802	1,021	

children in the two kindergartens at the start of 2025/26

pupils in the two general primary schools

students in the three mainstream secondary schools

Local figures: 2025/26 institutional annual work plans and official school data, cross-checked where possible with ŠeR / e-Matica. The Rudolf Steiner Centre is discussed separately because its service profile spans both education and social care.

1.4.3. Inclusion and education of pupils with developmental disabilities in Croatia and Daruvar

Croatia emphasizes an **inclusive approach**, ensuring that students with disabilities are **integrated** into the regular system whenever possible, supported by specific legal frameworks. Croatian **inclusion policy** is based on educating pupils with their peers wherever this is educationally appropriate, while ensuring that the programme, teaching methods, assessment, environment and support **correspond to the pupil’s functional abilities and needs**. The formal administrative decision on the appropriate education programme determines the curriculum model and relevant adjustments.

Four legally defined programme models

Programme model	Professional meaning in practice
-----------------	----------------------------------



Programme model	Professional meaning in practice
1. Regular curriculum with individualised procedures	The pupil works towards the regular curriculum outcomes without reducing the prescribed content, but teaching, task presentation, time, materials, communication, assessment and/or the learning environment are individualised.
2. Regular curriculum with adapted content and individualised procedures	The expected content and/or learning outcomes are adapted to the pupil's abilities, together with individualised teaching and assessment procedures.
3. Special curriculum with individualised procedures	A specially structured curriculum is used where the regular curriculum, even with adaptations, is not appropriate. It may be delivered in a special class/group or a special institution, depending on the formal decision and the school network.
4. Special curriculum for acquiring competences in activities of daily living and work, with individualised procedures	For pupils with more significant developmental disabilities whose education focuses on functional communication, self-care, socialisation, everyday living and work-related competences. It may continue up to the end of the school year in which the pupil turns 21.

Legal basis: Regulation on Primary and Secondary Education of Pupils with Developmental Disabilities (NN 24/2015) and the special curricula adopted for application from 2024/25.

Inclusion and Integration Mechanisms include:

Teaching assistants support students with disabilities and special educational needs in mainstream classrooms by providing practical, technical support, communication and social support (social integration) tailored to their individual needs, thereby promoting their participation, independence and inclusion in school life.

Expert Teams: Every school is mandated to have a pedagogical-psychological team that monitors the student's progress and adjusts the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Assistive Technology: Legal frameworks increasingly support the funding of specialized equipment to bridge the gap in learning capabilities.

The Croatian education system is founded on the principle of **equal opportunities for all**. In recent years, the focus has shifted significantly from a traditional medical model toward a **social and biopsychosocial model**, emphasizing the removal of barriers to ensure full inclusion. Croatia's commitment to inclusion is legally anchored in the concept of "reasonable adjustment."

1. Preschool Education (Early Childhood Intervention)

For children with developmental difficulties, the process begins as early as possible.

- **Early Intervention:** Children are integrated into regular kindergartens with individualized programs or attend specialized centers if their needs are more complex.
- **Support:** Inclusion is supported by mobile expert teams and professional associates (psychologists, speech therapists, and rehabilitators).

2. Primary Education (Compulsory Schooling)



Primary education lasts eight years. For students with disabilities, the Ordinance on primary and secondary education of students with developmental difficulties defines several integration models:

- **Full Integration:** Students attend regular classes with an **Individualized Curriculum** (adjustment of methods) or a **Tailored Curriculum** (adjustment of content).
- **Partial Integration:** Students attend certain subjects in regular classes and others in specialized groups within the same school.
- **Special Education Groups:** For students with more significant disabilities, classes are held in specialized institutions or school units.

3. Secondary Education: Pathways and Specialization

Secondary education is where the system offers specific vocational tailoring to ensure future employability. Students with disabilities have the right to **direct enrollment** or prioritized points, provided they meet the minimum requirements.

Types of Programs in Secondary Education:

- **Gymnasiums and 4-year Vocational Schools:** Students with minor difficulties follow regular programs with individualized support. They can take the national secondary school-leaving examinations with adjusted conditions (extra time, assistive technology, or adapted materials).
- **Adjusted Programs (3-year Vocational):** Designed for students who cannot master standard vocational curricula. These programs focus on practical skills for specific trades.
- **Special Programs for Gaining Competencies (TES):** Aimed at students with more severe disabilities, focusing on basic work skills and social independence.

4. Higher Education (University Level)

At the university level, students with disabilities are supported through:

- **Office for Students with Disabilities:** Most major universities (Zagreb, Split, Rijeka) have dedicated offices that coordinate peer support, transport, and exam adjustments.
- **Subsidized Housing and Scholarships:** Specific quotas exist for student dormitories and state-funded scholarships to alleviate the financial burden of education.

Primary education and transition to secondary education for pupils with developmental disabilities

Choosing a secondary-school route is a **planned transition** rather than a single admissions decision. A professionally appropriate pathway generally involves the following steps:

1. **Transition assessment** in primary education. The class teacher, professional support team, parents/carers and the pupil review attainment, functional abilities, interests, support needs and the existing formal education decision.
2. **Career guidance and programme matching.** For candidates using the disability-related admissions route, the Croatian Employment Service (HZZ) provides professional career-guidance input and recommends suitable programmes, taking account of abilities and relevant health requirements.
3. **Application** through the national secondary-school admissions system. Candidates apply to programmes for which they meet the prescribed conditions. Special admissions provisions ensure that disability-related support needs and the HZZ recommendation are considered within the regulated process.

4. **Transfer of educational information and support planning.** The receiving school implements the formal appropriate-programme decision, prepares individualised/adapted planning where required, and coordinates teachers, professional associates, parents and any approved teaching assistant.
5. **Ongoing review.** The programme and support arrangements are reviewed in the light of the student's progress, participation, well-being and vocational development. Where appropriate, cooperation between primary and secondary schools, HZZ, health/social-care services and families support continuity.

Social inclusion should not end when a young person finishes secondary school. Croatian universities increasingly operate dedicated support structures for students with disabilities. University disability offices can provide information, recommendations for adaptation of teaching and examinations and support in overcoming everyday academic barriers. The University of Zagreb also promotes peer support and activities aimed at socially including students from under-represented groups.

International mobility represents another important dimension. The Croatian Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes points students with disabilities towards the **Inclusive Mobility** platform and highlights additional Erasmus+ support available to participants with fewer opportunities. Erasmus+ also enables more flexible mobility formats where barriers prevent participation in conventional long-term mobility.

This is important because young people with disabilities should have access not only to compulsory education, but also to **international mobility, volunteering, higher education, employment preparation and active citizenship.**

Preschool inclusion in Daruvar

Both Daruvar kindergartens can include children with developmental difficulties in regular groups, with professional cooperation, individualised planning and external specialist support according to the child's needs and the resources available. Dječji vrtić "Vladimir Nazor" identifies cooperation with specialist health and support institutions, including the Rudolf Steiner Centre, as part of its local support network. **Early identification and coordinated transition planning are important because support needs may change substantially before school entry.**

Verified / published figure for primary and secondary schools in Daruvar

Indicator, school year 2025./2026.	Osnovna škola Vladimira Nazora Daruvar	Češka osnovna škola Jana Amosa Komenskog Daruvar	Ekonomska i turistička škola Daruvar	Gymnasium Daruvar
Teaching assistants	15	6	2	0
Total pupils with formal appropriate-programme decisions	42	20	31	5



Indicator, school year 2025./2026.	Osnovna škola Vladimira Nazora Daruvar	Češka osnovna škola Jana Amosa Komenskog Daruvar	Ekonomska i turistička škola Daruvar	Gymnasium Daruvar
Regular curriculum with individualised procedures	14	15	16	5
Regular curriculum with adapted content + individualised procedures	28	5	15	0

School sources: OŠ Vladimira Nazora Daruvar, ČOŠ J.A.Komenskog Daruvar, Ekonomska i turistička škola Daruvar, Gimnazija Daruvar annual work planning / curriculum pages; The 2025/26 annual plan and curriculum are listed on the current school’s websites.

Centar za odgoj i obrazovanje Rudolf Steiner Daruvar

The Rudolf Steiner Centre is a distinctive part of Daruvar’s education and support network. Institutionally, it is a **state social-welfare institution** under the administrative responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy. At the same time, it is licensed to conduct **primary education under special programmes**, and that educational activity is governed by school-education legislation, curricula and conditions set by the **ministry responsible for education (MZOM)**. This dual context is important: the Centre combines educational **provision with social services and specialist support**.

According to the Centre’s official description of its activities, it provides **primary education under special programmes for children and young people with intellectual disabilities and for pupils with combined or multiple developmental disabilities**. Its organisational structure includes a department of primary education under a special programme, together with **residential and support/service functions**. In contemporary professional terms, the Centre serves pupils whose more significant and/or multiple developmental disabilities require a level of curriculum adaptation, specialist intervention and environmental support that cannot always be provided adequately through a mainstream placement.

Educational pathways within or from the Centre are not identical for every pupil. Pupils who complete a special primary curriculum and have the functional abilities and vocational profile to continue in secondary education may **progress to a special vocational curriculum**. In Daruvar, an important local continuation route is **Tehnička škola Daruvar**, which offers assistant-level vocational qualifications. Pupils who are not able to continue into a special secondary vocational programme may continue in the special curriculum for acquiring competences in activities of daily living and work, with individualised procedures, no later than the end of the school year in which they turn **21 years of age**. The individual pathway is determined through formal assessment and the appropriate-programme decision, not simply by age or diagnosis.

Important distinction



Centar Rudolf Steiner is not a “Waldorf school” despite its name. Its education function is special education under Croatian statutory curricula and regulations; the institution also provides social-welfare services and is undergoing broader service transformation and deinstitutionalisation. Institutional sources: Centar Rudolf Steiner – “Djelatnost” and “Opći akti” pages (latest annual work plan publicly listed at the time of review: 2024/25); Croatian Parliament debate, 15 January 2025; MROSP social-welfare framework; NN 24/2015 and NN 42/2024.

Tehnička škola Daruvar: inclusive and special vocational provision

Tehnička škola Daruvar combines mainstream **technical and vocational programmes** with **special vocational curricula**. For first-year admissions in 2025/2026, the school offered **assistant-level qualifications including Assistant Cook, Assistant Interior Finishing Worker and Assistant Carpenter**. These curricula are vocational qualifications rather than merely “adapted versions” of a mainstream programme: they have defined learning outcomes, vocational modules, work- based learning and qualification requirements, while teaching and support are organised according to pupils’ formal education decisions and individual needs.

Tehnička škola Daruvar, 2025./2026.	Verified / published figure	Notes
Total pupils with formal appropriate-programme decisions	75	Include all pupils formally educated under an appropriate programme.
Regular curriculum with individualised procedures	31	Mainstream curriculum outcomes; individualised procedures.
Regular curriculum with adapted content + individualised procedures	13	Adapted content/outcomes plus individualised procedures.
Special vocational curricula / assistant occupations	31	If useful, also break down by Assistant Cook, Assistant Interior Finishing Worker and Assistant Carpenter / predecessor cohorts.
Teaching assistants	4	Number of authorised/employed teaching assistants supporting pupils in 2025/26.

