Definition of the target group(s)

According to the Education Act, a pupil (and a child and a student) with special educational needs is, in the current inclusive term a person who requires the provision of support measures to cover their educational possibilities or to assert or use their rights on an equal basis with others. Support measures do not result from the definition of a disadvantage but from the pupil’s current educational needs. The educational support is ensured to all pupils who need it, regardless of the nature of their disabilities in both inclusive conditions (to which the law gives preference) and the separate educational ones. In a context of having the possibility of setting up a school and class (department, study groups) for pupils with disabilities, the Education Act in section. 16, par. 9, defines the category of children, pupils and students with “mental, physical, visual, and hearing disabilities, developmental disorders of learning or behaviour, speech impediments, autism, and multiple disabilities”. However, support for pupils integrated in these schools or classes is also provided according to the above principles based on their current needs.

The Act also defines a target group of gifted and/or exceptionally gifted pupils and the conditions of their education. These pupils should also have the opportunity to use support measures. The definition of a gifted or exceptionally gifted pupil is specified in the decree: A gifted pupil is a pupil who, if appropriately supported, has a high level of cognitive abilities in one or more fields, in motor, manual, artistic or social skills, in comparison with their peers.” An exceptionally gifted pupil is a person whose ability spectrum reaches an extraordinary level, along with high creativity in a broad field of activities and/or in particular intellectual spheres or motor, manual, artistic, or social skills.”

Legislation and Bibliography:

Decree on Education of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and of Gifted Pupils [1]

Education Act [2]
Special support measures

Education of pupils with special education needs

Pupils (children and, students) with special educational needs have the right to free support measures provided by school and school facility. The support measures include the necessary modifications of educational and school services with respect to the health condition, cultural environment, or other life conditions of the pupil. It is guaranteed that education and school services are provided in structurally and technically adjusted spaces.

The support measures cover a wide range of pedagogical, organisational, and content modifications to education and the provision of school services. They include:

- reinforcing of the education staff - one more teacher, teacher’s assistant, sign language interpreter, transcriber (see below)
- consulting assistance and support for schools and school counselling facilities (see Guidance and Counselling in Early Childhood and School Education [3])
- modifications of conditions assessment and forms and methods of education
- adjustment of conditions for admission to schools and completion of education
- subjects of special pedagogical care
- additional special educational or educational interventions
- the use of Braille, alternative forms of communication, sign language, compensatory aids and ICT assistance (see below)
- extension of the duration of education (see below)
- education according to a plan of pedagogical support, education following an individual educational plan (see below)
- fewer pupils in the class

The support measures are divided into 5 levels according to the financial and organisational demands involved. Support measures of different levels may be combined on the basis of the pupil’s
needs. A support measure on a higher level can be used if the support measure on a lower level is not sufficient. For an overview of the levels, see the end of this section.

Pupils with special educational needs are taught according to mainstream educational programmes, with adjustments being made to educational conditions and support measures being used. Pupils with serious mental disabilities follow a modified educational programme, which reflects their educational needs (for more details, see Curriculum, subjects [4]).

The support measures of the 1st level can be provided by schools without a recommendation of the school guidance and counselling facility, and the informed consent of the adult pupil/pupil’s legal guardian is not required. To support these pupils, a plan of pedagogical support is established by the school.

The support measures from the level of 2 to 5 are recommended by a school guidance and counselling facility – a pedagogical and psychological counselling centre [5] (pedagogicko-psychologická poradna) or special education centre [6] (speciálně pedagogické centrum) – on the basis of professional judgment of the pupil’s educational needs. To ensure the requirements of these levels of support measures and their provision, the informed consent of the adult pupil/pupil’s legal guardian is necessary. They also have the right to check the recommendations for support measures or conclusions of the examination carried out by a school guidance and counselling facility. A body set up by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports [7] is commissioned to check the recommendation. The pupils of age or legal representatives of pupils with granted support measures from the level of 2 to 5, may apply to the school head for the possibility of education according to an individual educational plan. The recommendation of the school guidance and counselling facility must be part of the application.

Plan of pedagogical support and individual educational plan

A plan of pedagogical support is drawn up following a pedagogical analysis of the educational needs of the pupil. It contains goals towards which the support is oriented, ways they can be achieved, evaluation of their fulfilment, and recommendation of further steps to support the pupil’s educational success.

