

EDUCATION & DISABILITY



GOOD PRACTICES IN THE GREEK EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Special Education in Greece



- regulated by Law 3699/2008.
(supplemented by more recent laws and ministerial decisions)
- integral part of free of charge public education.
- compulsory for pupils with disabilities and/ or special educational needs, from 5-16 years old.

The Greek State



recognizes disability:

- as part of human being.
- as a complex social and political phenomenon.

undertakes to preserve, in the context of Special Education provided:

- equal participation in society for the disabled and people with special educational needs.
- independent living and economic autonomy.
- full consolidation of their rights to education and social and professional inclusion.

Pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs



Special Education is provided to pupils who have **difficulties in learning** for the whole or some period of their school life, because of:

- sensory, mental, cognitive and developmental problems.
- mental health and neuropsychological disorders.

Pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs



Pupils with:

- mental disability
- vision & hearing sensory disabilities
- physical disabilities
- chronic non curable diseases
- speech disorders
- specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia)
- ADHD
- **pervasive developmental disorders (autism spectrum disorders)**
- mental health disabilities
- multiple disabilities

Pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs



Also, **pupils with:**

- complex cognitive, emotional and social difficulties
 - delinquent behavior because of abuse, parental neglect and abandonment or domestic violence
 - pupils with one or more special mental skills and talents
- are also considered pupils with special educational needs.

Settings of education



To preserve **equity and quality education**, students with autism spectrum disorders may receive education in the following settings:



mainstream schools

(mainstream class, individual parallel support, inclusive classes)



special schools

- The proper school setting is suggested by the KEDDYs after assessing each child's special educational needs .

Special educational programs - interventions



- ✓ Either **in mainstream or special school** settings, pupils attend **special educational programs** depending on their special educational needs for **as long as needed** or **for their whole school life**.
- ✓ **Special schools** also provide **intervention programs**, like ergo therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy and any other services that ensure equal treatment, evaluation and pedagogical and psychological support.
KEDDYs may also provide such services.

Special Secondary Education

Special schools

Lower Secondary Special Schools attended by students till the age of 19 (4 years)



Upper Secondary Special Schools attended by the previous level graduated students (4 years)

Special vocational schools

a. United Lower and Upper Special Vocational Schools (4 + 4 years)

OR

b. Special Needs Vocational Education and Training Workshops (EEEEK)

Mainstream Education – Inclusive perspective



- ✓ In 2012, Greek State ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, together with its Optional Protocol, with Law 4074/2012.
- ✓ Inclusive approach of the Greek educational legislation, according to Article 24 of the Convention:
 - More and more pupils with disabilities and / or special educational needs (including pupils with autism) **are attending mainstream school with appropriate support** from special education teachers.
 - withdrawal of educational obstacles, equality in education, respect in diversity, smooth transition and full inclusion into the educational and social environment

Mainstream Education – Inclusive perspective



In this context, Law 4386/2016 (Article 82, §5) introduces:

- Pupils with disabilities and/ or special educational needs who attend **inclusive classes**, are supported in the mainstream class (cooperation of teachers, differentiated learning activities, appropriate adaptations to the educational material provided to the pupil and the educational environment)



Law 4386/2016 (Article 82, §3):

- **Co-education programs** can be implemented together by special and mainstream schools. They can have the form of:

- a) organized activities (e.g. sports, arts).
- b) joint programs of School Activities (Environmental, Health, Cultural Education, Vocational programs or European Programs (e.g. Erasmus +, eTwinning etc.).
- c) participation of pupils with autism in specific lessons taught in mainstream schools.
- d) co-teaching a lesson (e.g. theoretical part is presented in the mainstream school and the laboratory part implemented in the special school laboratory).

Co-education programs



Co-education programs aim at:

- the development and empowerment of **social, linguistic, communicative and interpersonal skills** of pupils with autism.
 - improvement of **self-esteem** and increase of **interest in learning**.
 - the awareness of all pupils, through active processes, on issues of **solidarity, equality** and **social justice**.
- ✓ These programs function simultaneously as practices to prevent phenomena such as school violence (bullying) and racism.

School violence – pupils with autism



- **School violence** is a phenomenon encountered in schools and may have negative **impact on learning process and the psychological - emotional development** of pupils.
- **Pupils with autism** may be targeted as victims of bullying or sometimes be considered as offenders because of their difficulties in social communication, understanding, sensory processing and their intense interests.

School violence – pupils with autism



- 1. Network of Prevention and Combating School Violence and Intimidation phenomena**
 - **Educational material** for teachers, pupils and parents
 - **Training** of teachers
 - **Informative meetings**, press releases, tv spots
 - **Research** on the periodical assessment of the phenomenon
 - **Online registration form** for incidents of school violence and bullying

School violence – pupils with autism



2. Joint programs of School Activities (e.g. programs of prevention of school violence, handling interpersonal relations among pupils, acceptance of diversity)

- strengthen pupils' personality
- raise their self-esteem
- enable them to solve conflicts on their own - help them adopt a positive attitude towards life.

School violence – pupils with autism



3. **Thematic week** in Lower Secondary Schools (activities and awareness of pupils on various issues)

- promotion of health and well-being of the pupils
- pupils are considered persons with emotional and social needs and concerns



**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION
ANY QUESTIONS...?**