Technical School sources: Annual Work Plan 2025/26; School Curriculum 2025/26; official 2025/26 admissions page and vocational-programme pages.

Higher education and lifelong learning in the local area

Daruvar does not currently host a university, faculty or university of applied sciences. At county level, **Veleučilište u Bjelovaru** provides professional higher-education opportunities. Daruvar residents also access higher education in Zagreb, Osijek and other university centres, with applications to most undergraduate and integrated programmes managed through the national electronic higher-education admissions system.



Lifelong learning is locally represented by **Pučko otvoreno učilište Daruvar**, a city-founded public institution that provides adult-education programmes alongside cultural activities. Its role is consistent with the national adult-education framework: helping adults complete or update qualifications, acquire partial qualifications and micro-qualifications, retrain for new work and develop competences throughout working life.

Conclusion

The Croatian education system combines nationally defined standards with local implementation and multiple progression routes. Daruvar illustrates this particularly well: two-language minority provision, general and vocational secondary education, parallel music education, adult learning, and a locally connected continuum of inclusive and special education. For pupils with developmental disabilities, **the key principle is not a single institutional model but an individually determined continuum of support—from inclusion in regular kindergarten and school groups, through individualised or adapted regular curricula, to special curricula in a specialist institution and, where appropriate, supported vocational progression.** This combination of vertical progression and horizontal flexibility is central to understanding how the system operates in practice.

2. EXISTING LOCAL POLICIES/STRATEGIES IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE EU DISABILITY RIGHTS STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR THEIR IMPROVEMENT ADDRESSING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies in Portugal – Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira

The Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira has been developing a local education policy based on the principles of inclusion, equity, participation and equal opportunities, in line with the European Union Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Municipal Strategic Education Plan 2030 (PEEM 2030) identifies “Education for All” as one of its strategic priorities, promoting an integrated approach involving schools, families, municipal services and the wider community. This approach is implemented through several initiatives, particularly the CLICK – Literacies for the World Programme (2025–2028), which focuses on inclusion, well-being and educational success.

The multidisciplinary intervention involves psychologists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, working in close cooperation with the Multidisciplinary Support Teams for Inclusive Education (EMAEI) across the municipality’s nine school clusters. The Municipality also promotes Therapies for Inclusion, socio-emotional skills development initiatives and special school transport services, seeking to reduce barriers to access, participation and autonomy. The Municipal Ombudsman for Citizens with Disabilities complements these measures by promoting rights, identifying barriers and raising awareness within the community.

Recommendations for Improvement

Despite the existing measures, it is important to continue moving from an approach mainly



focused on access and specialised support towards a broader concept of inclusion that also values social participation, autonomy, peer relationships and a sense of belonging.

In this regard, it is recommended to develop more inclusive activities involving young people with and without special needs in educational, cultural, sports and community settings; implement peer-support and mentoring programmes; strengthen the use of accessible and assistive technologies; and create mechanisms that enable young people themselves to participate more actively in decisions and initiatives that affect them.

Cooperation between schools, EMAEI, families, multidisciplinary teams, health and social services and community organisations should also be strengthened. Furthermore, the assessment of inclusion should consider not only access and academic achievement, but also well-being, social participation, interpersonal relationships and a sense of belonging.

The ultimate goal should be to ensure that young people with special needs are not merely present in educational institutions, but actively participate, have their voices heard and genuinely feel that they belong to their school and community.

The Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira addresses disability inclusion through an integrated framework overseen by the Plano de Desenvolvimento Social (PDS) and the local Conselho Local de Ação Social (CLAS).

To ensure rights enforcement specifically tailored to citizens with special needs, the municipality established the Provedoria Municipal dos Cidadãos com Deficiência (Municipal Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities). This specialized entity serves as an independent advocacy mechanism that directly assists young people and their families with:

- Rights Guidance: Navigating administrative pathways for social benefits, such as the Prestação Social para a Inclusão (PSI).
- Accessibility Audits: Reporting and remediating physical or systemic barriers across municipal public infrastructure.
- Civic Representation: Ensuring youth perspectives with disabilities are systematically integrated into municipal policymaking.

In operational alignment with national mandates under Decree-Law No. 54/2018, the local Projeto Educativo Municipal translates national inclusive education guidelines into school-level interventions across local school clusters (Agrupamentos de Escolas).

Coordinated Support Mechanisms

- Resource Centers for Inclusion (CRI): The municipality maintains formal operational protocols with local Resource Centers for Inclusion to deploy specialized personnel—including occupational therapists, speech therapists, and psychomotor specialists—directly into local public schools.
- Collaboration with Local IPSSs: Key partnerships with Social Solidarity Private Institutions (IPSSs), such as CERCÍ Feira, provide dedicated socio-educational programs, vocational orientation, and rehabilitation support tailored to youth with complex intellectual and multi-disabilities.



- Operational Funding & Staffing: Municipal authorities manage non-teaching support staff allocations and maintain school facilities to ensure physical accessibility and specialized equipment standards across classroom

To prevent social isolation outside the formal school curriculum, the municipality leverages targeted programs managed by the Municipal Youth Cabinet (Gabinete da Juventude) and the Sports Department:

- Adapted Sports Programming (Desporto com Vida): A structured, municipal-wide program providing calendarized adapted sports sessions designed specifically to ensure youth with physical, sensory, or cognitive impairments participate in regular physical activity.
- Inclusive Youth Initiatives (Juventude On The Road): Broader youth engagement projects explicitly incorporate accessibility and inclusion guidelines, ensuring young people with special needs have equal access to civic workshops, cultural festivals, and recreational programs.

Territorial Accessibility (Plano de Promoção da Acessibilidade - PPA): An ongoing municipal planning directive aimed at systematically upgrading public spaces, transport hubs, and municipal venues to maintain barrier-free routes for youth with mobility challenge

Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies in North Macedonia-Kochani

The Republic of North Macedonia has established an important legislative and strategic framework for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, inclusive education and equal opportunities. In recent years, national policies have gradually been aligned with a human-rights-based approach and with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as with the priorities of the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030 explicitly refers to the principles of equality and non-discrimination, universal accessibility and inclusion. Among its priorities are inclusive education, community-based services, independent living and the development of inclusive local environments.

In 2026, the adoption of the Education Strategy 2026–2032 represents an additional important step. The Strategy places inclusive education among the key priorities for the development of the national education system. It addresses inclusion in primary and secondary education, improvement of infrastructure, development of teachers' competences, digitalisation and the use of new technologies.

However, there is still a need to translate these national commitments into concrete, sustainable and measurable local practices in schools and municipalities. In particular, it is important to move beyond an approach in which inclusion is understood mainly as providing physical access or individual educational support, and to place greater emphasis on social participation, a sense of belonging, peer relationships, self-confidence, participation in school life and equal access to modern educational and digital opportunities.

1. National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030

One of the most important strategic documents is the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030, accompanied by an Action Plan for the period 2023–2026. The Strategy is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and is



aligned with European and national strategic priorities. It recognises the need for inclusive education, access to community-based services, independent living and the creation of inclusive local environments.

The Strategy represents an important step towards moving from a medical model towards a social and human-rights-based model of disability, according to which persons with disabilities should not be viewed only through the limitations they may experience, but as equal rights holders who should have the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Identified challenges

Despite the existence of a strategic framework, one of the main challenges remains its full and consistent implementation at local level. Differences between municipalities and schools in terms of human resources, accessible infrastructure, professional support, digital equipment and opportunities for additional inclusive activities may result in unequal opportunities for students.

Furthermore, social inclusion cannot be measured only by the number of students with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools. It is also necessary to monitor their actual participation in lessons, extracurricular activities, sports, cultural activities, peer groups and decision-making processes.

Recommendations

Municipalities and schools should:

- develop local action plans for inclusive education;
- introduce measurable indicators for the social inclusion and participation of students with SEN;
- provide regular training for teachers and professional support staff;
- develop peer-support and mentoring programmes;
- provide accessible digital and interactive educational resources;
- involve students with disabilities and their parents in the development of local policies;
- establish stronger cooperation between schools, municipalities, social work centres, healthcare institutions and civil society organisations.

2. Education Strategy 2026–2032

In March 2026, the Education Strategy 2026–2032 and its Action Plan for Implementation were adopted. The Strategy is particularly relevant for projects focusing on inclusive education, as it places emphasis on inclusion in primary and secondary education, improvement of infrastructure, development of the education system and the use of modern approaches.

The preparation process involved a broad range of stakeholders, including public institutions, international organisations, academia and civil society. This participatory approach provides an important basis for further development of inclusive education policies.

Of particular importance is the connection between inclusive education and digitalisation, digital and media literacy, new technologies and the development of teachers' competences.

Identified challenges



The main challenge in the coming period will be the transition from strategic commitments to practical implementation in the everyday life of schools. Teachers need not only general training on inclusion, but also practical methodologies and tools for working with students with diverse educational needs.

It is also important that the digital transformation of education is inclusive. The introduction of technology alone does not guarantee inclusion if digital tools and learning materials are not accessible and adapted to the different abilities and needs of students.

Recommendations

During the implementation of the Education Strategy 2026–2032, it is recommended to:

- link inclusive education with the digital transformation of schools;
- develop accessible digital educational materials;
- use interactive technologies, assistive technologies and educational tools that enable active participation;
- provide teachers with practical training and work-based learning opportunities;
- develop school models for social as well as academic inclusion;
- introduce mechanisms for monitoring the impact of inclusive measures on students' participation, self-confidence and social integration.

3. National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2022–2026

Another important policy document is the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2022–2026, which defines objectives, measures, activities, indicators and responsible institutions for promoting equality and preventing discrimination at both national and local level.

This policy is particularly relevant to students with disabilities because inclusive education cannot be fully achieved without systematically addressing discrimination, stigma and social isolation.

Identified challenges

At local level, the formal prohibition of discrimination does not always mean that students with disabilities are fully included in all aspects of school life. There may still be **hidden barriers**, such as negative attitudes, insufficient awareness among peers, limited participation in extracurricular activities, insufficient communication with parents or a lack of adapted activities.

Therefore, equality policies need to be connected with concrete activities in schools that contribute to changing school culture and attitudes.

Recommendations

It is recommended to:

- regularly implement awareness-raising activities for students on diversity and disability;
- develop peer-support programmes;
- organise joint sports, cultural, artistic and digital activities;
- introduce mechanisms through which students with SEN can actively express their views;
- develop school-level policies against stigma and discrimination;



- involve parents, NGOs and local institutions in inclusion activities.

4. Legislative Framework and Inclusive Mechanisms in Education

In addition to strategic documents, North Macedonia has established specific mechanisms for inclusion through education legislation. The Law on Primary Education provides for a school inclusion team and a student inclusion team, involving teachers, professional associates, parents, special educators and rehabilitators and other relevant persons according to the student's needs. The student inclusion team contributes to the preparation and implementation of an Individual Educational Plan and support measures.

Similar mechanisms exist within secondary education, including inclusion teams for students with special educational needs and the preparation of Individual Educational Plans.

In recent years, additional progress has been made through an increased number of educational assistants and the development of resource centres that provide support to schools.

Main challenge

These mechanisms need to be further developed through activities that go beyond individual educational support. A student may have an Individual Educational Plan and an educational assistant, while at the same time remaining socially isolated from peers.

