



A COLLABORATION

TOOLBOX TO BUILD

A SCHOOL FOR ALL.... TOGETHER IS BETTER!

NEWSLETTER 6

Our 6th project meeting in Graz, Austria

2-4 March 2015

Monday 2/3/2015

We started our working day at ZIS (Zentrum für Inklusiv- und Sonderpädagogik Sprachheilschule Graz). This is an advice centre for the whole of Graz.

We were welcomed by Ursula Strauss and the principal Eva Bernat introduced us to the Austrian education system. She also gave some information about the functioning of ZIS.

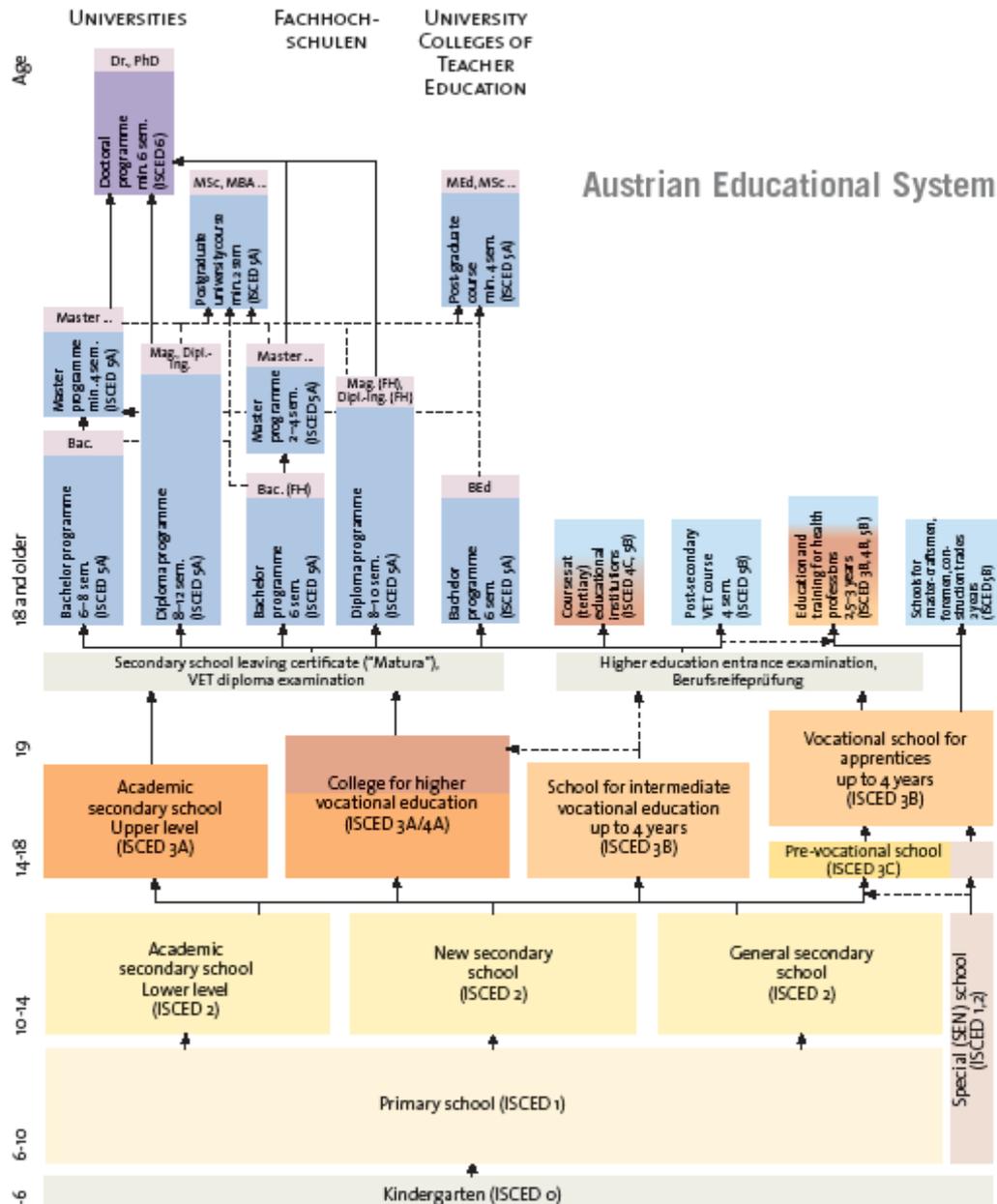


The Austrian Education System:



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ISCED: International Standard Classification of Education (UNESCO), ISCED 97

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Functioning of ZIS

In small groups, we had a guided tour with a working plan on the aspects of the institute. Their services are available for 40 primary schools, 22 secondary schools, 1 polytechnical school and 5 special schools, parents and teachers.