Individual educational plan is a binding document for ensuring pupil’s special educational needs. Based on school educational programme, it is a part of pupil’s documentation in the Registry of Pupils. It results from the school educational programme and is a binding document to safeguard the pupil’s special educational needs. It sets educational objectives for the pupil, modifications to the organization and content of education, timing and distribution of the contents of subjects, way in which tasks are specified, ways of assessment and classification, pedagogical methods, exam and final examinations organisation, etc. It describes the type and scope of special pedagogical and psychological support for the pupil, its organisation, and the way the support and its provider are ensured (not only the institution but also the staff member). It defines compensation and teaching aids, ICT equipment, textbooks, learning texts, etc., fewer pupils in a class, taking on another teacher or a sign language interpreter or an additional worker in the class. In 2018/19, 6 % of pupils followed an individual educational plan.

Length of education
The basic education of pupils with special educational needs can last 10 years. The school head can allow pupils with special educational needs who have not completed basic education after compulsory school attendance to continue basic education for up to 20 years, or 26 years of age (for more details, see Compulsory school attendance [8] in Chapter 2).

The school head can allow pupils or students with special educational needs to extend their upper secondary and tertiary professional education by a maximum of 2 school years.

**Staffing in education**

At most 4 members of education staff can carry out their educational activity at the same time in classes (departments, study groups).

On the basis of the recommendation of a school guidance and counselling facility, an additional teacher may be taken on – a teacher’s assistant (asistent pedagoga) – who works in classes, where there is (are) a pupil (s) with special educational needs. The teaching assistant is part of the support measures that help in the integration of pupils with special educational needs into the educational process and activities in and outside the classroom. The assistant also works with the other pupils in the class, following the instructions of the teacher. Teacher’s assistant can support a pupil or more pupils at the same time, but at most 4 pupils in class with regard to special educational needs of these pupils. Pupils are eligible to a teacher’s assistant from the third support measure. The school will receive funding for such teacher’s assistant in the form of increase of financial means for direct educational costs. In case the schools are established for specified type of health disability (according to section 16, paragraph 9 of the Education Act), the number of pupils per teacher’s assistant can be greater. A higher number of pupils per teacher’s assistant can also be the case if for legal reasons (for more details see further) there are more than 5 pupils in mainstream class with granted support measure from the second to fifth level. However, in that case the school head asks for support of such assistant separately from the budget of development programme announced by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports [9].

To facilitate the education of pupils with a hearing disability, who are not able to hear and use spoken language, an interpreter of Czech sign language or a speech transcriber for the deaf is employed.

**The interpreter** correctly translates communications among involved parties in a clear and understandable way and in a communication system chosen by the pupil. The interpreter can also help in out-of-school activities which relate to education.

**A speech transcriber for the deaf** is employed as a support measure if a pupil uses for communication a written form of the Czech language that is not the communication system of the other pupils in the class. During education, the transcriber translates the spoken language into a written form in real time.

The school provides pupils taught in Czech sign language with parallel education in the written Czech language; here the same methods are used as in teaching Czech as a foreign language. The outputs of science subjects for pupils studying in Czech sign language are set in this language and in written Czech.

In classes, where there is a pupil with special educational needs, a personal assistant for this pupil (osobní asistent) may be employed with the school head’s consent and on the basis of a recommendation by the school guidance and counselling facility. The personal assistant is not an employee of the school. He/she works following the Act on Social Services and provides the pupil with
social services, e.g. self-care, transport to school, and the like. The costs associated with the assistant’s work do not fall within the competence of the school. However, to help the pupil with self-care and mobility is also among the standard activities of a teacher’s assistant in the event that it is covered as a support measure from the state budget free of charge according to the Education Act.

**Decreasing the number of pupils in class**

The highest number of pupils in class is reduced by 2 with every pupil having the support measure 4 or 5 (or level 3 for pupils with mental disability) placed in the mainstream class of nursery school (mateřská škola) or basic school (základní škola). The highest number is further reduced by 1 with every pupil with the granted support measure 3. This way it is possible to reduce the highest number of pupils at maximum by 5. Thus for nursery school the maximum number is reduced from 24 to 19 and for basic school from 30 to 25. The reduction is not applied if it is in contradiction with the obligation of priority admission of a pupil according to the Education Act or there is a change in granting the level of support measure to a pupil in course of the school year.

