ERASMUS INTENSIVE PROGRAMME

INN-ASNE

Innovative Approaches in Special Needs Education –
How to enhance the learners’ skills regarding the 8 key competences

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HANDBOOK

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University College Syddanmark/Denmark
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1. **Preface and Introduction**

It is a great pleasure to present a publication developed within the framework of the ERASMUS Intensive Programme “INN-ASNE” (Innovative Approaches in Special Needs Education - How to enhance the learners’ skills regarding the 8 key competences).

The objective of the IP was to achieve an increase in the quality of teaching in the subject area of Special Educational Needs (SEN) by widening national approaches in view of international learning contexts. Based on the eight key competences of Life Long Learning, the IP implemented innovative approaches on two levels: the students followed innovative courses based on an integrated approach, which combined different methods in the field of SEN.

The participating lecturers combined their professional know-how and expertise and their views on how to teach specific content areas in order to offer a new learning experience to future teachers in a multinational learning environment.

The following handbook is a reflection of what participants learned during the Intensive Programme, which took place from March 3rd to March 16th, 2013 at the Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol in Innsbruck/Austria. It will consist of three major parts. In the first part, you can read about the key topics and issues students covered. The second part will present some of the eight key competences which students selected. Key competences had to be connected to what students experienced in the different programmes of the two weeks. Finally, the third part will include the concrete conclusions of the Intensive Programme and students’ suggestions for further development of Special Needs Education in their country.

Students coming from the Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol (Austria), Palacky University Olomouc (Czech Republic), University College Syddanmark (Denmark), University of Szeged (Hungary), and Universidad de Almería (Spain) had to work together according to nationalities.
The Intensive Programme was organised and administrative co-ordinated by Melanie Steiner and Simone Schmid (International Office of the Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol) and professionally supported by the lecturers Monika Windisch and Wolfgang Sieberer.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to this Intensive Programme and its outputs. A particular word of thanks should go to Andrea Taczman for the excellent proofreading and to Thomas Stornig for creating the layout.

Melanie Steiner & Simone Schmid
Co-ordination of the IP and Editors of the handbook
June 2013
2. Key Topics of the Intensive Programme

2.1 Group from Austria

The intensive programme “INN-ASNE” started with a real highlight for us, because every group had to present its special needs education system in its own county. We were divided into five groups where all participants of different countries were mixed and had to present their poster. It was very interesting for us to hear how schools work in other countries. We noticed many differences between the education of special needs teachers in Austria and other countries.

If we look at our personal highlights of the themes we heard and talked about during these two weeks, we definitely would like to mention the lecture on the second day, namely “Turning differences to advantage through multiple intelligences”. It was held by Sagrario Salaberri from the University of Almería. We think that this lecture and the workshop connected to it were held in a very interesting and spontaneous way. We heard a lot of useful things which we will definitely need not only in the classrooms, but also in our everyday life. The lecturer talked about how our brain works within its two hemispheres. She also mentioned the theory of Howard Gardner which explains the real meaning of intelligence. Furthermore, it was really interesting to hear that every school system makes the same “mistake”, because schools do not treat the 8 intelligences equally, but prioritize only two of them. Besides gaining theoretical knowledge about the intelligences it was very useful to see some practical examples based on theory.

We also liked the presentation including a workshop on Thursday, the 7th of March with Sanne Feldt-Rasmussen. There we learned about the Dunn and Dunn learning styles which include different elements (e.g. the environment surrounding us, the emotional element, the physiological and psychological elements, etc.). We really appreciated that Mrs Feldt-Rasmussen involved everybody in the lecture and showed how many different ways of learning styles can exist in one class. She gave us two possible ways of learning (e.g. learning
in silence or with music) and we had to choose one side, which best defines our way to work or learn at home. Some of us liked learning when lying on the floor instead of sitting on a chair; others learn more effectively when they are alone and in silence instead of listening to music. In this lecture, we learned how important it is to offer children many different ways to work, so that they can choose the right one for themselves and get individual access to the learning material. In our opinion, this system of learning is a very important principle for inclusion in our schools because it ensures the free choice of the best way to learn. We have not heard about the Dunn and Dunn learning styles before but we think that these are very important strategies for our future practice in special needs education. This is the reason why we are so grateful for having the opportunity to participate in this lecture.

On Friday in the first week, Monika Windisch gave a great lecture entitled “Person centred planning”. She had a very nice voice, so we could follow her easily. Mrs Windisch told us about the North Star (the goal) and about our problem-focused attitude. She stated that we had to focus on the person. She also showed us a video to imagine how person-centred planning works.

Besides one of these first lectures we would like to mention the lecture “Theory and symptoms of trauma” held by Cristina Gulløv from the University College Syddemark in the second week. This lecture is one of our highlights because the lecturer focused on the practical implications and shared a lot of her experiences with children. For us it was easier to imagine a special situation when we heard examples from real life. There was also a workshop connected to this lecture. In the workshop, we could decide if we wanted to play or not and of course EVERYONE wanted to play. In our opinion, it was very good that she did not force us to play. She also offered us the chance to create new versions of the games. We appreciated that she also gave us the time to play our own version of the game. We strongly believe that we did not just play during this workshop; we also learned a lot about how to treat children and which games are appropriate for the quiet pupils but also the restless ones.
In the second week, we also had a great presentation called “Different countries-different algorithm” given by Wolfgang Sieberer. At the beginning, he told us two emotional stories and encouraged us to think about them. He let us practice some things which prevented us from getting bored. We also think that it was very interesting to see how people of other countries calculate.