Therefore, the next step should be a transition from “integration” towards full social inclusion.

5. Priorities for Improving Local Policies and Practices

Based on the existing national framework, the following priorities for local improvement can be identified:

1. From access to education towards active participation

Municipalities and schools should monitor not only how many students with SEN are enrolled, but also how actively they participate in educational, sports, cultural, artistic and other school activities.

2. Development of an inclusive school culture

Activities are needed for all students, teachers and parents in order to reduce prejudice, develop empathy and promote acceptance of diversity.

3. Peer support and mentoring

Schools should develop structured peer-support and peer-mentoring programmes, as well as joint activities that provide students with and without disabilities with more opportunities for natural social interaction.

4. Digital and technological inclusion

In line with the Education Strategy 2026–2032, inclusive education should be connected with digitalisation. Particularly important are assistive technologies, interactive digital tools, educational robotics and accessible digital learning materials.



5. Strengthening teachers' competences

Professional development should focus on practical competences, including differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning, diversity management, social-emotional learning, digital inclusion and the use of assistive technologies.

6. Stronger local cooperation

There is a need to establish local networks involving schools, municipalities, parents, social work centres, healthcare institutions, resource centres, NGOs, sports clubs and organisations of persons with disabilities.

7. Involving young people in decision-making

Young people with SEN should be active participants in the development of activities and policies that affect them. Their views should be collected through student councils, focus groups, consultations and other participatory mechanisms.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

North Macedonia has established an important foundation for the development of inclusive education through the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030, the Education Strategy 2026–2032, the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2022–2026, education legislation and existing inclusive support mechanisms. These documents are largely aligned with the European approach based on human rights, equality, accessibility, non-discrimination and full participation.

The main challenge is no longer simply the existence of policies, but their effective implementation at local and school level. In particular, there is a need to reduce the gap between formal inclusion and the actual participation of students with disabilities in school and community life.

Therefore, future local policies should focus on creating schools where students with special educational needs are not only present, but actively participate, communicate, cooperate, create, make decisions and feel like equal members of the school and local community.

In this context, innovative approaches based on digital technologies, arts, sports, peer mentoring, educational robotics, practical learning and experiential learning can play an important role. Such approaches can help translate national strategic objectives into concrete local practices and sustainable models of social inclusion.

The proposed project can therefore contribute directly to this policy gap by testing and promoting practical, inclusive and innovative approaches that can be adopted by schools and local authorities and potentially replicated in other municipalities and educational institutions.

Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies Greece -Piraeus

Greece has developed a substantial legal and policy framework for the rights of persons with disabilities and for the education of learners with disabilities and special educational needs. The framework is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with



Disabilities, which Greece ratified through Law 4074/2012, and is linked to the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030. The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024–2030 provides the current national direction and places emphasis on equality, accessibility, independent living, participation, inclusive education and coordination across public authorities.

Within education, Law 3699/2008 remains the principal framework for special education and training, while later reforms, including Law 4547/2018 and Law 4823/2021, strengthened multidisciplinary assessment, school support and the operation of Centres for Interdisciplinary Assessment, Counselling and Support (KEDASY). Learners may receive support in mainstream classes, through parallel support, integration classes and school networks, or attend Special Education and Training School Units when this is assessed as necessary. This mixed system provides several routes to education, but it also creates an ongoing policy challenge: ensuring that placement and support lead to genuine participation, peer relationships, autonomy and a sense of belonging.

For Piraeus, national provisions are implemented through schools, the competent education directorates, KEDASY, municipal social services, special education units, families, civil-society organisations and cultural and sports bodies. The city therefore has an important foundation for inclusion, but local coordination and the consistent translation of rights into everyday school and community experience should be strengthened.

1 National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024–2030

The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024–2030 is the central national policy framework for advancing disability rights. It follows a human-rights-based approach and seeks to embed disability across public policy rather than treating it solely as a matter of welfare or medical support. Its relevance to young people and education lies in its emphasis on accessibility, equal participation, independent living, digital inclusion, protection from discrimination and effective coordination between levels of government.

For educational institutions, the Strategy supports the transition from formal access to meaningful inclusion. This requires accessible premises and transport, but also accessible information and digital services, appropriate educational support, participation in cultural and sports activities, and opportunities for young people with disabilities to express their views on decisions that concern them.

Identified challenges

The main challenge is implementation across sectors and territories. Responsibilities are distributed among national ministries, regional education structures, municipalities, schools and social-service providers. Without shared local objectives, clear referral pathways and common monitoring indicators, families may encounter fragmented services and young people may receive academic support without equivalent opportunities for social participation.

Recommendations

- Develop a Piraeus local action plan for disability-inclusive education and youth participation, with named responsibilities, timelines and measurable indicators.



- Align municipal accessibility, youth, culture, sport and social-policy measures with the National Strategy and the EU Disability Rights Strategy.
- Establish regular consultation with young people with disabilities, families and representative organisations, applying the principle “nothing about us without us”.
- Monitor not only access to services, but also participation, well-being, peer relationships, autonomy and belonging.

2. Legislative Framework for Inclusive and Special Education

Greek legislation recognises special education and training as part of public education and provides a continuum of support. Depending on assessed needs, learners can be supported in mainstream classrooms by the class teacher, receive parallel support or assistance, attend an integration class, or enrol in a special education school unit. Individualised educational planning and cooperation between school staff, specialist personnel and families are central elements of the framework.

Law 4823/2021 reorganised the assessment and support system through KEDASY. These centres assess educational and psychosocial needs, recommend appropriate support, provide counselling to schools and families, and contribute to inclusive school practices. School Networks of Educational Support and school-based interdisciplinary structures are intended to bring assistance closer to the learner and reduce the distance between assessment and classroom practice.

Identified challenges

The existence of several support arrangements does not automatically guarantee a coherent learner journey. Delays in assessment or staffing, discontinuity between educational levels, uneven accessibility, insufficient specialist support and limited time for multidisciplinary cooperation can weaken implementation. A further concern is that inclusion may be understood narrowly as physical placement in a mainstream school rather than active participation in learning and school life.

Recommendations

- Strengthen cooperation among schools, KEDASY, municipal services and families through clear local referral and case-coordination protocols.
- Support systematic co-planning between general and special-education teachers and specialist staff.
- Use individual educational planning to include social, communication, autonomy and participation goals alongside academic objectives.
- Plan transitions from pre-school to primary, primary to secondary education and from school to vocational training, employment or independent living well in advance.

3. Accessibility and Universal Design

Greece has reinforced its accessibility framework through national disability policy and Law 4727/2020 on digital governance, which incorporates requirements for accessible public-sector websites and mobile applications. In education, accessibility must be understood broadly: it includes school buildings and routes, transport, communication, teaching materials, digital platforms, assessment procedures and extracurricular activities.



In Piraeus, the dense urban environment and the age and configuration of parts of the school-building stock can create barriers. Recent municipal works to improve pavements and safe movement for persons with disabilities contribute to community accessibility, but an education-focused accessibility audit is also needed so that routes to school, entrances, classrooms, toilets, laboratories, sports areas and emergency procedures form one uninterrupted accessibility chain.

Recommendations

- Audit the accessibility of educational buildings and routes using a common checklist and prioritised improvement plan.
- Apply Universal Design for Learning when developing lessons, digital resources and assessment activities.
- Provide information in accessible formats, including easy-to-read language, captions, alternative text and Greek Sign Language where appropriate.
- Include accessibility requirements in all municipal education, culture, youth and sports procurement and events.

4. Local Coordination and Support in Piraeus

Piraeus has a diverse ecosystem of general and special education schools, higher-education institutions, municipal services, health and welfare structures, sports clubs and civil-society organisations. This ecosystem can support a strong local inclusion model if cooperation is organised around shared outcomes. Municipal action is particularly valuable where educational and social inclusion intersect: accessible transport and public space, family support, cultural participation, sport, youth engagement, prevention of discrimination and transition to adult life.

A local inclusion network should not replace the statutory responsibilities of education and social-service authorities. Its role should be to connect existing structures, identify service gaps, organise joint initiatives, share accessible resources and ensure that young people and families can navigate support without repeatedly starting from the beginning.

Recommendations

- Create a permanent Piraeus Inclusive Education and Youth Network involving schools, KEDASY, municipal departments, families, organisations of persons with disabilities, universities, sports clubs and cultural bodies.
- Designate contact persons in participating organisations and maintain an updated map of services and accessible opportunities.
- Organise joint annual planning and review meetings based on anonymised needs and participation data.
- Develop common safeguarding, consent and accessibility standards for cross-sector activities involving minors and young adults.

5. Priorities for Improving Local Policies and Practices

1. From school attendance to active participation

Local monitoring should examine whether learners with disabilities participate meaningfully in lessons, school trips, student councils, arts, sports, digital activities and community events, rather than recording enrolment alone.



2. Inclusive school culture and awareness

Schools should implement recurring, age-appropriate disability-awareness and anti-stigma activities led, wherever possible, with persons with disabilities. One-off commemorative events should be complemented by year-round classroom and whole-school work.

3. Peer support and youth leadership

Structured peer-support, buddy and mentoring arrangements can expand natural interaction and mutual learning. Young people with disabilities should also have leadership roles in planning and evaluating activities.

4. Teacher and staff competences

Continuous professional development should address differentiated teaching, Universal Design for Learning, accessible digital materials, positive behaviour support, communication needs, co-teaching and collaboration with families.

5. Inclusive digital transformation

Digital tools should be selected and designed for accessibility from the outset. Assistive technology, accessible learning platforms and alternative ways of demonstrating learning should be integrated into ordinary educational practice.

6. Inclusive transitions and preparation for adult life

Schools and local partners should connect education with vocational orientation, life skills, mobility, self-advocacy, further training, employment and community participation. Transition plans should reflect the young person's own goals.

7. Evidence and accountability

Piraeus should use a concise local indicator set covering accessibility, participation, learner and family satisfaction, staff competence, incidents of exclusion, transition outcomes and the accessibility of municipal opportunities.

6. Conclusion and Overall Recommendation

Greece has a mature legal basis and a current national strategy that are broadly aligned with the EU Disability Rights Strategy 2021–2030. The priority for Piraeus is now consistent local implementation. The city should connect education, accessibility, social support, culture, sport and youth participation through a permanent cooperation mechanism and a measurable local action plan.

The strategic objective should be a community in which young people with special educational needs and disabilities are not only admitted to educational institutions and provided with individual support, but are able to learn with others, build friendships, participate in decisions, use public and digital services, develop autonomy and move confidently towards adult life. Practical initiatives based on peer mentoring, inclusive sport, arts, accessible technology and experiential learning can turn this objective into visible and transferable local practice.



Local policies and strategies in alignment with EU strategies in Croatia-Daruvar

Croatia has established a substantial legislative, strategic and institutional framework for the education and social inclusion of children and young people with disabilities and developmental difficulties. The framework combines general education legislation, disability-rights policy, anti-discrimination legislation, specialised education regulations, curricular measures and individual support mechanisms. It is also increasingly aligned with the human-rights-based approach established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the European Union's disability and inclusive-education policies.

Two important national strategic documents are the **National Plan for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2027** and the **National Plan for the Development of the Education System until 2027**. The first identifies *inclusive education and the employment of persons with disabilities* as a priority and includes the specific objective of ensuring inclusive education for children with developmental difficulties and students with disabilities. Its measures cover mainstream and vocational education, improved availability of support and access to higher education.