**The maximum number of pupils with support measures in class**

Usually up to 5 SEN pupils with granted support measures from the level of 2 to 5 can be educated in class taking into account the structure of the support measures and the nature of pupils’ special educational needs. The number of these pupils must not exceed one third of pupils in class. The number of pupils with defined type of health disability (a group according to section 16, paragraph 9 of the Education Act) is limited to 4 in a mainstream class. The limits mentioned are not applied if there is an obligation for school to preferentially admit some pupils or if it concerns upper secondary schools (střední školy), conservatories (konzervatoře) and tertiary professional schools (vyšší odborné školy). If there are more than 5 pupils in class with the support measures of the levels 4 and 5, it is possible to take advantage of another member of education staff, especially teacher’s assistant (see above).

**Separate classes**

Education of pupils in separate classes for pupils with special educational needs does not belong among the support measures. In mainstream schools, pupils with special educational needs are regularly educated in classes with their classmates. However, the possibility to establish separate classes in mainstream schools or to establish separate schools for pupils with mental, physical, visual, or hearing impairment, with developmental learning or behavioural disorders, speech impairments, autism or concomitant multiple defects is mentioned in section 16, paragraph 9 of the Education Act. Education in schools for pupils with the above disabilities is included in part Separate Special Education Needs Provision [10]. Most conditions set for these schools is applicable also for education in special classes of the mainstream schools. Classes established directly for pupils with serious disorders or disabilities are arranged according to the type of disability. This means that in separate classes prevail pupils with a certain type of disadvantage. Pupils with other type of disadvantage cannot exceed one third in this classes.
Preparatory classes

According to the Education Act, it is possible to establish preparatory classes (přípravné třídy, ISCED 020) can be established in basic schools (ISCED 100+244). They are dedicated to children in the last year before the compulsory school attendance where there is a presumption that their inclusion into the preparatory class may balance out their development, and preferentially to children with postponement of compulsory school attendance. The education is free of charge. Teaching aids, textbooks, and teaching texts are also free. A preparatory class has a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 children. Lessons are held in the mornings (18 to 22 hours a week), and in the afternoon the children can go to an after-school centre. The basic education document is the Framework Educational Programme for Pre-primary Education [11]; the preparatory class educational programme is part of the school educational programme of the relevant basic school. At the end of the second semester of the school year the teacher of the preparatory class draws up a report on the progress of the pre-primary preparation of the child in a given year. Education in the preparatory class is regulated by the Education Act and Decree on Basic Education.

Overview of the levels of support measures

(Processed according to the Annex No. 2 to the Decree No. 27/2016 Coll. For complete version, see website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports [12].)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> First level support measures are used to compensate minor difficulties in pupil’s education (e.g. slower pace of work, minor difficulties in reading, writing, with arithmetic’s, problems with forgetting, minor difficulties with concentration, etc.) where it is possible to achieve improvement via moderate adjustment of school education and home based preparation. The measures include also pupil’s support measures for reasons of the accelerated development of their school skills. Further, difficulties may be caused mainly by current health or psychical conditions, or possibly by long-term problems of small scale and intensity. The school takes into account social status, the pupil’s relationships and his/her social and family environment.</td>
<td>No standardised financial demands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **2** The nature of the pupil’s educational needs for this support measure is mainly influenced by the pupil’s current state of health, developmental delay, different cultural environment or other living conditions of pupil, problems in the initial ability to learn and prepare for school work, giftedness, disorders of learning or behaviour, mild weakening of auditory or visual functions, mild speech impediments, weakening of communication skills, autism spectrum disorder with mild difficulties, lack of knowledge of the language of instruction and other particularities requiring individual approach toward educational needs, modifications in organisation and methods of education, pupil’s assessment, setting the procedure and forms of redress and possible use of a support measure in the form of an individual educational plan. Pupil’s problems in education can be characterised as mild, it is possible to compensate them by using special textbooks and special or compensatory aids with the support of the subject of special pedagogical care and adjustments of pedagogical work. | Unless already covered by other legislation, standardised financial costs are determined for individual measures:  
• adjusting the content of education,  
• special textbooks and special teaching aids,  
• compensatory aids,  
• 1 h per week of educational intervention to work with a pupil or class at school  
• 1 h per week of educational intervention to work with a pupil or class in school facility,  
• 1 h per week subject of special educational care provided by a special school teacher,  
• 2 h per month of methodological support from school guidance and counselling facility for school or school facility. |
The character of the pupil’s special educational needs is most often influenced by serious specific learning disorders, different cultural backgrounds and other pupil’s living conditions, behavioural disorders, severe speech impediments (in communication skills), more serious speech impairments, autistic spectrum disorders, mild mental disability, visual and hearing impairment (low vision, hearing loss), physical disability, not knowing the language of instruction, other difficulties with a significant impact on the quality and course of the pupil’s education, or possibly the influence of pupil’s exceptional intellectual talent. It requires already noticeable modifications in the working methods, in the organisation and course of education, in the adaptation of the school curriculum and in the pupil’s assessment. It also requires the support of the teaching staff to assist the teacher (for at maximum of 4 pupils), the use of communication systems for the deaf and deaf-blind, and the use of alternative or augmentative communication tools to meet the pupil’s needs, the support of a special education centre in case of assistance of spatial orientation training and use of alternative forms of communication. It is also appropriate to cooperate with experts from other departments if the pupil’s interest (doctors, social workers, therapists, etc.) require it.