2.2 Group from the Czech Republic

In the following, we will highlight some lectures and workshops where we think we learned a lot. We will also mention some games and our experience in the field studies.

a) The opening ceremony (4\textsuperscript{th} March 2013)

We liked the opening ceremony because of the nice and friendly welcome. We especially appreciated the confident attitude of the organizers, who told us that they had done their best and they had hoped we would like the programme. Well, we did!

b) Lectures

- Turning difference to advantage through multiple intelligences” (5\textsuperscript{th} March 2013)
  This lecture was very interesting for us. We especially appreciated the pictures and materials which will be useful for us as future teachers.

- Inclusive education as a challenge” (7\textsuperscript{th} March 2013)
  The lecture gave us some ideas to think about inclusive education from the teachers’ point of view. We also shared our personal opinion about inclusion as a way of teaching, but we agreed that it should not be obligatory for everyone.

- Theory and symptoms of trauma” (11\textsuperscript{th} March 2013)
  Thanks to this lecture, we know that there is an option to use joyful playing to heal children’s trauma.

- Different countries - different conventions - different algorithm” (12\textsuperscript{th} March 2013)
We liked that the lecturer showed us how people count in different countries. We also find the stories very inspiring.

- **Alternative and augmentative communication as a tool for complex development of MH clients** (12th March 2013)

During this lecture, we learned about sign language in different countries. It helped us to discover differences. The visual aspect of the presentation was very nice and we also appreciated the interesting videos.

c) **Workshops**

- **“Special needs education in the participants home”** (4th March 2013)
We got to know special education and its studies in other countries, which will help us to improve the current situation in our home country. Thanks to this task, we could also talk to other participants of the group.

- **“Learning strategies - learning success”** (5th March 2013)
During this workshop we found out that everyone had a different learning style. We also learned about how we could use it in practice. We especially enjoyed the questionnaire about what type of intelligence we have.

- **“Learning types”** (7th March 2013)
This workshop helped us to become aware of the different learning style of each student in the classroom. Based on this recognition, we can use adequate teaching methods.

The workshop was very interesting and every student took part in it. The atmosphere was very informal and relaxed.

- **“Algorithm”** (12th March 2013)
During this workshop, we especially liked the wooden game where the goal was to build a tower without using hands and communication. It made everyone to co-operate and be patient. The games which concentrated on imagination were also very enjoyable and useful.

- **“Learning to learn for students with special needs”** (14th March 2013)
We especially liked that everyone from the Spanish group took part in the workshop and helped each other. Their English was not very good, but they did their best and that is
something we appreciated. We found the programmes for computers and tablets very interesting. They even encouraged us to try them.

d) Games

“SINNE” (9th March 2013)

We really liked the idea of trying how blind people feel and live. It was also fun to eat in complete darkness. We even had to build a boat using just our voice and touch. We experienced the feeling of complete trust someone else and the importance of having other people around us.

e) Field studies (6th March 2013)

The field studies were very interesting and useful for us because we could see how schools work in Austria. We could have a discussion with teachers and see the practical aspect of what we have learned in theory. It was also good that we had debriefing sessions afterwards because we could share our experience and opinion with the others.
2.3 Group form Denmark

a) Howard Gardner’s theory of “Divided Intelligences”

When talking about intelligence, you often categorize the person based on their average result of an IQ test. In case of an IQ test, it must be understood that it is designed from an aspect of age of the person - compared to general knowledge and ability that is expected in the same age category. The disadvantages of intelligence tests can be that the person is stigmatized as not intelligent because they are weak in mathematics but strong in creative matters.

There are numerous tests but WISC (Wechler Intelligence Scale for Children) is regarded as one of the best ones. It concentrates on testing the strong and weak sides of a person.

In order to solve this stigmatization dilemma, Gardner defined the following eight intelligences:

- **Verbal/language**: listening, speaking, writing, pronouncing, language awareness (e.g. talk/speak), the awareness of pronunciation and understanding the word being used.
  *Many tests are based on reading (see the PISA reports).*

- **Logical-Mathematical**: pattern recognition, music, rhythm, ability to listen and take in the gist of a message.
  *Many people claim that mathematics is a new “language”.*

- **Visual/spatial**: creating, performing, using different tools (e.g. the internet, media in general), understanding of art, geography, geometry, science, etc.
  *You observe differently depending on the person. That is the reason why an observation may have many variations.*
- **Bodily/kinaesthetic**: physical coordination, awareness of movements, using wide or narrow movement patterns. It is important to look at your own method of movements or to make use of moving objects.

  *People using body language replace verbal activities with more physical activities.*

- **Rhythm/musical**: the ability to repeat rhythms, recognize sounds and manipulate them, playing, composing, etc. If having a stroke, this is one of the areas of the brain that you lose last.

  *Music is very important for learning.*

- **Interpersonal**: the ability to communicate and read body language, empathy, reading between the lines.

  *Expressive forms are required in order to be observant.*

- **Intrapersonal**: understand your own personality and where your personal limits go, have a model for yourself which you can use effectively.

  *You need inner motivation to get to know yourself.*

- **Naturalist**: categorization/classification of language, activities such as connecting words, the ability to gather, analyse, study and take care of plants, animals and the environment.

