



EVOLVEMENT AND PARENTS RIGHTS FOR DECISIONS

Context: Legislation, rights, communication and collaboration, assessment, support

Key words: Integration, special needs education, communication and collaboration; assessment; citizen rights; support

Description:

Austria stresses the rights of pupils with disabilities to have the support they need in order to learn. The situation for parents of children with disabilities who attend school is also a kind of choice. The parents can decide if they want their child to attend

1. a regular class in the compulsory school – individually included – or if they prefer to have their child in
2. an integration class in a regular school or if they want their child in
3. a special school.

In Austria about 50% of children are integrated in regular classes – either individually included or in integration classes. In Styria the percentage is 83%. The state is responsible for teacher resources and the pedagogical guidelines and the municipalities are responsible for the environment (houses, materials....). Many children need extra support.

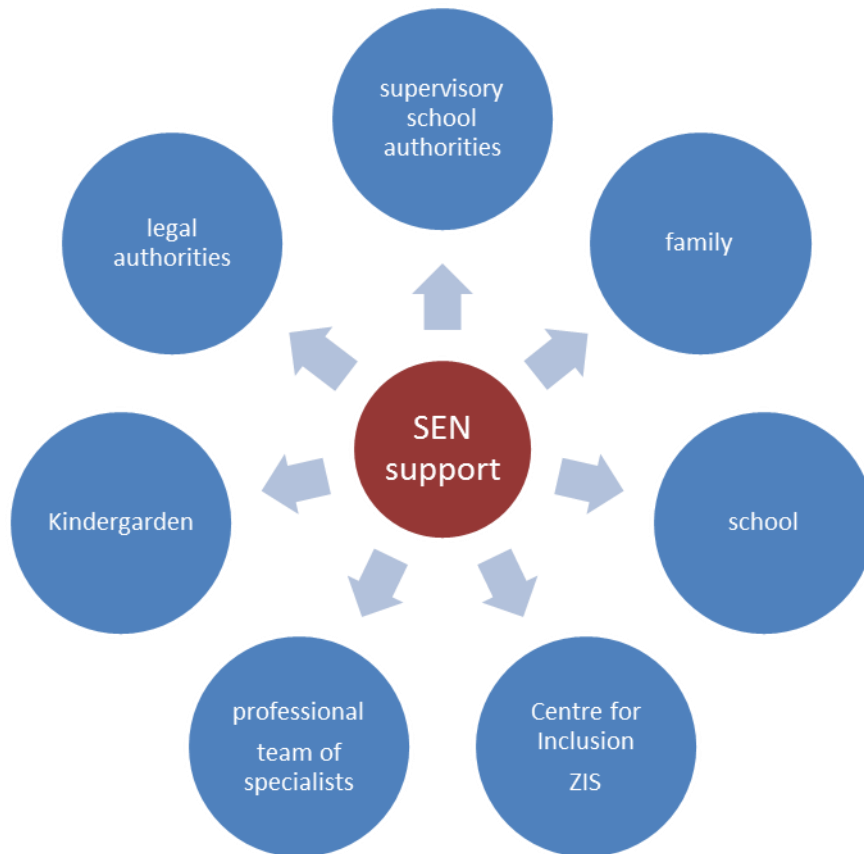
Support systems

- Dual system of integrations classes/groups and special classes/groups in both Kindergarten and school provided by the state
- Parents have the right to choose between both systems. The transition from one to the other is always possible.
- A professional team consisting of specialists such as psychologists, pedagogues, social workers, special education teachers, regular teachers, parents and in some cases pupils are involved in the decision-making of extra support.
- Pupils with SEN have the right to an assessment for which the parents can apply.
- The school administration is responsible to facilitate the assessment and intervention.
- The assessment is conducted by a special advisory team in preschool and by a special team consisting of professionals in pedagogical assessment, of school psychologists and medical doctors in schools.



- Pupils with SEN have the right to an individual education plan (IEP)
- All technical aids (assistive devices) that a child needs to facilitate learning in school are free of charge.

Cooperation



Conclusion

The disability policy in Austria today focuses on identifying and removing obstacles to full participation and equality in society, preventing and fighting against discrimination and promoting equality. Persons with disabilities have the same rights and duties as other citizens,

Pupils with specific need of support have the right to education and to attend either an integration class in a regular school or a class in a special school. Parents have the right to choose and the school administration has to give advice and support in order to provide the support needed. The specific needs of a child are stated in initial assessments. (Schulpflichtgesetz §8)