The support measures for this level are intended in particular for pupils with severe behavioural problems, moderate and severe mental disabilities (including co-morbidities), severe visual or hearing impairment, severe speech impairments, autistic spectrum disorders, and severe physical disabilities. Furthermore, it is for exceptionally gifted pupils requiring significant individualisation of education beyond the appropriate level of education, they achieve exceptional results and require adjustments in the forms of education. The character of the pupil’s special educational needs in education already requires significant adjustments in the methods and organisation of education, adjustments in the content of education, the possibility of adjusting educational outcomes, with a view of developing pupil’s abilities and skills, to compensate for the consequences of disability. The pupil’s current state of health is always taken into account. If a pupil learns in a regular classroom, he/she is educated with the support of an individual educational plan. The pupil’s individual educational plan also includes subjects of special educational care focused on the pupil’s specific needs in relation to the type of his / her difficulty, the type of disability and its manifestations.

It is intended exclusively for pupils with the most severe degree of disability, usually with multiple disabilities, requiring a high level of support, reflected in the organisation’s arrangements, the content, the forms and the methods of education; the choice of support measures fully respects the possibilities and limitations of the pupil in the selection of educational contents and methods, the assessment of pupil’s educational outcomes. The nature of a pupil’s special educational needs requires the highest degree of adaptation of the organisation, the course and content of education, support for the development of the pupil’s abilities and skills, and compensation for the consequences of his / her disability. The organisation of the pupil’s education and the choice of teaching methods fully accept the pupil’s state of health and the constraints that result from it. The education of the pupil at this stage usually requires adjustment of the working environment. If necessary, it is possible to use communication systems of deaf and deafblind persons or means of alternative or augmentative communication. Pupils are usually educated with the support of a teacher’s assistant, a SEN teacher and a second teacher, often with the presence of another person important for supporting the pupil. Teaching is carried out by SEN teachers, possibly with their intensive support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Support Measures</th>
<th>Financial Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The character of the pupil’s special educational needs is most often influenced by serious specific learning disorders, different cultural backgrounds and other pupil’s living conditions, behavioural disorders, severe speech impediments (in communication skills), more serious speech impairments, autistic spectrum disorders, mild mental disability, visual and hearing impairment (low vision, hearing loss), physical disability, not knowing the language of instruction, other difficulties with a significant impact on the quality and course of the pupil’s education, or possibly the influence of pupil’s exceptional intellectual talent. It requires already noticeable modifications in the working methods, in the organisation and course of education, in the adaptation of the school curriculum and in the pupil’s assessment. It also requires the support of the teaching staff to assist the teacher (for at maximum of 4 pupils), the use of communication systems for the deaf and deaf-blind, and the use of alternative or augmentative communication tools to meet the pupil’s needs, the support of a special education centre in case of assistance of spatial orientation training and use of alternative forms of communication. It is also appropriate to cooperate with experts from other departments if the pupil’s interest (doctors, social workers, therapists, etc.) require it.</td>
<td>Unless already covered by other legislation, standardised financial costs are determined for individual measures: • adjusting the outputs and the content of education • special textbooks and special teaching aids, • compensatory aids, • 3 h per week of special educational intervention (subjects of special educational care), possibly psychological intervention • 3 h per week of educational intervention (of which 1 h per week to work with a class) • teaching assistant’s services (shared) for multiple pupils according to the character of special educational needs, at a maximum of 4 pupils per class • additional teaching support provided by another member of educational staff in the range of 0.5 of full-time work schedule • 0.5 workload support by a school psychologist or a SEN teacher (service for pupils and school) in the range of 0.5 of full-time work schedule • for the first 6 months, 3 h per week of intensive methodological support of school or school facility from guidance and counselling centre</td>
<td>unless already covered by other legislation, standardised financial costs are determined for individual measures: • special textbooks and special teaching aids, • compensatory aids • adjustment of the pupil’s environment and working place • labour costs for other teaching staff, especially for teacher’s assistant and providers of special education care • labour costs for interpreters of the Czech sign language and transcribers for deaf, school psychologists, school SEN teachers • ensuring the use of communication systems for deaf and deaf-blind persons • ensuring the use of alternative or augmentative communication tools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Legislation and Bibliography:**