  *The capacity to discriminate and classify man-made articles and associate them with intelligences.*

Gardner also considered a 9\(^{th}\) intelligence called “existential intelligence”. Gardener is criticized for gathering more competences under the term “intelligence”. Others think that this leads to a loss of the concreteness of the term.

**The “G” factor = General Factor**

If you make a fact-analysis of Gardner’s eight intelligences, the G-factor takes a very little part of the explanation of the total variation between people. You will therefore notice that the factor almost disappears or the main focus is on the separate intelligences.

When solving problems or doing IQ tests you must use:

- intelligence
• intuition
• logic (planning)

Cultural differences:
In different countries, they have different ways of communicating. In most Western countries, we have a direct communication; we say things the way they are. In Eastern countries, people have an indirect communication. Western people’s messages are clear and explicit, whereas Eastern people’s messages are implicit. In the West, people are honest and say what they think. In the East, because of the indirect communication, people always try to be polite rather than honest.

b) Person centred planning:
Helen Sanderson: Making a path for disabled people as you can see in the picture below.
Principles: focus on the person, future orientation, the active involvement of family and friends, shift in power and control, social inclusion and community participation, supporting.
c) Learning styles - Dunn and Dunn:

We all have different learning styles. It is hard to find someone with the same learning style.

Definition: Based on the theory developed by Rita Dunn and Ken Dunn, learning styles may be defined as the methods each person uses to:

- concentrate on new and difficult information
- internalize this information
- process this information into knowledge
- retain this knowledge
- use this knowledge

(Source: http://www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk/what-we-do.aspx)
What do you do when something is new or difficult?

- read the instructions
- look at pictures or illustrations
- try it out by using your hands
- discuss
• go for a walk

There are students with auditory, visual, tactual and kinaesthetic learning styles in the class. Your task is to take care of all of them.

d) Trauma:

Psychological trauma can be defined as an extremely threatening experience, or series of experiences that completely overwhelm a child’s psychological capacity to cope. Joyful playing is an essential part of curing traumatized children. Empowering, joyful playing with sensitive, caring adults can help to restore what trauma violently strips from a child.

It is very important for teachers to be aware of re-traumatized children.

There are different reasons why children are traumatized (e.g. sexual abuse, poverty, etc.). According to John Bowlby’s attachment theory, children who do not get attention from their parents will develop emotional problems; attachment is important for all children. Babies need attention; all of us are dependent on what other think of us.

When children are traumatized they have difficulty recognizing feelings, regulating their emotions and connecting with others. Traumatized children behave childishly and often suffer from bedwetting, have difficulty sleeping and have other behavioural problems.

Joyful playing helps children to regulate their emotions; it activates the brain and develops the connection to other people. It is important that children play joyfully.

Domains of playfulness: joyfulness, social connection, internal control, active engagement.

2.4 Group from Hungary

2.4.1 Students’ presentations - Special Needs Education in the participants’ home countries (4th March 2013)

After the welcome ceremony, every country presented their system of special needs education. We heard some interesting facts about other participants’ countries:

• Austria: students go to practice from the first semester in different schools.

• China: too many pupils in a classroom, the most frequent disability is hearing impairment.

• Czech Republic: they separate the special needs education into age-groups instead of
• **Denmark**: inclusion; parents have the right to teach their children at home.
• **Spain**: the special education system includes immigrants.

2.4.2 “Anthropological and Legal Underpinnings of the Educational System in Austria” (Karl Heinz Auer, 4th March 2013)
We gained new knowledge about rights and the history of Austrian law.

2.4.3 Games (Monika Windisch, Wolfgang Sieberer, Barbara Weyermüller-Hopfgartner, 4th March 2013)
At the end of the day, we played some games, e.g. I like .... I don't like... – We had to guess which one the lie is; Sorting objects, we had to find the rule; Square game; SET game.

2.4.4 “Turning Difference to Advantage through Multiple Intelligences” (Sagrario Salaberri, 5th March 2013)
We learned that „We are all different.” We heard about the brain (B + rain), intelligences, multi-modal learning and the eight intelligences (verbal / language, mathematical / logical, visual / spatial, body / kinaesthetic, rhythm / music, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist).

2.4.5 “Learning Strategies – Learning Success” (Sagrario Salaberri, 5th March 2013)
We got an introduction into different learning strategies, and we filled out a test for multiple intelligences.

2.4.6 “Dyscalculia: Core Deficit and Individual Manifestations” (Univ.-Prov. Dr Karin Landerl, 5th March 2013)
We heard about many research studies about dyscalculia, working memory, and attention.

2.4.7 “Inclusive Education as a Challenge” (Milon Potmesil, 7th March 2013)
The main topic of the lecture was inclusion, but it gave more information about exclusion, separation, and integration. It defined the inclusive education and showed the individualized educational plan (IEP).

2.4.8 IEP as a Tool for Special Education (Milon Potmesil, 7th March 2013)
We discussed the definition of inclusion and inclusive education in small groups.
2.4.9 “Learning Types” (Sanne Feldt-Rasmussen, 7th March 2013)
We heard about different learning styles and did some practice to find out our learning styles (psychological, physiological, perceptual, environmental, emotional elements).