ZIS is a consulting centre. They provide expertise to schools. Their system works on five levels:

1. Multistage classes with the main focus on speech therapy
2. Speech and language therapy courses
3. Transition
4. Pedagogical consulting and remedial courses
5. Special needs Assessment

The teachers all have a specialty of speech- and language therapy.



To close off our first half a day in Graz we had a nice lunch offered by ZIS.

In the afternoon first of all the questionnaire conclusions were discussed. Then every participating country presented their own teacher training programs.

There was an overview of new projects. To close off our first day program we worked in local teams to prepare the closing conference.



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In the evening we were offered a guided tour through Graz. We started at the “Hauptplatz”. Graz by night is really amazing.
We ended up our first day in the restaurant “Steirerstubn” where typical Austrian food was served.

Tuesday, 3/3/2015

We started the day with a visit to the Volksschule Graz Gabelsberger. It is a primary school with pupils from 24 different countries and 27 different mother languages. Some classes are multileveled, other are grade classes. It is the choice of the parents if a child is placed into a multilevel or a grade class.



There are also 24 pupils with special needs. They are divided into 6 integration classes. Every integration class has 2 teachers, who work as a team. One teacher is a special needs teacher.

www.vs-gabelsberger.at

The next visit was to the kindergarten Mosaik.

It is a private pre-primary school with 69 pupils of which 39 with special needs. They have 3 integration groups (18 pupils) and 3 cooperative groups (small groups, 6 pupils with severe special needs).

External therapists are working one-to-one or integrated in class.

They also have an ambulant service in which they go to 49 regular kindergartens to support 110 toddlers with SEN.

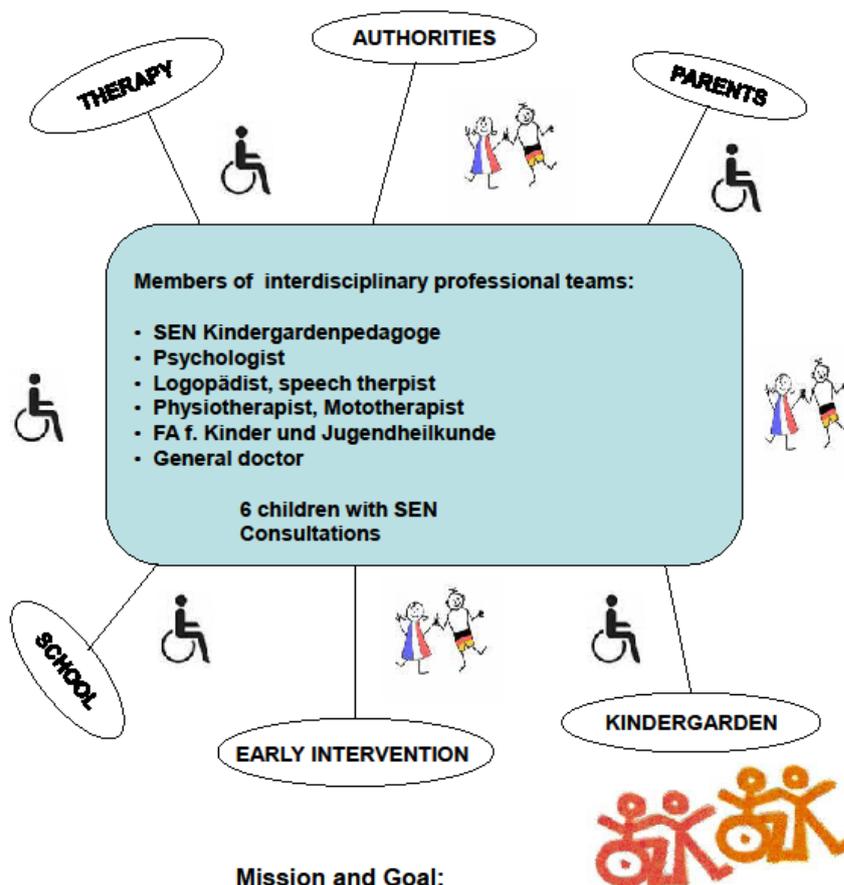


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INTEGRATIVE SUPPORT TEAM / IZB