At the same time, the challenge for Croatia is increasingly not simply whether pupils with developmental difficulties have formal access to education, but whether they can **participate meaningfully and on an equal basis in lessons, extracurricular activities, school events, peer relationships, digital learning, vocational training and community life**. This distinction between placement in education and genuine inclusion is particularly important because a large majority of Croatian pupils with developmental difficulties are already educated in mainstream schools and regular classes.

1. National Strategic Framework for Inclusive Education

The **National Plan for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2027** explicitly links Croatian disability policy with the UNCRPD, reasonable accommodation and the principle of equal opportunities. Its Specific Objective 1 is to ensure inclusive education for children with developmental difficulties and students with disabilities. The Plan envisages continued infrastructure support, teaching assistants and professional communication intermediaries, professional development for teachers and school specialists, and improved accessibility of vocational and higher education.

The Plan originally set a target of **31,000 children with developmental difficulties participating in inclusive education by 2027**, from a baseline of 28,390 in 2020. However, the 2025 implementation report of the National Plan for the Development of the Education System records **34,518 children with developmental difficulties included in inclusive education in 2025**, already exceeding that earlier quantitative target. The Ministry notes that this increase reflects improved early identification, timely inclusion and greater availability of appropriate educational support, while also placing additional demands on institutional capacity.

The **National Plan for the Development of the Education System until 2027** further reinforces this approach. Specific Objective 6 is dedicated to ensuring access to education for pupils with developmental difficulties and students with disabilities, with the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM) and the Education and Teacher Training Agency (AZOO) responsible for relevant measures.

Current statistical context

According to MZOM data published in the **2025 Annual Report of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities**, the number and proportion of pupils with developmental difficulties have increased continuously despite a decline in the overall school population.

School year / level	Total number of pupils	Pupils with developmental difficulties	Share
2021/22 – primary and secondary	456,441	29,153	6.39%
2022/23 – primary and secondary	454,232	30,131	6.63%
2023/24 – primary and secondary	450,855	31,958	7.09%
2024/25 – primary and secondary	448,478	35,891	8.00%
2025/26 – primary and secondary	446,728	37,255	8.34%
2025/26 – primary schools	298,480	29,926	10.03%
2025/26 – secondary schools	148,123	7,329	4.95%

Source: MZOM data, as reported by the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities.

Of particular importance for inclusion policy is the fact that **82.54% of primary-school pupils and 90.54% of secondary-school pupils with developmental difficulties are educated in mainstream schools and regular classes**. By contrast, 10.5% of primary-school pupils and 5.14% of secondary-school pupils are educated in institutions operating under special educational conditions.

These figures demonstrate considerable progress towards mainstream participation, but they also show why enrolment figures alone are no longer sufficient as indicators of successful inclusion. Future monitoring should increasingly consider **participation, well-being, autonomy, friendships and peer relationships, school belonging, participation in extracurricular activities, transitions between levels of education and successful participation in work-based learning**.

2. Legislative Framework and Inclusive Education Mechanisms

The main legal basis is the **Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Zakon o odgoju i obrazovanju u osnovnoj i srednjoj školi)**, currently incorporating amendments up to *Narodne novine* 156/2023. The Act is supplemented by several specialised regulations governing the education of pupils with developmental difficulties.

Of particular importance is the **Ordinance on Primary and Secondary Education of Pupils with Developmental Difficulties (NN 24/2015)**. It establishes the forms of appropriate education that may be determined according to a pupil's individual needs. These include a regular programme with individualised procedures; a regular programme with adapted content and individualised procedures; a special programme with individualised procedures; and special programmes aimed at acquiring competences for activities of daily living and work. The appropriate



programme and forms of support are established through a formal professional assessment procedure.

The assessment procedure is supported by school and administrative expert commissions. Under the amended **Ordinance on the Procedure for Determining the Psychophysical Condition of a Child or Pupil and the Composition of Expert Commissions**, the competent county administrative body, or the City of Zagreb, appoints an expert commission for each primary school. This creates an institutional link between the school, professional assessment, parents and the competent education authority.

A further important support mechanism is regulated by the **Ordinance on Teaching Assistants and Professional Communication Intermediaries (NN 85/2024)**. Its stated objective is to equalise pupils' opportunities, ensure appropriate education, promote increasing independence and support participation in the school environment. Importantly, the regulation explicitly establishes that teaching assistants and communication intermediaries are **not responsible for delivering the teaching process and may not design a pupil's appropriate education programme**. Their role is supportive rather than a substitute for teachers, educational rehabilitators or other professional interventions.

In 2025, Croatia provided **5,183 teaching assistants and professional communication intermediaries for 5,978 pupils with developmental difficulties**. This represents a substantial system of direct support, but it should be interpreted as one component of reasonable accommodation rather than the entirety of inclusive education.

Croatia has also modernised its specialised curricular framework. New **Special Education Programmes for Primary and Secondary School Pupils with Developmental Difficulties** were adopted in 2024 (NN 42/2024), with phased implementation. In 2025, MZOM published detailed implementation guidelines supporting individualised and differentiated curricula, adapted teaching and assessment, active pupil participation and the use of **assistive technologies developed through the ATTEND framework**. Adaptable accompanying materials are also available through the national Edutorij platform.

The broader rights framework is reinforced by the **Anti-Discrimination Act (NN 85/2008, 112/2012)**, which includes disability among protected grounds, applies explicitly to education, science and sport, and recognises failure to provide reasonable accommodation as a form of discrimination. The **Act on Croatian Sign Language and Other Communication Systems of Deaf and Deafblind Persons (NN 82/2015)** additionally recognises rights relating to the use of, access to information through, and education in Croatian Sign Language and other communication systems appropriate to individual needs.

3. Alignment with European and International Standards

Croatia's approach must be understood within the broader European and international human-rights framework. Article 24 of the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** requires an inclusive education system at all levels, reasonable accommodation according to individual requirements, support within the general education system and individualised measures designed to maximise both **academic and social development**. The Convention also specifically refers to alternative and augmentative communication, sign language, peer support and mentoring.

At EU level, Article 21 of the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** prohibits discrimination on the grounds of disability, while Article 26 recognises the right of persons with



disabilities to measures supporting independence, social and occupational integration and participation in community life.

The **EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030** further promotes full participation and social and economic inclusion. Importantly, in May 2026 the European Commission strengthened the Strategy through COM(2026) 541, introducing a new flagship initiative on **disability-inclusive lifelong learning**. The strengthened framework places additional emphasis on disability-inclusive curricula and pedagogy, reasonable accommodation, accessible higher education, inclusive digital transformation and accessible education technologies, including equality-sensitive use of artificial intelligence.

The **Council Recommendation on Pathways to School Success** is especially relevant to local inclusion projects because it treats school success as more than academic performance. It calls for inclusive measures for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs and explicitly recognises school well-being as an important component of successful education. The Council's 2025 conclusions on inclusive, learner-centred education go further by emphasising accessible infrastructure, teaching materials and pedagogical approaches, as well as the personal, emotional and social development and full participation of all learners.

Digital inclusion also has a legislative dimension. Croatia transposed **Directive (EU) 2016/2102 on the accessibility of public-sector websites and mobile applications** through the 2019 Web Accessibility Act. It should be noted, however, that Croatian kindergartens and primary and secondary schools are generally exempt from the Act except in relation to essential online administrative functions. This makes voluntary application of broader accessibility standards to digital learning materials particularly important as a matter of inclusive educational practice, even where it is not a direct statutory requirement.

4. Identified Challenges in Croatia

Croatia's principal challenge is therefore the transition from **formal inclusion to effective, high-quality and socially meaningful inclusion**. The 2025 report of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities records continuing cases concerning access to the nearest mainstream school, physical accessibility, transport, adapted textbooks, reasonable accommodation and the availability of teaching assistants and professional communication intermediaries.

The Ombudsperson also identifies practical problems with delays in decisions on appropriate educational programmes and support. Such delays may mean that pupils begin a school year without a final decision, appropriate classroom arrangements, assistive devices, adapted textbooks or the necessary support personnel. Greater coordination between schools, early-childhood institutions, healthcare and social services and local authorities is therefore required.

Another important issue concerns the role and sustainability of teaching assistants. Current regulations provide fixed-term employment until the end of the school year. The Ombudsperson has warned that this contributes to employment insecurity and can make it more difficult to recruit sufficient numbers of qualified staff. At the same time, the Ombudsperson stresses that an assistant must never become the only form of reasonable accommodation or a substitute for appropriately trained teachers and educational rehabilitators.

Transition to secondary vocational education and **work-based learning** is another area requiring attention. The Ombudsperson has recommended that employers and relevant authorities ensure reasonable accommodation in work-based learning and that teaching-assistant or



communication-intermediary support be available at workplaces whenever it is required by the pupil.

5. Priorities and Recommendations for Improving Local Policies and Practices

Based on the Croatian legal framework, national data, the recommendations of the Ombudsperson and current EU policy, local and regional authorities, school founders and educational institutions should develop the following priorities:

1. **Move from enrolment indicators to participation and belonging.** In addition to the number of pupils formally included in mainstream education, schools should monitor participation in lessons, extracurricular activities, sport, arts and culture, school trips, digital activities, peer networks and pupil decision-making, as well as indicators of well-being and school belonging.
2. **Develop inclusive school culture for the entire school community.** Inclusion should not be treated exclusively as an individual intervention for a pupil with developmental difficulties. Awareness-raising, anti-stigma activities, social-emotional learning and joint activities for pupils with and without disabilities should form part of regular school culture.
3. **Introduce structured peer support and mentoring.** Peer-assisted learning, buddy systems, peer mentoring and collaborative projects can complement professional support and are directly consistent with the social-participation principles of Article 24 of the UNCRPD.
4. **Strengthen digital and technological inclusion.** Schools should systematically use accessible digital resources, assistive technology, augmentative and alternative communication where appropriate, adaptable teaching materials and principles of Universal Design for Learning. Educational robotics and other interactive technologies can be particularly valuable when used as tools for cooperation between pupils rather than as isolated activities for pupils with disabilities.
5. **Strengthen professional competences and multidisciplinary support.** Continuous professional development should include differentiated teaching, individualised curricula, reasonable accommodation, assistive technologies, behaviour and communication support, social-emotional inclusion and practical collaboration among teachers, educational rehabilitators, psychologists, pedagogues and other specialists.
6. **Build stronger local inter-sectoral networks.** Schools should cooperate systematically with school founders, local and regional authorities, families, healthcare and social-service providers, employment and vocational-rehabilitation services, civil-society organisations, sports and cultural organisations and organisations representing persons with disabilities. Such cooperation is especially important during transitions between primary and secondary education and between school, vocational training and employment.
7. **Give pupils and families an active role in decision-making.** Pupils with developmental difficulties should not be passive recipients of support. Their views, preferences and experiences should inform individual planning, school activities and local inclusion policies through age-appropriate consultations, pupil councils, focus groups and other participatory methods.