2.4.10 “Person centred planning” (Monika Windisch, 8th March 2013)
This lecture was about person centred planning which can be defined as “... a process of continual listening and learning, focused on what is important to someone now, and for the future, and acting upon this in alliance with their family and friends ...” (Helen Sanderson)

2.4.11 “Identifying special needs” and “A presentation of techniques and instruments used for identifying special needs / diagnosing abilities” (Anett Aszalai, 8th March 2013)
With different posters, techniques and instruments, each country presented how they identify special needs.

2.4.12 “Theory and Symptoms of Trauma” (Cristina Daniela Gulløv, 11th March 2013)
We heard about the importance of playing in cases of traumatized children. Joyful playing helps children to regulate emotions. It also raises the brain arousal level. An activity cannot be regarded as play unless it is engaged playfully. Activities we generally regard as hard work (e.g. math homework, cleaning up, cooking dinner) can be better described as “play” if they are approached in a playful manner.

2.4.13 Teaching Culture to Special Needs Students (Márta Lesznyák, 11th March 2013)
Information about importance of culture in life and in case of special needs students. Knowing other cultures fairy tales in a playful help us to understand the differences between cultures.

2.4.14 “Different countries – different conventions – different algorithm” (Wolfgang Sieberer, 12th March 2013)
We heard about different countries’ algorithms of math (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division).

2.4.15 “Alternative and Augmentative Communication as a Tool for Complex Development of MH Clients” (Monika Kunhartova, 12th March 2013)
We got more information about alternative and augmentative communication, benefits, basal communication, Snoezelen Multisensory Room, E-tran and sign language.

**2.4.16 “Digital Competence”** (Luis Ortiz, Victoria Figueredo Canosa, Lorena Pedrejas, Juan Jesus Ojeda, 14\(^{th}\) March 2013)

The lecturer presented the importance and role of digital competence in Spain (e.g. they introduced digital competence dimensions). We also got new information about the importance of digital competence in the everyday life of special needs students.

**2.4.17 “Learning to Learn for Students with Special Needs”** (whole Spanish group, 14\(^{th}\) March 2013)

The workshop introduced some digital tools like Kinect, E-Mintza, Azamar, AraBoard, PictDorid Lits, Logopedia, PiktoPlus, PictogramAgencia, Symbaloo.

**2.5 Group from Spain**

**2.5.1 “Anthropological and Legal Underpinnings of the Educational System in Austria”**

(Karl Heinz Auer, 3\(^{rd}\) March 2013)

We began our ERASMUS experience by participating in a lecture on the anthropological basis of the educational system in Austria. The lecturer emphasized the role of education as one of the social pillars. During the lecture, we looked back on the ancient roots of education and were introduced to different education systems and the demands of our society. Excellent videos supported the content of the lecture and helped us to deepen our knowledge.

**2.5.2 “Dyscalculia: Core Deficit and Individual Manifestations”** (Karin Landerl, 5\(^{th}\) March 2013)

We would like to emphasize the clear definition of dyscalculia as a learning disability or difficulty in understanding and learning arithmetic. The lecturer presented a study about the
difficulty and its symptoms. We also learned that it is very difficult to categorize these disorders because the symptoms are very similar.

2.5.3 “Inclusive Education as a Challenge” (Milon Potmesil, 7th March 2013)

The lecture was started with an introduction to the concepts of exclusion, separation and inclusion. He presented the results of a study about inclusion which showed that the informants approve of inclusion of students with special needs. However, there are also some disadvantages (e.g. more work, difficulties of students with certain disorders such as ADHD).

Mr Potmesil talked about the inclusive movement and focused on aspects such as academic achievement, language and communication as part of the community. This presentation described inclusion as a competition. On the one hand, pupils go to school and receive special support. On the other hand, parents choose their education. It should also be noted that the actions of other students will influence pupils with special educational needs.

In the second half of the lecture, we had a discussion based on given questions which helped us to develop a critical approach to inclusive movement.

2.5.4 “Person Centred Planning” (Monika Windisch, 8th March 2013)

“Person Centred Planning” method is based on certain steps which are taken in order to achieve proposed dreams of people with disabilities. It is beneficial to people living with disabilities. The lecture expressed the idea that disabled people should not feel disabled but should fight for their own dreams just as other people do. In spite of the fact that they receive attention, they should not feel they are in the spotlight. The lecturer also added that social barriers have to be eliminated in order to promote their participation in society.

This planning is called person-centred because it is based on the resources of the social environment of the person and aims to overcome personal and social barriers in order to facilitate participation self-determination. This method is very especially important in social
work. The lecture was followed by a workshop in which each group had to come up with a plan for achieving its dreams.

2.5.5 “Identifying Special Needs” (Anett Aszalai, 8th March 2013)
In this workshop we had the opportunity to get an insight into different methods used for diagnosis. We could compare and contrast these methods based on the presentations of other participating countries.

2.5.6 “Theory and Symptoms of Trauma” (Cristina Daniela Gulløv, 11th March 2013)
We would like to highlight a quote from Steven Gross: “Life can hurt, play can heal”. Playing is an essential part of the cure of traumatized children. Joyful playing with caring adults can help to restore what trauma violently strips from a child. The trauma can originate from different sources like sexual abuse, alcoholic parents, poverty, violence, natural disasters, etc. It is important to understand that the concept of “joyful playing” regards playing as a child’s most important opportunity to develop resilience and social competence. Playing helps children to regulate emotions. It also activates the arousal level of the brain, makes children aware of their own and others’ feelings and encourages them to believe in fellowship. Once you develop all kinds of games, remember that “The best way to bring joy and playfulness to your children is to have it yourself”.

