Programmes/projects/initiatives organised by public authority and funded by the EU Fund Процедури и проекти в процес на изпълнение по Оперативна програма „Наука и образование за интелигентен растеж“ [1] (Project and procedures part of the Operatinal Program Education and science for intelligence growth) are operated by the Ministry of education and science. One of them is “Educational integration of ethnic minority students and / or seeking or receiving international protection.” Nearly 3,000 children and students from ethnic minorities, including Roma, participate in educational integration activities. They work with teachers and representatives of non-profit legal entities in partnership with municipalities to ensure sustainability of the results.

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Educational support

Assessment and guidance of children with special educational needs towards integrated education or towards training in special kindergartens and special schools are carried out after initial assessment by the complex pedagogical assessment teams at the regional inspectorates on education. These teams include various experts:

- special pedagogues;
- resource teachers;
- psychologists;
- speech therapists;
- teachers from general education kindergartens and schools;
- representatives of the Child Protection departments;
- other specialists if required, as well as parents of children.
Assessment is carried out at the request of parents or guardians. The head of the regional inspectorate on education approves by an order in writing the children and pupils who will be trained within the environment of general education with the appropriate resource support.

In addition to educational support for the children and pupils with special education needs, the legislation provides measures for gifted children although they are not determined as a separate category of children with special education needs.

The next group of people which is not legally included in the standard group of children with special educational needs, however, for which special measures are provided, are the children of migrants, the children of citizens of member-countries in the European Union, the European economic space and Switzerland.

**Children with special education needs**

Kindergartens, schools of general education and vocational schools are obliged to enroll children and students with special education needs ensuring required for their integrated education environment support. That includes:

- architectural access;
- provision of resource teachers and specialistst;
- individual educational programs;
- textbooks;
- teaching aids;
- technical means;
- facilities;
- didactic materials, etc.

Education and training of children and students with special education needs is implemented under:

- programs for pre-school education and training; school syllabuses and curriculums;
- individual educational programs for early impact and early rehabilitation of children with visual impairment and children with hearing impairment;
- curriculum on special subjects for children and pupils with hearing impairment and for children and pupils with visual impairment.

At all kindergarten and schools where children with special educational need to undergo integrated education, as well as at special schools, a team is established by an order of the headmaster, which consists of chairperson-class teacher and members:

- psychologist, and/or pedagogical consultant;
- resource teacher;
- specialized pedagogue;
speech therapist;

- teachers on different subjects.

If necessary, parents or guardians and other experts also take part in the work of the team. The team assesses education needs, monitors the dynamics of development of the pupils with special education needs and prepares individual educational programs for their education, training and development. The programs are approved by the headmaster of relevant school.

Integrated education of children and pupils with special education needs is assisted by resource teachers and other specialists (psychologists, speech therapists, rehabilitators of hearing and speech etc.) appointed at the established in 2006 twenty eight (28) state resource centers for support of integrated education and training of children and pupils with special education needs (one center for each administrative region). Resource centers through the teams of experts conduct different activities for implementation of state policies for integrating education and training of children and pupils with special education needs and have several core functions related to the education of children and pupils with special education needs into an environment of general education jointly with the teachers of the relevant group at the kindergarten and at the school class. They also consult parents and children with special education needs and provide methodical help for teachers and teams of the schools of general education and kindergartens.

Individual educational program includes special assignments within the framework of the curriculum on one or more subjects of the syllabus and is designed to help the child and the pupil with special education needs:

- learn and acquire knowledge and skills for implementation of state educational requirements for preschool education and training or about the educational content in compliance with their individual necessities and potential opportunities;
- promote the overall development of the children;
- acquire specific knowledge and skills depending on the impairment or malpractice;
- develop social skills for independent life in view of successful social integration and professional realization.

Children and students with special education needs who are trained on individual educational programs but meet state educational requirements for preschool education and training and for learning content continue their training on the programs of the relevant kindergarten or school syllabus and school curriculums of the relevant school and receive certificates for completed preparatory group/preparatory grade or document for completed grade, stage, or degree of education according to state educational requirement for the documents of the National education system.

Children and students with special education needs who have completed their education for a stage or a level of education on individual educational programs but have failed to meet state educational requirement for learning content receive certificates for completed class and those who have finished XII class – a certificate of completed high school stage according to
state educational requirement for the documents of the National education system.

Individual educational programs for children and students contain a grading scale for the level of achieved knowledge, skill and competencies, cognitive development, language speaking development and communicative skills, emotional, characteristic and behavioral specifics with regard to the type and degree of impairment, violation or difficulty. It reports achieved results in each of defined fields and prepares suggestions for changes in the program on the basis of achieved results in education and training and in child’s and pupil’s development.

For participation in external evaluation of the pupils of IV, VII and VIII classes as well as for conducting state matriculation examinations the legislation provides a number of particular measures aimed at supporting the children with special education needs – exam materials on Braille or enlarged print for children with visual impairment, computer with synthetic synthesized speech, quaestors and consulting teachers who are aware of Braille or Jest-mimics, oral exam for students who are no able to sit for exam in writing, extended duration of exam on relevant subject or cycle of subjects, etc.

**Social cohesion and equal opportunities**

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