6. Conclusion and Project Relevance

Croatia has developed an extensive framework for the education of pupils with developmental difficulties. The **National Plan for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with**



Disabilities 2021–2027, the **National Plan for the Development of the Education System until 2027**, the Education Act and related ordinances, the new special curricula, teaching-assistant arrangements and anti-discrimination legislation provide a strong formal foundation. These national measures are complemented by the UNCRPD, the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030 and its 2026 reinforcement, the European Education Area framework and recent EU recommendations on inclusive and learner-centred education.

The statistical evidence also demonstrates significant progress: **37,255 pupils with developmental difficulties were recorded in Croatian primary and secondary education in 2025/26, compared with 29,153 in 2021/22**, and most are now educated in mainstream schools and regular classes. At the same time, this progress increases the importance of ensuring adequate professional capacity, reasonable accommodation, accessible learning materials, appropriately trained staff and consistent implementation throughout the country.

The next stage of development should therefore focus not only on **where a pupil is educated**, but on **how fully the pupil participates and belongs**. A genuinely inclusive school should enable pupils with developmental difficulties to learn, communicate, build friendships, participate in sport and culture, use digital technologies, make choices, develop autonomy, prepare for further education and employment, and be recognised as equal members of their school and local community.

Within this context, the proposed project can make a direct contribution by testing practical approaches that complement existing statutory support: **peer mentoring, inclusive digital and assistive technologies, educational robotics, arts and sport, experiential learning, social-emotional activities and structured cooperation between mainstream and specialised education**. If these approaches are accompanied by measurable indicators of participation, well-being, autonomy and belonging, the project could provide a transferable model for schools, school founders and local and regional authorities elsewhere in Croatia.

3. SELECTION OF BEST APPROACHES (BEST PRACTICES AND RISING AWARENESS ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in Portugal and Santa Maria da Feira Municipality

To operationalize its commitment to accessibility and social inclusion, the Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira has established projects and community initiatives that bridge formal education, culture, civic participation, and adaptive sports. By combining targeted socio-emotional interventions with inclusive municipal actions, it empowers young people with special needs, facilitates key developmental transitions, and ensures equal access to public and cultural life across the municipality. Some projects examples:

Projeto Aproximar: A strategic municipal project focused on mapping local needs, diagnosing barriers, and developing targeted social intervention plans. It plays a key role in empowering



young people with disabilities, supporting their families, and training local care providers to promote long-term community inclusion and social cohesion.

Project "Da Minha Janela": An educational and socio-emotional inclusion project designed to foster empathy, self-expression, and a smooth transition from kindergarten to elementary school, using theatre and a sense of identity as tools to foster inclusion.

Viagem Medieval Accessibility Plan (*Viagem Medieval Acessível*): Integrated into Europe's largest medieval historical reenactment, this plan ensures young visitors and participants with disabilities experience the festival without barriers. It features dedicated accessibility routes through the historic center, sensory and tactile tours, Portuguese Sign Language (LGP) interpretation for shows and children's areas, Braille programs, and trained inclusive-tourism volunteers.

Imaginarium Acessível (Accessible Street Theatre Festival): Integrated into the international *Imaginarium* street arts festival, this event offers adapted guided tours, LGP interpretation, touch tours, and dedicated accessible areas, enabling young participants with sensory or mobility disabilities to experience street art on an equal footing.

SMF Youth Talks & Civic Forums: Community-driven youth forums where local youth with special needs actively participate in policy discussions, raising awareness about physical accessibility, education barriers, and social inclusion.

Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in North Macedonia and Kochani

The selection of best approaches in North Macedonia aims to identify and highlight effective practices, initiatives and models that address key challenges related to inclusion, equal opportunities, education, child and youth participation, well-being and community engagement. The purpose is to understand which approaches have demonstrated positive results and have the potential to be further developed, adapted or replicated in other communities.

The selected approaches from North Macedonia will provide a basis for sharing experiences, identifying lessons learned and developing recommendations for future actions.

2.1 Project "Inclusion-Friendly Classroom"

The Association of Special Educators and Rehabilitators of North Macedonia was part of the **Erasmus + project "Inclusion-Friendly Classroom: The ICF as a Problem-Solving Tool for the Team Around the Child in Educational Settings" (Include with ICF)** which gave teachers and inclusive teams in education and parents the opportunity to use the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). The use of ICF helps teachers, parents and students to focus on the abilities, goals of participation and full inclusion of children with developmental disabilities through the use of a common language.

The duration of the project was from February 2022 to January 2024



Project results

1. **ICF- Inclusion checklist (O1)** - allows teachers and parents to describe and assess the participation of students with developmental disabilities. It allows focusing on abilities and what the child CAN achieve. It facilitates the assessment of the necessary support of the child and enables the common definition of the GOALS OF PARTICIPATION.
2. **Participation Goal Incubator (O2)** - is a tool to support teachers in co-defining important participation goals (with parents and / or students), while providing information and resources with more than 70 examples of goals for participation. This tool allows teachers to learn how other professionals have created goals for participation and have the opportunity to transfer these examples into their daily work. The resource set is directly related to the ICF- checklist and supports teachers to create their own goals for their students.
3. **Teachers teamwork toolkit (O3)** - The Teacher teamwork toolkit supports teachers to learn and decide on useful teamwork methodologies for working with children with developmental disabilities and their parents. The package consists of methodological guide and examples of best practice for teamwork in educational conditions (school, kindergarten). It also contains skills-oriented information for teachers to acquire relevant skills for different approaches to team teaching and their implementation in school or kindergarten.

The goals provide practical guidance for professionals in school, kindergarten and other educational institutions (e.g. early childhood intervention).

All tools are free and support the individual educational plans for children (0-18 years) with developmental disabilities.

2.2 Project “Youth 4 Inclusion, Equality & Trust”

The project “Youth 4 Inclusion, Equality & Trust” focuses on partnering with young men and women to address **divisive narratives** and polarized communities, to enhance social cohesion within but especially across the zones involved.

The project’s core thrust is to strengthen the **engagement of young men and women** – recognizing the crucial impact of traditional gender norms – across identity group lines and communities to promote constructive narratives and counter divisive narratives and patriarchal gender norms in order to increase inter-group dialogue, mutual understanding and gender equality. The project makes deliberate efforts to build upon and leverage existing capacities, organizations and mechanisms as much as possible, and to reach marginalized youth. One of the project outcomes is young people to enhance dialogue and trust across the region by promoting fact-based, positive narratives and gender equality in the public sphere and media.

The duration of the project is from May 2022 to December 2026

The project is financed by the UN Peace Building Fund and jointly by 4 UN agencies: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNESCO and UN Women in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo^[1], North Macedonia and Serbia.

2.3 Inclusion of Roma children in public preschools (kindergartens)

The project "Inclusion of Roma children in preschool education" is being implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in cooperation with the Roma Education Fund, local government units and kindergartens starting from 2006 to 2021. The aim of the project was to



remove existing barriers to access to preschools for Roma children aged 3 to 6, inclusion of children and their socialization, as well as strengthening the awareness of their parents about the importance of early childhood development and education of their children.

During these 15 years of the project's implementation, around 4,000 children from the Roma ethnic community in 20 municipalities have been included free of charge, 20 Roma caregivers have been engaged who worked with these children in the process of facilitation and integration in kindergartens, of which 18 of them have had their work engagement transformed into a regular employment relationship. In addition to the caregivers, 18 mediators are also engaged who work under project contracts in cooperation with the kindergartens, caregivers and the project team.

This project by the Roma Education Fund has been assessed as one of the more successful projects approved by the Board of the Fund, which has a key role in the process of Roma education and reducing the gap between Roma and other ethnic communities in the area of education. Also, in each Progress Report of the Republic of North Macedonia of the European Commission, this Project was highlighted as a successful model for increasing the level of education among the Roma population. At the same time, this project contributed to increasing the rate of enrollment of children in first grade, which significantly improves the development of Roma children and their inclusion in the education system.

In order to systematically address the inclusion of Roma children who are at social risk in kindergartens, since 2018 the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy has been submitting Information to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on the inclusion of Roma children who are from families at social risk, with which the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia recommends that the mayors of the local self-government units convene the Municipal Councils and consider the possibility of exemption from participation in preschool institutions - kindergartens for Roma children who are at social risk (age 3-6), i.e. Roma children. In the first half of the 2021/2022 school year, the total number of Roma children enrolled in kindergartens at the national level is 420 children.

Within the framework of the project Inclusion of Roma children in preschool education in the first half of the 2021/2022 school year, a total of 200 Roma children from families at social risk, or 51% of the planned 390 children, are included in 16 municipalities (Beroovo, Bitola, Vinica, Prilep, Chair, Delchevo, Kochani, Kumanovo, Veles, Pehchevo, Debar, Centar, Kavadarci, Kriva Palanka, Radovish and Gazi Baba), 16 kindergartens that are covered by an adopted recommendation from the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia with exemption from participation of Roma children at social risk with supported participation of local self-government units.

Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in Greece and Piraeus

Greece offers several transferable approaches that combine disability awareness, inclusive education, sport, peer participation and community accessibility. The practices below were selected because they respond directly to the chapter's objective: increasing the social inclusion of children and young people with special needs by changing attitudes and creating shared

experiences with their peers. They can be adapted by educational institutions and local stakeholders in Piraeus.

1. Focus on the Person Disability Awareness Programme

The Association of Social Responsibility for Children and Youth (SKEP) has implemented the “Focus on the Person” disability-awareness programme in Greek schools since 2009. The programme is based on human rights, equality and direct interaction. It seeks to move students away from stereotypes, pity and fear and towards familiarity, respect and recognition of persons with disabilities as equal members of society.

The school-based approach brings students into dialogue with speakers with disabilities and uses experiential activities and guided discussion to examine social and environmental barriers. Its strength lies in placing lived experience at the centre of learning. Rather than presenting disability only as a theoretical topic, it allows young people to ask questions, reflect on language and attitudes, and understand how exclusion is often created by inaccessible environments and negative perceptions.

The model is highly transferable to Piraeus. Schools could organise a coordinated annual programme with local disability organisations and self-advocates, accompanied by preparatory classroom work and follow-up student projects. Participating students could map barriers in their school or neighbourhood and propose practical improvements to school leaders and the Municipality.

Key inclusion value

Direct contact, youth reflection and the active participation of persons with disabilities can produce deeper attitude change than information campaigns alone.

2 Special Olympics Unified Schools and Unified Sports

Special Olympics Unified Sports brings together athletes with and without intellectual disabilities on the same teams. In the school context, Unified Schools and Unified Champion Schools combine inclusive sport with youth leadership and whole-school engagement. Special Olympics Hellas has developed Unified Schools programming in consultation with the Greek Ministry of Education to promote the social inclusion of young people through shared sporting experiences.

The approach is effective because sport creates regular, structured contact around a common goal. Students participate as teammates rather than being divided into service providers and beneficiaries. The model can also include student committees, awareness activities, school celebrations and community competitions, allowing inclusion to influence the broader culture of the school.

Piraeus has strong sporting infrastructure and a dense network of schools and clubs. A local Unified Sports programme could connect mainstream and special education units through basketball, athletics, football, swimming or adapted multi-sport sessions. Activities should be co-designed with young people, use accessible venues and trained coaches, and culminate in a community event focused on participation rather than competitive ranking.



Key inclusion value

Repeated cooperation between peers builds friendships, visibility, confidence and a shared school identity.