2.5.7 “Teaching Culture to Special Needs Students” (Márta Lesznyák, 11th March 2013)
The lecturer started her presentation by defining the term “culture” and its elements (e. g. beliefs, language, gesture, types of clothes, etc.). It is of utmost importance that professionals in the field of special needs education are aware of the definition of culture because countries have different cultures. In order to communicate effectively, it is essential to raise awareness of cultural differences in the special needs education classroom. This
would be an enriching experience. After the presentation, we had to work in groups. Each country had to read a story and write an ending. This activity helped us to realize that each group interpreted the same story differently based on the own culture.

2.5.8 “Development of Digital Competence for Students with Special Needs” (Luis Ortiz, 14th March 2013)

The presentation consisted of two parts: a theoretical part and a practical part. In the theoretical part, the term “digital competence” was defined. It includes a variety of skills and competences, media and communication, technology, literacy, information science and computing, as well as the knowledge, skills and attitudes. The most remarkable feature was the use of the Internet as a tool which allows us to connect the reality with the virtual world. It means that you are never alone because you can be in contact with other people anywhere. This helps you to develop important and necessary skills (e.g. the ability to use appropriate resources to produce and understand complex information or the ability to search, collect and process electronic information, data and concepts).

In the practical part, four projects were presented which are very important for developing digital competence and new technologies in special needs education. The aim of these projects is to help people with disabilities integrate within society and to use technological devices. Then, two applications were explained in order to show that there are different ways to use these devices. In conclusion, portable devices are not only for calling and sending short messages, but also for making everyday life easier.

It is also worth highlighting a project about “Kinect” whose aim is to use it for learning and improving the skills of students with special needs. “Kinect” enables people to develop different activities focused on improving the motion and cognitive skills. Three applications were presented in the workshop: the first one is used to analyse the interaction between the pupil and the Kinect sensor because it is necessary to evaluate the skill of the student for adapting the programme. The rest of the applications were software demos which are used for improving certain cognitive skills.
2.5.9 “Learning to Learn for Students with Special Needs” (Luis Ortiz, 14th March 2013)

In this lecture, Mr Ortiz talked about strategies of learning and cognitive skills that facilitate learning to learn different subjects with special needs students. Some of the main researchers in this field are: Sternberg, Pahours, Haywood, Campione y Brown, Scheuer, Pramling, etc.

The lecturer also presented a research developed in Spain. The goals of this research are the following:

- “Planning, design and implement a programme of education, at the programming level of classroom that includes cognitive development through a reflective and by learning strategies, learning capabilities.”
- increase and accelerate the development of basic cognitive functions
- develop internal motivation for the accomplishment of the tasks
- develop the efficiency of thought and the predisposition for school learning.

In the research, there are eleven participants (students of different levels and disabilities) from Granada (Spain). The conclusions of the research are that these practices enable students to develop a more reflective, critical way of thinking and get involved in the classroom activities.
3. KEY COMPETENCES

3.1 Group from Austria

Learning to learn

The first key competence we would like to connect to the Erasmus intensive programme “INN-ASNE” is *learning to learn*. This can be defined as the ability to pursue and organise one’s own learning (either individually or in groups), in accordance with one’s own needs.

- Lectures:
  The professors tried to describe a lot of different methods in their lectures. There were lectures where we had to write something down, where we had to discuss or find a solution to a certain problem. It was useful to have different methods, because everybody could pick up something he or she could work with. However, it was not always suggested by the professors how to handle all of the information in a short time. It was not always easy to concentrate, especially when someone was just standing and talking in front of you, without any examples or a break.
  The favourite lecture was the one on the different types of intelligences. In this lecture, the professor involved us and she really tried to connect the theoretical part with the practical part. It was really interesting to think about ourselves and our own learning type. The most important message of this lecture was that you as a teacher are not allowed to forget how many different learning types you will have in one classroom. That is the reason you should try to teach in as many ways as possible.

- Workshops:
The different workshops offered us a lot of opportunities to learn something new. On the one hand, we could always choose in which group we want to be. On the other hand, we could choose the topic or the material we want to work with. Everybody had the opportunity to find his or her favourite “thing” and could work with it. That was very effective.

We felt really comfortable in the workshops and could learn a lot. It was good to try to apply theory in practice.

- **Social events:**
  We had a lot of social events during these two weeks, but a very interesting social event was the “Lunch in the dark”. There we had to trust people and it was not that easy for everyone. We did not know each other very well. There were not many opportunities for us; we just had to go for it. It was good to feel that everyone was excited. We learned that it is really important to try to trust people, because than you can move on to another level.

- **Field studies:**
  During our field studies, we also had the chance to learn a lot of new things. We could choose the schools we wanted to visit, so everybody had the opportunity to visit his or her favourite school. We already knew most of the ordinary schools like the primary and secondary school of the Pedagogical University, but there were also some schools which we have not known before. Some of us went to the “VIA factory school”, others to the “Aufbauwerk der Jugend”, where we get to know two really interesting schools which are different from ordinary ones.

**Communication in foreign languages**

Another important key competence of the “INN-ASNE” intensive programme was the *communication in foreign languages*. It was important for every member to have studied English for some years. Understanding and speaking English were equally important during
the programme. Without speaking a foreign language, the whole project would not have been possible. We recognized that there were differences in the groups in terms of foreign language competence, which is the reason why understanding was not always that easy.