Mission and Goal:

Mobile interdisciplinary professional teams work for and support the Integration of children with SEN in regular pre-primary institutions and support the overall personal development process of children in Kindergarten.



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On Tuesday noon “sunny afternoon” we treated ourselves on a nice picknick in the park.

In the afternoon we got back to work in our working groups (toolboxteam, newsletter, blog, digital team, glossary).

In the evening we went for dinner to “Das Lorenz”, a restaurant with a very special link to our Comenius-project as well. Therefore it made the dinner not only very nice but also more special. Thank you, Austrian colleagues, to share this with us!!

First of all we were welcomed by managing director Mag. Klaus Candussi. He gave us a short presentation of the project “Das Lorenz”. The drinks were on invitation of the governor of Steiermark, LH Mag. Franz Voves.

The restaurant “Das Lorenz” is a part of a social project called ‘atempo’. It’s a social enterprise where people with learning disabilities or social problems are integrated in the labor market.



www.atempo.at

Wednesday 4/3/2015

On our last day in Graz we visited a secondary school, NMS Dr. Renner.

The secondary school’s task is to prepare the students for professional life.

Teachers (AHS , technical and integration teachers) plan the lessons as a team and ensure the best possible individual learning conditions for all students .



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NMS Dr. Renner secondary school is situated in the Southern districts of Graz and gathers the children from the surrounding area. They are specialized in teaching children with different cultural background, speaking 20 different languages. Integration and inclusion are being lived in their eight classes every day. The mix of teachers having experienced different vocational training, a resulting diversity of skills and team teaching create a human climate in the classroom where each child can learn according to their rhythm. At present 144 pupils attend the school, 38 with specific needs. After the lessons the pupils may profit from an afternoon programme until 5pm including lunch, a study hour and various activities.

Children who immigrate to Austria and are integrated in the school attend special German lessons (5 hours a week). Otherwise they follow along or do special work in each subject without being marked for two years. Five extra hours of German are proposed twice a week in the afternoon at school. This support is offered by ISOP, an organization which proposes innovative social projects. They may also attend lessons in their mother tongue in their free time.

Afterwards we went to visit the polytechnical school of Graz. They are a multicultural school with 210 pupils of the age between 15 and 17 years old, divided in 10 classes, 4 classes with integration/inclusion of children with special needs.

There are around 20 to 25 students per class.

At the moment there are 20 students with special needs at the school.

Most of the time there are 4 SEN pupils in the class supported by a SEN teacher.

The students have established close links with commerce and industry by practicing in enterprises, during 5 weeks. Afterwards they have to choose a specialised area (hairdresser, tourism, metal, wood en construction,...)

For the SEN-pupils they have job coaches to help the pupils to choose what they want to do.

The main subjects like German, Maths, English and 10 different areas of studies like woodwork, metal, electronic, trade, tourism are attended by all students.

At the beginning of the school year there are 5 weeks of orientation – to get to know all subjects and areas of studies which are offered; focus on strength, interests of everyone

Then the students choose their area of study, (10 different ones), like trade, electronics ...)

Minimum 3 weeks practice in companies – like an internship

The challenges the school attends are the age group and the different stages of development from childhood into young grown ups.

Also the different social and cultural background and the support the development of the personal and professional career are real challenges.

At noon we went back to the Sprachheileschule and ate very tasty sandwiches offered by ZIS.

After lunch alle the countries shared their final preparations for the closing conference in Brussels.

Then we came, one more time, together in the working groups to finalize the work and shared afterwards about the working groups.



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Finally, the school of Lovenjoel proposed their program of the project meeting in Ten Desselaer, the first of June.



We once more had a very instructive and interesting visit. Thank you, Austria!



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