3 Inclusive Cultural Participation and Co-Creation

Arts-based inclusion offers young people different ways to communicate, collaborate and be recognised for their abilities. Inclusive theatre, music, dance, photography and visual-arts workshops can bring together students with and without disabilities while allowing flexible roles and multiple forms of expression. The most effective activities move beyond passive attendance and enable young people with disabilities to act as creators, performers, facilitators and decision-makers.

For Piraeus, this approach can be linked to municipal cultural venues, schools, youth organisations and local festivals. An annual inclusive arts laboratory could begin with accessible workshops in schools and conclude with public performances or exhibitions. Accessibility measures may include step-free venues, captioning, Greek Sign Language interpretation, audio description, tactile material, relaxed performances and easy-to-read programmes.

The awareness-raising element should be integrated into the creative process. Short participant stories, accessible digital exhibitions and moderated post-performance discussions can challenge stereotypes while respecting dignity, consent and safeguarding. Evaluation should record who participated in creative and leadership roles, not only audience numbers.

Key inclusion value

Co-creation shifts public attention from impairment to talent, voice and equal cultural citizenship.

4 Peer Support and Inclusive Youth Leadership

Peer-support and peer-mentoring models enable young people to build relationships through shared learning and mutual assistance. When properly structured, they can reduce isolation, support school transitions and encourage young people with disabilities to develop self-advocacy and leadership skills. The strongest models avoid assigning fixed roles in which one student is always the helper; participants should be able to contribute, learn and lead in different ways.

Schools in Piraeus could establish mixed peer teams connected to student councils, environmental groups, cultural clubs, digital projects and school events. Older students, including students with disabilities, could receive mentoring and safeguarding training and support younger peers during transitions or joint activities. Regular supervision by teachers and specialist staff would help address communication needs and ensure that participation remains voluntary and safe.

A municipal youth forum could complement school-level mentoring by enabling participants to present accessibility findings and inclusion proposals directly to local decision-makers. Accessible consultation methods—such as easy-to-read questionnaires, visual communication, supported discussion and multiple ways to contribute—would make youth voice meaningful rather than symbolic.

Key inclusion value

Young people become partners and leaders in inclusion, rather than passive recipients of support.

5 Accessible Community Mapping and Experiential Learning

Community accessibility mapping turns the city into a learning environment. Mixed groups of young people can examine routes, public buildings, cultural facilities, sports venues, digital information and communication barriers. With support from teachers, disability organisations and municipal staff, they can document obstacles and identify realistic solutions.

In Piraeus, mapping can be organised around routes between schools, public transport, municipal services, sports facilities and cultural sites. Participants may use printed maps, photographs, checklists, audio notes and accessible digital tools according to their preferences. The activity develops orientation, problem-solving, civic awareness and cooperation while producing evidence that can inform municipal planning.

The process should conclude with feedback from the Municipality and a public account of which proposals will be examined or implemented. This closes the participation loop and demonstrates that young people's contributions can influence their environment.

Key inclusion value

Experiential learning links accessibility, autonomy and democratic participation to concrete improvements in the local community.

6 Recommended Combination for Piraeus

The best results would come from combining the approaches in a coherent local cycle rather than implementing isolated events. Schools could begin with disability-awareness sessions, form inclusive peer teams, participate in Unified Sports or arts activities, undertake an accessibility-mapping exercise and present recommendations through a youth forum. This sequence connects awareness with sustained interaction, co-creation and civic participation.

All activities should be co-designed with young people with disabilities and their representative organisations. Accessibility, informed consent, safeguarding, data protection, transport and communication support should be planned from the outset. Evaluation should combine participation figures with feedback on belonging, confidence, friendships, attitudes, accessibility and influence on decisions.

Best practices and rising awareness activities to increase social inclusion of youth with special needs in Croatia and Daruvar

Croatia has developed a broad range of measures, projects and practices aimed at improving the educational and social inclusion of children and young people with disabilities and developmental difficulties. These initiatives range from early childhood education and mainstream school inclusion to assistive technology, teaching assistants, inclusive digital



resources, arts-based education, sport, support for disadvantaged groups and measures facilitating access to higher education.

The Croatian approach increasingly reflects the principle that inclusion should not be understood solely as physical access to an educational institution or formal enrolment in a mainstream school. Effective inclusion requires **active participation, communication, autonomy, peer relationships, accessibility, equal access to digital opportunities, participation in extracurricular activities and a genuine sense of belonging.**

This approach is consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030. In May 2026, the European Commission further strengthened the Strategy, placing additional emphasis on implementation, assistive technologies, inclusive education at different stages of life and the practical removal of barriers to participation.

It is also strongly aligned with Erasmus+, where **inclusion and diversity** constitute one of the four horizontal priorities of the 2021–2027 programme. Erasmus+ explicitly encourages projects to involve participants with fewer opportunities, including people with disabilities and those facing social, geographical, economic or educational barriers.

1. Best Practice: ATTEND – Assistive Technology in Education

One of the strongest Croatian examples of combining education, digitalisation and disability inclusion is the project **Support for the Achievement of Equal Opportunities in Education for Students with Developmental Disabilities – ATTEND (Assistive Technology in Education).**

The project was implemented from **1 July 2021 to 30 April 2024** and was led by CARNET in cooperation with the University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences and the City of Reykjavík Department of Education and Youth. Its central objective was to improve educational opportunities for pupils with developmental difficulties by providing specialised educational institutions with assistive technology and training staff to use it effectively.

ATTEND involved **34 educational institutions from 22 Croatian cities.** According to CARNET, the project supplied **5,686 pieces of assistive technology equipment**, currently benefiting more than **1,750 pupils**, while 75 workshops involved more than 1,450 participants, including educational rehabilitators, headteachers and other educational professionals.

The project value amounted to approximately **EUR 4.24 million**, with 85% financed through the EEA Financial Mechanism and 15% from the Croatian state budget.

Particularly relevant to Bjelovar-Bilogora County is the fact that **two specialised educational institutions from the County participated directly in ATTEND:**

- Centar za odgoj, obrazovanje i razvojnu podršku Bjelovar;
- Centar za odgoj i obrazovanje Rudolf Steiner Daruvar.

Both institutions therefore became part of a national network equipped with assistive technologies and supported through professional training and knowledge exchange.

ATTEND is especially valuable as a best-practice model because it did not focus exclusively on purchasing equipment. It combined **technology, professional development, institutional networking, sustainability requirements and public awareness raising.** Participating founders were required to ensure equipment sustainability for at least five years following completion of the project.

Transferable elements

The ATTEND model could be further developed locally by creating shared assistive-technology resources, enabling mainstream schools to cooperate with specialised centres, organising demonstrations and workshops for teachers and parents, and allowing pupils to test technologies according to their individual needs.

This would help specialised institutions gradually strengthen their role as **centres of expertise and support for the wider education network**, which is also envisaged in Croatian education regulations. Croatian legislation allows specialised support centres to provide professional advice, train educational staff and teaching assistants, support parents and develop innovative teaching methodologies.

2. Emerging Best Practice: ATOLLO – Inclusive Digital Education

A particularly relevant recent Croatian-led initiative is the **ATOLLO project – Building a Digital Education Environment for Learners with Special Educational Needs (DigiEdu4SEN)**.

The Erasmus+ project was implemented from **January 2024 to August 2026** and brought together partners from Croatia, Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Norway and Australia. Croatian partners included Profil Klett as project coordinator, the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences and the School for Education and Training in Pula.

Its principal result is a freely available digital resource library containing **45 interactive educational units** for pupils with developmental and learning difficulties. The resources are available in Croatian and five other languages and focus particularly on mathematics and digital competences.

The resources incorporate accessibility and **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** principles, including adjustable font sizes, dyslexia-friendly fonts, colour and contrast settings, audio narration and subtitles. They are organised across different learning levels so that teachers can adapt the same general learning area to pupils with different abilities and educational needs.

The Ministry reports that the materials were tested in **15 schools with 498 pupils and 120 teachers**, with feedback subsequently used to improve the resources.

ATOLLO is particularly important because it addresses a new dimension of inequality: **digital exclusion**. Providing a pupil with access to a computer or tablet does not automatically create inclusion if the educational content itself is inaccessible or cognitively inappropriate.

For future Croatian projects, the ATOLLO approach provides a strong foundation for combining accessible digital learning with **educational robotics, communication technologies, AI-assisted learning, interactive tasks and collaborative activities involving pupils with and without disabilities**.

3. Teaching Assistants and Professional Communication Intermediaries

Another important Croatian practice is the systematic provision of **teaching assistants and professional communication intermediaries** for pupils with developmental difficulties.

The current Ordinance on Teaching Assistants and Professional Communication Intermediaries (NN 85/2024) defines their role as supporting equal opportunities, increasing pupil independence and enabling participation in the school environment. Importantly, their support may extend beyond classroom lessons to extracurricular and off-site activities, practical training, work placements, competitions and multi-day educational activities.



This is important because social inclusion takes place not only during formal lessons but also during **school trips, practical learning, extracurricular clubs, sport, cultural activities and informal peer interaction.**

Bjelovar-Bilogora County has considerable experience in implementing EU-supported teaching-assistant projects. Under the project “**Uz potporu sve je moguće – Phase VII**” (“**With Support, Everything is Possible – Phase VII**”), launched in the 2024/25 school year and designed to run for three school years, funding was secured to support **57 pupils with developmental difficulties in primary and secondary education.** The County also allocated additional funding for training teaching assistants where the required training could not otherwise be covered.

Such programmes constitute a significant foundation for inclusive education. However, teaching assistants should be regarded as **facilitators of independence and participation**, not as substitutes for teachers, professional support staff or peer interaction. Croatian regulations explicitly state that the assistant is not the person responsible for the teaching process and cannot replace additional educational or rehabilitation programmes.

A future best-practice model should therefore connect teaching-assistant support with **peer mentoring, inclusive group work, communication skills, independent living skills and gradual development of pupil autonomy.**

4. Awareness Raising through Sport – Paralympic School Day

Croatia also has a long-standing example of disability awareness raising through sport: the **Paralympic School Day** programme implemented by the Croatian Paralympic Committee.

The programme was introduced in Croatia in **2010** and uses sport, presentations, direct interaction with Paralympic athletes and practical activities to help children understand disability and individual differences. Activities have included opportunities for pupils to experience sports such as boccia, wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball.

By February 2015, Croatia had already held its **125th Paralympic School Day.** The programme was explicitly designed to promote tolerance, acceptance and awareness of the barriers encountered by peers with disabilities.

This is an important model because it changes the focus from explaining disability theoretically to **learning through shared experience.**

A similar approach could be expanded within schools and municipalities through:

- inclusive sports days;
- adapted sports workshops;
- meetings with athletes with disabilities;
- mixed teams of pupils with and without disabilities;
- disability-awareness workshops;
- cooperation with local sports clubs and disability organisations.

Such activities are particularly useful for addressing stigma and improving peer relationships.

5. Arts and Creative Activities as Tools for Inclusion

Croatian schools have also used Erasmus+ to develop arts-based approaches to working with pupils with developmental difficulties.

One example is the two-year Erasmus+ project “**Sky is the Limit – SENART**”, implemented by the Secondary School – Centre for Education and Training Zagreb together with partners from Turkey, Romania, Portugal and Poland.