In our opinion, communication was going well in spite of the fact that some people did not have perfect English. The main thing was to get in contact with each other for which you do not need the ability to speak perfect English. We liked that we could use simple English and did not have to deal with too many special words, so it was easier for us to speak and for the others it was easier to understand.

- **Lectures:**
The most difficult thing about the lectures was the language. It was sometimes really difficult to understand what the lecturers meant because we did not know all the special words. That is the reason why the lectures were sometimes a big challenge for us. A major problem was the speed of the lecturer`s speech. Concentration depends on the language because you have to focus even more than in your mother language. Some of the teachers were also not that good at English. They always told us at the beginning of the lecture that they were sorry for their English and that they hoped that we would understand them. We liked that the teachers were also not that good because it was also easier for us to speak with them. If the teachers had been perfect native speakers, we would have been more afraid of talking to them in case we made mistakes.

- **Workshops:**
It was very interesting that language was not a problem in the workshops. All the games described their aim on their own, which is why language was not that important. We could solve all the language problems that came up without difficulty.

- **Social events:**
We had some nice evenings together where we got to know each other better and therefore we had to talk to others and tell about our lives. We were not only talking with spoken language but also with body language to understand each other better.

- **Field studies:**

  During the field studies, language was a problem because we often did not know how to explain the different themes and materials in English. Also the teachers in schools had problems to explain because many of them were not that good at English.

  In conclusion, the two weeks contributed to the improvement of our English. We learned a lot of new words and we got used to speak in a foreign language. After some time, it became easier to get in contact with the others, because we realized that we were not the only ones who did not have perfect English.

### 3.2 Group from the Czech Republic

**Communication in a foreign language**

- All the lectures and workshops were in English, so that everyone could understand them. During the lectures and workshops, lecturers spoke in English. Participants also had to discuss the topics in English.

- There were participants from five countries: Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, and Spain. Participants were divided into mixed groups, so everyone had to speak English. For instance, in the presentation called “Special Needs Education in the Participants’ Home Countries”, participants were divided into five mixed groups according to the colour of the name card. Everyone had the opportunity to learn about special education in other countries and talk about special education of the home country in English.
• We often talked with each other in informal English, but participants had to use professional terms in the field of special education. The discussions about special needs education were very formal during the lectures and workshops. For instance, we had to understand some important terms such as inclusive education, integration, inclusion, AAC, PCP, IEP, trauma, etc.

• The accents of participants from different countries were diverse, but both speakers and listeners did their best in order to understand each other.

• The members in one group were almost from the same country and they could talk to each other in the mother tongue. However, there were three girls from the Czech Republic and two girls from China in our group, so we had to communicate in English all the time.

• There were many useful materials in English. For example, slideshows of lectures, questionnaires, instructions, stories, timetable, etc. They helped us to keep track of what we failed to understand during the lectures.

• We had to do many tasks in formal English such as posters, a handbook, presentations, etc. For example, in order to prepare a handbook, we had to understand the instructions, then everyone had to express their own opinion, discuss with others, come to a conclusion to get agreement, and write all the ideas for the handbook in English.

• In our home countries, we usually communicate in our native language, so talking in English was a great challenge for us. However, all of us did our best.

• It was surprising that almost everyone in Innsbruck could speak English very well which we appreciated very much.

• In conclusion, the whole programme provided us a great opportunity to practice English.

**Social and civic competences**

• There were a lot of activities during the two weeks, such as lectures, workshops, games and other group studies. Thanks to these activities, our social and civic competences could improve.
• The participants came from different countries, we had different languages and customs, so we had to accept and respect each other.

• There were many workshops and group studies during the intensive programme, and every time we had to join different mixed groups and did diverse tasks in a short time, we learned how to cooperate with others. Especially in the “SINNE” programme, the members of the group had to work together in a completely dark room. There, we learned to trust each other. This practice really improved our social competence.

• We learned how to speak in front of other people and improvise depending on different tasks. We also learned to listen to others and be patient during the workshops.

• We also experienced the educational reality in Austria during the field studies. Every student visited two different schools in Innsbruck, and we could compare and share our educational experience, and the ideas of inclusive education.

• There were some lectures which compared and contrasted the participating countries in terms of mathematics, sign language, diagnosis of special needs children, and the present situation of inclusive education. We had to think about the current situation in our own country, about possible improvements in inclusive education and special needs education.

• This programme provided an opportunity for us to take part in every activity and express our opinion. We also had the chance to evaluate the whole intensive programme in terms of organisation, the presentations of teachers, and workshops.

• During these programme, we were happy to learn about other cultures (e.g. different cultures in the workshop “Fairy tales”). We also shared and enjoyed the food, the dances, the music, and the customs of the participating countries. Furthermore, we also learned some Chinese, Czech and Hungarian words in our free time.

3.3 Group from Denmark

Communication in foreign languages
1. Lectures:

In all of the lectures, the working language was English. As it is not our mother tongue, we had a great opportunity to develop our foreign language competences. For some of the other groups, English was difficult, so we had to find ways to understand each other. (e.g. one of the Danish students who could speak Spanish helped us to understand Spanish participants). In other situations, we had to figure out what Spanish students wanted to say based on similar words in English, Danish and German.

We come from the southern part of Denmark which used to be part of Germany. One of the girls from our delegation is German but belongs to the Danish minority on the southern border. Therefore, we often spoke in German.