- *Decree on Education of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and of Gifted Pupils* [1]
- *Education Act* [2]
- *Statistical Yearbook – Education. Performance Statistic Indicators* [13]

**Education of gifted pupils**

Gifted and exceptionally gifted pupils are guaranteed the right to get **support measures to develop their talent** and meet their educational needs. The education of exceptionally gifted pupils is governed by separate chapters within framework educational programmes; the school educational programmes should be drawn up so as to create conditions for the education of these pupils.

The support measures **include** particularly:

- output enlargement of the school educational programme – **enlargement or enrichment of educational content**, imposing specific tasks, or engagement in special projects
- accelerated learning – the school head may **shift** an exceptionally talented pupil to a higher grade without their completing the previous grade after the pupil has passed an exam before a three-member commission; the pupil is not given the report from the skipped year and the reports for the following years state which years have been skipped
- enlarged educational content beyond the scope set by the educational programme concerned/possibility of **taking part in education in a higher grade**
- education by way of **scholarships in another school** of the same or a different kind
- **education groups** – the school head may make up groups for gifted pupils in which pupils from the same or different grades study some subjects together
- **individual educational plan** – describes modifications of the development and content of education
- provision of **didactic aids** and technical equipment to develop talent
- **psychological and pedagogical support**
The overview of support measures and overview of compensation and didactic aids divided into five levels, which can be granted from the State budget sources, including calculation of per capita amounts, are part (an annex) of the decree on the education of pupils with special educational needs and of gifted pupils.

**Overview of the levels of support measures**

(Processed according to the Annex No. 2 to the Decree No. 27/2016 Coll. For complete version, see website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. First level support measures include support for pupils on the grounds of accelerated development of school skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The educational needs of the pupil for whom the level is intended are mainly influenced by the giftedness and other specifics that require the use of an individualised approach to the pupil’s learning needs; modifying the organisation and methods of teaching, the pupil’s assessment, his/her progress and the forms of remediation and potential use. Support measures in the form of an individual educational plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The character of pupils’ special educational needs is influenced by their exceptional intellectual talent. It requires already noticeable modifications in the methods of work, in the organisation and course of education, in the modification of the school educational programme, in the assessment of the pupil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Support measures at this level are designed for exceptionally gifted pupils who require a distinct individualisation of education beyond the respective level of education, they achieve extraordinary results and require adjustments in forms of education. The character of the pupil’s special educational needs in education already requires significant adjustments in the methods and organisation of education, in the modification of the content of education, and the possibility of adjusting the learning outcomes with a view to developing the pupil’s abilities and skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is intended exclusively for pupils with the most severe disabilities, so it does not apply to talented pupils.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational support and evaluation of a pupil’s talent and of the educational needs of gifted pupils and working out proposals for support measures are provided by pedagogical and psychological counselling centres intermediated by psychologists who are specialists in care for gifted pupils.

If a child is sufficiently mature in terms of their physical and mental development, the Education Act offers them the opportunity to begin compulsory school attendance earlier (see Compulsory school attendance in Chapter 2).

The educational needs of gifted pupils are also met through establishing classes with extended education in some fields.

One of the ways to show and develop a pupil’s talent is a competition – knowledge and skill, art, sports, and other contests – regional, nationwide, organized in cooperation with academic and art communities.

Children can develop their talent and interest in art at basic art schools (základní umělecké školy) which offer basic education in particular art fields (see Basic art schools in Chapter 5).

**Legislation and Bibliography:**

Decree on Basic Art Education [15]
Decree on Basic Education [16]

Decree on the Education of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and of Gifted Pupils [1]

Decree on Pre-primary Education [17]

Education Act [2]

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