The project, which began in September 2020, focused on improving teaching methods for pupils with developmental difficulties through artistic approaches. Activities included music therapy and other creative methods, while professionals from partner institutions exchanged methodologies and practical experience.

This type of practice is highly transferable because arts activities can create forms of participation that are less dependent on traditional academic achievement. Music, theatre, photography, dance, visual arts and digital storytelling can allow young people with different communication and cognitive abilities to **create together, express identity, develop confidence and interact naturally with peers**.

Future projects should therefore avoid organising arts exclusively “for young people with disabilities”. Wherever possible, activities should be designed for **mixed groups of young people with and without disabilities**, as this creates stronger conditions for genuine social inclusion.

4. ACTION PLAN

In the Action plan all main objectives are turned into real examples of potential ideas which can be implemented by project partners involving various stakeholders in the Educational sector in the next 5-10 years. Activities are presented in an identical way, describing the performer(s) of the activity, timeframe for its implementation, expected results, other potential participants, human resources, as well as prerequisites for implementation of foreseen activities.

Activity 1:

Description of the activity	Lab in Dance A laboratory of dance composed of capacitated youths/adults and youths with Special Needs. Rehearsals every 15 days after school/work. • Creation of stage performances that will take place in the events of the city; • Dance that explores the body and its characteristics • Promote values of self-esteem, communication, respect for diversity, equality,
Performer of the activity	• Youths from several municipal schools • NGO's users • Municipal resources
Expected results	• To promote the inclusion of people with disabilities through contemporary dance; • to empower people with disabilities in the field of dance by transmitting learning and technical and creative skills; • to promote contact with professional dancers through

	artistic residencies; • to democratize dance as an accessible art for all; • to contribute to the SDG 'reducing inequalities', aligning art with education, culture and health;
Period of performance	• 2027/2029
Human resources	• Dance teacher, adults and youths
Budget:	• 10 000€
Financial sources:	• Municipal, NGO, and School

Activity 2:

Description of the activity	• Plural Sports – inclusion project through sports
Performer of the activity	• Youths with special needs • Families • Elderly
Expected results	Personal growth; sharing; motor, cognitive and social development; promote the participation of people with disabilities in sports
Period of performance	Annual
Human resources	Municipal officers; sports clubs; schools
Budget:	3000€
Financial sources:	Municipality

Activity 3:

Description of the activity	• Monthly online meeting with parents having youths with Special Needs
Performer of the activity	• parents having youths with Special Needs • teachers • health professionals • legal professionals
Expected results	• To promote emotional health, facilitate dialogue between parents and caregivers, and between them and specialists from different areas such as health, jurisdiction, etc. • To inform and empower caregivers on different issues related to their children's disabilities;

	To promote social inclusion.
Period of performance	2 times a year
Human resources	Per session: 1 expert , 2 municipal officers
Budget:	No budget. The experts make their intervention for free; online platform
Financial sources:	Staff costs: 2 hours per event

Activity 4:

Description of the activity	Innovative approaches for social inclusion of preschool children with special educational needs The project main objective, which project partners would like to achieve, is development, implementation and promotion of the new educational concept for pre-school children with disabilities in understanding, reducing prejudice and strengthening of the social integration in their communities. Project activities will lead to creation of the inclusive environment for children with disabilities in three kindergartens. Other objectives covered in this project are: - Development and implementation of innovative activity-based educational concept for tackling diversity, and supporting inclusion of children with disabilities and SEN in pre-school education - Increasing kindergarten teachers' skills and competences in implementation of new educational methodologies for work with kids with SEN - Promotion of the advantages of transnational cooperation in improving of inclusivity of the educational processes Addressing the need for improvement of local policies/strategies in tackling the challenges in creation of a full inclusive educational environment for young people with disabilities (from pre-school to upper educational levels)
Performer of the activity	- Preschool institutions - Child psychologists and educators - NGOs advocating for children's rights - Parents

Expected results	Created and successfully implemented an innovative educational approach for tackling of educational and inclusion challenges that preschool children with disabilities are facing - Kindergartens' teachers with increased skills to implement new educative approaches. - Raising awareness about necessity of improving of the local policies/strategies in creating social inclusive environment for young persons with disabilities - Established long-term transnational partnership
Period of performance	2027-2029
Human resources	Experts from NGO's, kindergarten teachers, parents, public authorities
Budget:	EUR 250,000
Financial sources:	Erasmus + Programme, other EU funding programmes

Activity 5:

Description of the activity	- Inclusive Classrooms with Educational Robots The main objective of the project is the development, implementation, and promotion of an innovative inclusive educational approach using educational robots to support children with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN) in elementary schools. The project aims to improve social inclusion, reduce prejudice, strengthen communication and teamwork among children, and create a supportive and interactive learning environment for all students. The project activities will contribute to the creation of inclusive classrooms equipped with educational robotic tools in selected elementary schools, encouraging equal participation and active learning for children with different abilities. Other Objectives Covered in the Project - Development and implementation of innovative robot-assisted teaching methodologies for inclusive elementary education - Improving students' social interaction, communication, creativity, and problem-solving skills through collaborative robotic activities - Increasing teachers' skills and competences in using educational robots and digital tools for work with children with disabilities and SEN
-----------------------------	--

	- Promoting equal access to modern technologies and digital education for all children - Strengthening cooperation between schools, parents, local communities, and inclusion experts in supporting inclusive education - Promotion of the advantages of transnational cooperation and exchange of good practices in inclusive digital education - Supporting the development of local educational policies and strategies for inclusive and technology-based learning environments - Raising awareness about the importance of inclusion, diversity, and acceptance among students, teachers, and the wider community - Encouraging early STEM education and digital literacy for children with different educational needs
Performer of the activity	- Elementary schools and Preschool institutions - Child psychologists and educators - NGOs IT experts - Parents
Expected results	Expected Results - Establishment of inclusive classrooms with educational robots in participating schools - Improved inclusion and participation of children with disabilities in classroom activities - Increased teacher competences in inclusive digital teaching methods - Development of educational materials and robotic activities adapted for inclusive learning - Stronger cooperation between educational institutions and local stakeholders - Greater awareness of inclusive education and equal opportunities for all children
Period of performance	2027-2029
Human resources	Experts from NGO's, teachers, parents, public authorities
Budget:	120,000 EUR
Financial sources:	Erasmus + Programme, other EU funding programmes

Activity 6:

Description of the activity	• Empowering Students Through Inclusion The main objective of the project is to improve inclusive education and social participation of students with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN) in secondary schools through innovative educational activities, peer support, digital learning tools, and strengthened cooperation between schools, families, and local communities. The project aims to create a safe, accessible, and supportive school environment where every student can actively participate in educational, social, and extracurricular activities regardless of their abilities or background. Specific Objectives • Strengthening inclusive practices in secondary schools • Improving teachers' competences for working with students with disabilities and SEN • Encouraging peer support, tolerance, and social integration among students • Developing accessible digital and interactive learning materials • Increasing awareness about inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunities • Supporting students' personal development, self-confidence, and active participation in school life • Promoting cooperation between schools, parents, NGOs, and local institutions • Encouraging youth participation in decision-making processes related to inclusive education
Performer of the activity	• Secondary school students • Students with disabilities and special educational needs • Teachers and school staff • Parents and families • Local educational institutions and NGOs
Expected results	Expected Results • Improved inclusion and participation of students with SEN in school activities • Increased teacher knowledge and skills in inclusive education • Better social interaction and reduced discrimination among students • Creation of inclusive school policies and support



	mechanisms • Increased use of innovative and accessible educational tools • Stronger cooperation between schools and local communities • Greater awareness about the importance of inclusive education and equal opportunities
Period of performance	2027-2029
Human resources	• Experts from NGO's, teachers, parents, public authorities, secondary school students
Budget:	250,000 EUR
Financial sources:	• Erasmus + Programme, other EU funding programmes

Activity 7:

Description of the activity	<i>Sports Inside and Outside Care Institutions</i> This activity aims to enhance social inclusion, mental health, and physical development of young people living in Care Institutions through participation in organized sports activities, both inside and outside the institutions. Through sports, young people learn values such as teamwork, responsibility, discipline, inclusion, and acceptance of diversity. Key Features: • Organization of inter-institutional sports programs, including team games, gymnastic activities, and sports tournaments. • Outside Activities at local sports facilities or community centers, promoting socialization and interaction with peers from the local community. • Educational workshops to promote inclusion, teamwork, and self-esteem through sports. • Collaboration with local sports clubs, coaches, and volunteers for organizing and implementing activities. • Integration of adaptive sports to ensure full participation of young people with different abilities. • Organization of friendly competitions and community events to strengthen community ties.
Performer of the activity	• Sports clubs and youth centers. • Physical education instructors, coaches, social workers and phycologists.
Expected results	• Improved physical and mental health of participants. • Enhanced social skills, cooperation, and solidarity among participants.

	- Reduced social exclusion and increased integration of young people into the local community. - Development of a positive relationship with sports as a means of personal and social growth. - Greater awareness and acceptance of diversity and inclusion among participants and the local community. - Creation of a sustainable model of sports-based inclusion activities, replicable in other centers.
Period of performance	2027 – 2029
Human resources	- NGOs and organisations active in the fields of social inclusion and sports. - Youth and children's care institutes.
Budget:	EUR 120,000
Financial sources:	- Erasmus + and other European youth programs. - National and local funds for social initiatives. - Grants from NGOs and international organizations supporting youth inclusion.

Activity 8:

Description of the activity	Mentoring Between Students with Special Needs – Social Inclusion Through Art and Theatre This activity aims to enhance the social inclusion and active participation of young people with special needs through the implementation of mentoring programmes. Within this framework, older or more experienced students with special needs take on the role of mentors, guiding and supporting their peers through art - and theatre-based activities. Through the creative process, participants develop social and communication skills, strengthen their self-confidence and self-esteem, while fostering solidarity, cooperation and acceptance of diversity. Art and theatre function as safe and inclusive tools for personal expression, empowerment and social connection. Key Features: Development of structured mentoring programmes in which young people with special needs mentor and support other peers with similar experiences. Organisation of theatre expression, drama therapy and visual arts workshops aimed at promoting social inclusion. Encouragement of creativity, self-expression and collaboration within a safe and supportive environment. Utilisation of artistic outputs and theatre performances to raise awareness within the local community about the abilities, rights and potential of young
------------------------------------	--

	people with special needs. Provision of opportunities for participants to develop leadership, communication, responsibility and mentoring skills.
Performer of the activity	Schools and educational centres for young people with special needs. Artists and theatre educators. Social workers and psychologists. Young people with special needs acting as mentors.
Expected results	Development of leadership, mentoring and responsibility skills among young people acting as mentors. Strengthening of solidarity, mutual support and trust between young people with special needs through mentor–mentee relationships. Increased self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of empowerment among all participants. Improvement of social and communication skills, including cooperation, active listening and emotional expression. Enhancement of creative expression through art and theatre as tools for personal and social development. Production of socially impactful artistic works and theatre activities by young people, to be used for awareness-raising actions. Strengthened cooperation among educators, artists, social workers and inclusion-focused organisations.
Period of performance	2027 – 2029
Human resources	NGOs and organisations active in the fields of social inclusion and arts.
Budget:	EUR 140,000
Financial sources:	Erasmus + and other European youth programs. National and local funds for social initiatives. Grants from NGOs and international organizations supporting youth inclusion.