2. Workshops:

a. Students’ presentations (Monday, 04.03.13)
b. Learning types (Thursday, 07.03.13)
c. Personal-centred planning (Friday, 08.03.13)
d. Perception and communication (Saturday, 09.03.13)
e. Joyful playing (Monday, 11.03.13)
f. Fairy tales (Monday, 11.03.13)

3. Field studies:

a. Praxis Volksschule
b. Practice Secondary School
c. Volksschule Amras

4. Social events:

a. exchanging lifestyles and habits across nations
b. learning about different cultures and the differences in humour
c. opportunities to learn other languages (e.g. German and Spanish)
d. future friendships across Europe
e. Facebook group
f. the opportunity to speak different languages and “switch” between them quickly

**Social and civic competences**

1. **Lectures:**

   We learned a lot about different cultures and how we react to each other. We especially learned about cultural differences, when we had the *Intercultural communication* lecture. Here we saw different angles on how you can communicate not only with the help of verbal language, but also with your body and facial expressions.

   a. Dyscalculia (Tuesday, 05.03.13)
   b. Intercultural communication: directness – indirectness (Monday, 11.03.13)

2. **Workshops:**

   a. Student presentations (Monday, 04.03.13)
   b. Games (Monday, 04.03.13.): SET, puzzle and categorizing
   c. Learning types (Thursday, 07.03.13)
   d. Perception and communication (Saturday, 09.03.13)
   e. Personal centred planning (Friday, 08.03.13)
   f. Fairy tales (Monday, 11.03.13)
   g. Algorithm (Tuesday, 12.03.13)

3. **Field studies:**

   a. Praxis Volksschule
   b. Volkschule Amras
   c. Practice Secondary School

4. **Social events:**
a. Restaurant “SINNE” – unusual experience in a practical way, teamwork, having to use your all of our senses, cooperating in the dark when you cannot see facial expressions and body language

b. The guided tour – learning about Innsbruck, its history and culture

3.4 Group from Hungary

Competence means the combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. Learning to learn is related to learning, and the ability to pursue and organise one’s own learning (either individually or in groups), in accordance with one’s needs, and awareness of methods and opportunities. We chose these competences, because we think that we learnt many important things connected to these topics. This knowledge is useful and we can apply it in our country.

First, we heard about different intelligences. Howard Gardner said that the intelligence is not something unitary with different capacities; it is a set of distinct and independent intelligences. There are some key ideas from Armstrong: each person has the eight intelligences, and the intelligences may develop. They help us to understand that our students use different channels to develop their verbal intelligence. The eight intelligences are verbal, logical, visual, bodily, music, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist. They are connected with each other in a complex way. It has a practical meaning, too.

Multi-modal learning refers to the fact that everybody uses different channels to express ideas, experience and knowledge. If you use different ways to learn, you will remember the information better.

The different intelligences are the following in detail: The verbal/language intelligence includes listening, speaking, talking, reading, writing, pronunciation, and language awareness. The mathematical/logical intelligence means for example a sequence in time and order, the recognition of patterns and solving problems through logic. The visual/spatial
intelligence means the manipulation of mental images. Bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence includes physical coordination and sensory experiences of movement.

Rhythm/music intelligence means that we express ourselves through music, composing, and playing music. Interpersonal intelligence means to communicate with others and understand them. It allows a skilled person to read others’ intentions and desires even if they are hidden. Intrapersonal intelligence refers to the understanding of ourselves; what we are able to do, who we are, our limitations etc. The naturalist intelligence refers to the categorization of language (or shape, colour and number) and grouping words.

The learning styles depend on these kinds of intelligences. The term “learning style” can be defined as the way in which individuals undertake learning tasks. It may not be fixed and thus may be open to adaptation and modification. There is a smaller category in learning styles, they are the learning strategies. They used by individuals in their enactment of specific learning tasks.

We would like to write more about the learning styles, because it is very important to recognise the best way of learning for a child in class. There are different dimensions of learning styles. The first is the environment. Its elements are sound, light, temperature and seating. They affect the learning methods of a child.

Other important dimension is the emotional which includes motivational support, persistence, individual responsibility and structure. We can recognise the preference of the children. We have to pay attention to the best way for them to learn.

Another important dimension is the sociological one. Some of the pupils dislike group projects and prefer to learn by themselves, but others like working in pairs or from adults. The fourth dimension is the physiological one. It shows which students use which learning modality. There are four modalities: visual, auditory, tactual and kinaesthetic. It depends on the type of intelligences which the child prefers. It also means the child’s needs during the learning (intakes like drink and food).
The last dimension is psychological and it includes the types of global, analytical, impulsive and reflective. This dimension refers to the general strategies students use when coping with learning difficulties.

We would also like to write about our experiences during our field studies. We could see that some children learnt on the floor, some children needed to move around or have a break or drink something. They could work alone or with a partner or in a group if they wanted.

The second group of competences we chose is the social and civil competences. They refer to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behaviour that equips individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life.

In a globalised world, understanding the concept of culture and people from other cultures becomes increasingly important. Social and civic skills are the most important abilities a person can have. People are social beings and a lack of good social skills can lead to a lonely, unhappy life, full of anxiety and depression. Great social skills help you meet interesting people, establish a supportive family, get a job you want and progress further in your career and relationships.