Activity 9:

Description of the activity	<i>Travelling Without Google Maps</i> The educational activity “Travelling Without Google Maps” aims to develop students’ orientation skills, geographical awareness, critical thinking and autonomy through experiential exploration of space without the use of digital navigation applications (such as Google Maps). Students are invited to “travel” using traditional orientation tools, including printed maps, verbal directions, natural landmarks and environmental observation, fostering decision-making skills and a deeper understanding of spatial relationships. Key Features: Group work to strengthen cooperation and collective decision-making. Use of printed maps, compasses, diagrams and handwritten instructions. Learning basic orientation concepts (north, cardinal points, scale, distances). Orientation activities in school settings, neighbourhoods or natural environments. Reading and interpreting natural and man-made landmarks. Comparison of traditional and digital navigation methods, with an emphasis on critical thinking. Route planning designed and implemented by the students themselves.
Performer of the activity	Geography, physical education and environmental education teachers. Occupational therapists and social workers. Outdoor activity coordinators. Volunteers / accompanying staff.
Expected results	Development of orientation and spatial awareness skills. Strengthening of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Improved cooperation, communication and teamwork. Increased autonomy and self-confidence during students’ movement, both in nearby and more distant locations from their place of residence. Understanding the value of traditional navigation tools. Development of environmental and geographical awareness. Ability to compare and responsibly use digital tools
Period of performance	2027 – 2029

Human resources	Environmental education centres Local authorities and museums
Budget:	EUR 10,000
Financial sources:	Erasmus+ and other European educational programmes School and local educational resources Environmental and experiential learning programmes

Activity 10:

Description of the activity	Artificial Intelligence and Educational Robotics for Inclusive Learning of Children with Special Educational Needs The activity will focus on the development and piloting of the AI-ROBO-INCLUDE Methodology, an innovative pedagogical approach combining Artificial Intelligence, educational robotics and inclusive education to support children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities. The methodology will provide differentiated and adaptable robotic learning activities addressing communication, social interaction, attention, cognitive development, emotional expression, motor skills, autonomy and cooperation. It will include visual resources, individual and group learning scenarios, teacher guidance, assessment tools and a Robot Adaptation Matrix linking individual educational needs with appropriate robotic activities. The methodology will be implemented with mixed groups of children with and without disabilities and validated through practical piloting, teacher and student feedback, and pre- and post-assessment of learning and participation outcomes.
Performer of the activity	The activity will be jointly implemented by all project partners. One partner will act as Methodology and Pedagogical Lead, coordinating the development of the AI-ROBO-INCLUDE framework. A technology or robotics partner will lead the development and adaptation of AI-supported and robotic tools. Schools, SEN centres and educational organisations will implement and test the methodology with children. Special education experts, psychologists and inclusive education specialists will ensure that all activities are adapted to children's needs. NGO's may support research, data analysis, validation and evaluation.
Expected results	AI-ROBO-INCLUDE Methodology combining Artificial Intelligence, educational robotics and inclusive pedagogy. Development of adapted educational activities for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), covering communication, social interaction, emotional development, cognitive skills, attention, problem-solving, motor skills and independent learning. Implementation of practical robotics and AI-supported activities with students with SEN in participating schools and educational centres. Participation of students with SEN and disabilities in structured, inclusive robotics and AI learning activities.

	Implementation of mixed activities involving students with and without SEN, promoting peer interaction, cooperation and social inclusion. Development of individualised and differentiated learning scenarios, allowing activities to be adapted to different abilities, learning levels and communication needs. Development of an AI-ROBO Adaptation Framework enabling teachers to select and adapt activities according to individual student needs and progress. Teacher Training Programme enabling educators to design and implement AI- and robotics-supported inclusive learning activities. Digital repository/platform containing lesson plans, robotic activities, AI-supported resources, visual materials and adaptation guidelines. Evaluation report documenting students' participation, engagement and progress in targeted competences before and after the pilot activities. A validated and transferable European methodology that can be adopted by schools, SEN centres and other educational organisations.
Period of performance	2027 – 2029
Human resources	project managers, educational robotics experts, SEN/special education experts, inclusive education specialists, teachers, pedagogues/psychologists, ICT experts, researchers/evaluators, trainers and mentors.
Budget:	EUR 250,000
Financial sources:	Erasmus+ and other European educational programmes



References

UNICEF North Macedonia. (2025). *Policy Brief: Inclusive Education in North Macedonia*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia>

European Commission. (2025). *North Macedonia Report 2025*. Brussels: European Commission. Retrieved from <https://nkeu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/north-macedonia-report-2025.pdf>

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. (2026). *Overview of the inclusive education system in North Macedonia*. <https://www.european-agency.org/country-information/north-macedonia/overview-inclusive-education-system>

State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia (2026). *Primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools at the beginning of the school year 2025/2026*. <https://www.stat.mk>

Ministry for education and science (2025). *Образовни асистенти во основното и средното образование*. <https://mon.gov.mk>

Kajgana. (2025). *За прв пат образовни асистенти и во средното образование*. <https://kajgana.com/vesti/makedonija/za-prv-pat-obrazovni-asistenti-i-vo-srednoto-obrazovanie>

European Commission (2021). *Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030*. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/equality-and-inclusion/union-equality-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2021-2030_en

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2020). *Greece: Legislation and policy*. <https://www.european-agency.org/country-information/greece/legislation-and-policy>

European Commission, Eurydice (2025). *Greece: Separate special education needs provision in early childhood and school education*. <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/greece/separate-special-education-needs-provision-early-childhood-and-school>

Hellenic Republic (2008). *Law 3699/2008 on Special Education and Training of persons with disabilities or special educational needs, as amended*.

Hellenic Republic (2012). *Law 4074/2012 ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol*.

Hellenic Republic (2020). *Law 4727/2020 on Digital Governance and electronic communications*.

Hellenic Republic (2021). *Law 4823/2021 on school upgrading, teacher empowerment and educational support structures*.



Hellenic Republic (2024). National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024–2030. National Accessibility Portal. <https://amea.gov.gr>

Municipality of Piraeus (2025). Reconstruction and upgrading of pavements to improve safe movement and accessibility. <https://piraeus.gov.gr/>

Association of Social Responsibility for Children and Youth (SKEP) (n.d.). “Focus on the Person” – On-site School Program. <https://www.skep.gr/en/focus-on-the-person-on-site-school-program/>

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (n.d.). Focus on the Person: Disability Awareness Programme successfully implemented in schools in Greece. <https://www.inclusive-education-in-action.org/>

Special Olympics (n.d.). Unified Schools and Unified Champion Schools best practices, including the Special Olympics Hellas school programme. <https://resources.specialolympics.org/youth-and-school>

Special Olympics Hellas (n.d.). Inclusive sport and youth activities in Greece. <https://www.specialolympicshellas.gr/>

European Commission (2021). Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/equality-and-inclusion/union-equality-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2021-2030_en

Municipality of Piraeus (n.d.). Municipal information and accessibility actions. <https://piraeus.gov.gr/>

2021 CENSUS (Statistics Portugal / Instituto Nacional de Estatística)

Decree-Law No. 54/2018 (*Decreto-Lei n.º 54/2018* - The legal framework for inclusive education in Portugal)

European Union Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Municipal Strategic Education Plan 2030 (PEEM 2030) (*Plano Estratégico Educativo Municipal 2030*), Câmara Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira

CLICK – Literacies for the World Programme (2025–2028), Câmara Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira

Plano de Desenvolvimento Social (PDS), Câmara Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira

Plano de Promoção da Acessibilidade (PPA), Câmara Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira

Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM) – Education overview:
<https://mzom.gov.hr/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/109>



MZOM – 2025/2026 school calendar decision: <https://mzom.gov.hr/odluka-o-pocetku-i-zavrsetku-nastavne-godine-broju-radnih-dana-i-trajanju-odmora-ucenika-osnovnih-i-srednjih-skola-za-skolsku-godinu-2025-2026/7049>

Narodne novine NN 88/2025 – 2025/2026 calendar decision: https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2025_06_88_1222.html

Preschool Education Act (as amended through NN 22/2026);

School Education Act (as amended through NN 156/2023);

Higher Education and Scientific Activity Act (NN 119/2022);

Adult Education Act (NN 144/2021).

MZOM – ŠeR / School e-Rudnik: <https://mzom.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/ser-skolski-e-rudnik-3419/3419>

MZOM – National secondary school-leaving examinations (državna matura): <https://mzom.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/vrednovanje-i-osiguranjekvalitete-u-sustavu-odgoja-i-obrazovanja/drzavna-matura/459>

MZOM – Higher education: <https://mzom.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/visoko-obrazovanje/133>

MZOM – Adult education: <https://mzom.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/obrazovanje-odraslih/131>

Regulation on the education of pupils with developmental disabilities (NN 24/2015): https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/full/2015_03_24_510.html

Special curriculum for competences in activities of daily living and work (NN 42/2024): https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/full/2024_04_42_743.html

Bjelovar-Bilogora County – primary education institutions: <https://bbz.hr/pravne-osobe/ustanove-osnovno%C5%A1kolskog-obrazovanja>

Centar za odgoj i obrazovanje Rudolf Steiner Daruvar – activities: <https://crsd.hr/djelatnost/>

Centar Rudolf Steiner – general acts / annual planning documents: <https://crsd.hr/opci-akti/>

OŠ Vladimira Nazora Daruvar – annual work plans and curricula: <https://os-vnazora-daruvar.skole.hr/godisnji-planovi-i-programi-rada-i-kurikulum/>

Tehnička škola Daruvar – official documents: <https://www.tsd.hr/site/dokumenti/>

Tehnička škola Daruvar – admissions / programmes: <https://www.tsd.hr/site/upisi-2026-2027/>

Croatian Employment Service professional-guidance information

Dječji vrtić “Vladimir Nazor” Daruvar, Annual Work Plan 2025/26

Češki dječji vrtić Ferde Mravenca Daruvar, Annual Work Plan 2025/26

OŠ Vladimira Nazora Daruvar official current school data / 2025/26 planning documents

Češka OŠ J. A. Komenskog Daruvar, Annual Work Plan 2025/26

Gimnazija Daruvar, Ekonomska i turistička škola Daruvar and Tehnička škola Daruvar, Annual Work Plans 2025/26; BBŽ register for Glazbena škola Brune Bjelinskog Daruvar

Veleučilište u Bjelovaru official programme information

Pučko otvoreno učilište Daruvar official adult-education information



European Commission (2021; enhanced 2026), Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030. [link](#)

Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, National Plan for Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2027 and implementation reports. [link](#)

Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, National Plan for the Development of the Education System until 2027; annual implementation report for 2025. [link](#)

Ordinance on Primary and Secondary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities, NN 24/2015. [link](#)

Ordinance on Teaching Assistants and Professional Communication Intermediaries, NN 85/2024. [link](#)

Bjelovar-Bilogora County Development Plan 2022–2027. [link](#)

Bjelovar-Bilogora County Social Plan 2025–2027. [link](#)

Town of Daruvar, Implementation Programme 2025–2029. [link](#)

Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities, Annual Report for 2025. [link](#)