There are different parts of this competence:

- knowledge of how to maintain personal and social well-being,
- awareness of basic concepts relating to individuals, groups, work organisations, gender equality, society and culture,
- understanding of different cultures and how a national cultural identity interacts with European identity,
- ability to communicate in different environments, to express and understand different viewpoints, to negotiate and be able to create confidence, to feel empathy
- ability to cope with stress and frustration and to express it in a constructive way,
- interest in socio-economic development and intercultural communication,
- ability to value diversity and respect others, to overcome prejudices and to compromise,
- knowledge of the concepts of democracy, citizenship, civil rights and awareness of their application at local, regional, national, European and international level.

In Hungary, we have to deal with the gypsy population in the school, because they have a different culture. To handle this situation successfully, we have to know their culture and their habits, not only the surface elements, but the deeper elements, like attitudes and values as well. In the future, we would like to become teachers who regard moral and cultural elements as important as the subject.

### 3.5 Group from Spain

**Cultural awareness and expression**

We believe that one of the most important competences is cultural awareness and expression which includes appreciation of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions. The lectures helped us to extend our knowledge about special education and the different perspectives of other countries. All participants from different countries expressed their ideas in various ways. The lecturers had great ideas which they presented but they also made us to participate.

During the workshops, we could develop our own creative ideas. They also gave us the opportunity to improve ourselves personally and to learn from others. We used different ways to make others understand our country better, like music, body language, visual arts, cuisine, etc.

We also would like to highlight the lunch in complete darkness which helped us put ourselves in the role of a blind person. Through this experience, we could gain awareness and understanding of people with this disability. In absence of our visual sense we could develop other senses and communicate with others in an unusual way.
Focusing on different centres (primary schools, secondary schools, etc.), we must say that we could connect theory and practice. We observed the organisation that uses each centre and the means to develop their own learning adapted to the characteristics of each person. In different countries and cultures, learning varies according to the means and resources available in each country and adapted to each person and each situation.

The dynamics used in class are different from those of our country.

If we compare Spain with Austria, we noticed that Spain has a more controlled education. Students at the same level of education must have the same knowledge. Furthermore, there is more emphasis put on written work. We also observed that in Austrian schools, students have to wear house shoes (for hygienic reasons).

**Competence of foreign language communication**

It is necessary to be aware of the cultural diversity in schools. This competition includes the integration in situations which require either written or oral language. Skills such as listening, discussing, communicating, understanding, expressing, etc. serve not only as a tool for exchanging information, but the language should be a tool used for establishing respectful relationships as well.

This competition is essential to successfully develop this Erasmus intensive programme. Learning is not an end in itself but a means to communicate with others and understand the world. Students from Spain are quite limited in foreign language competence but we improved a lot during these two weeks. In the lectures, we could expand our vocabulary in professional area. We appreciated that we could also participate actively in the lectures. In the workshops, we could improve our ability to cooperate with others.

In the following, we would like to highlight some social events which were also part of our programme:
- Guided tour of the city: It was the first opportunity to interact with other participants outside the classroom.
- Lunch in darkness: This event was an experience that allowed us to further perceive the group and find new ways of communication.
- Visits to primary-secondary schools and vocational centres allowed us to learn about the educational system and methods in Austria. It was also very useful that we could talk to the teachers.

4. CONCRETE CONCLUSIONS OF THE INTENSIVE PROGRAMME

4.1 Group from Austria

It seems that every country has its own problems with the integration or inclusion of special need children into the school systems. A north star, which is called “inclusion”, is not even on the Austrian sky. This star you can see in all participating countries of INN-ASNE. Every country has its own system of education, its own system of teaching, learning and dealing with special needs students.

Every country has one main problem: money. It seems that most of the students joining the INN-ASNE Project agree that inclusion is a good way of integrating or including people with handicaps, but many of them think also, that there are some special needs kids which need their own attention, their own space, and even their own special classes, as it was shown at the lecture of Mr Potmesil. Only one professor raised his arm when he asked: “Who thinks that every child can be included?”

It is a very central issue in all countries, that there are missing structures and money. The educational systems have to be reformed and developed to include everyone. The system of identification of special needs children is different in every country but they are all have the same aim: to help children.
People or children with disabilities are still taboo in some countries. Even these days, some people still do not dare look at disabled people. They are a part of our society, but there are not many people who think like that. The main problem is that they never get in touch with disabled people. Inclusion or integration could be the first step for people to get in touch with handicapped persons. Borders can be removed with an inclusionary or integrative system of education. The reservations can be removed, and disabled people can live their life as they want to. They have their own needs, as does anybody else. They need love, something to eat, to drink, a home, friends, etc. Mrs Windisch read the letter of a man who is handicapped. It was a very touching and impressive experience.

The system of education has to be changed to include disabled people. Every child has to be recognised. Different learning-styles and types have to be offered. Individualised instructions can be also part of a well-functioning system for every child. These are just some of the factors, which could be leading to a better educational system, but maybe these are the most efficient ones in establishing a system of inclusion. A peaceful and respectful relationship with everyone (different culture, handicaps or disabilities, age) is one of the most important things. Every lecture presented ideas, theories, skills and intelligences, which were important for teaching, not only special needs kids. The ideas are universal, so they were not only for schools teaching pupils, but for students and adults as well. They showed how we can teach in a person-centred way.

The main ideas for a better system of education, especially inclusion, exist. There are also many possibilities to use all these theories and ideas, but the main problem is transferring those into the educational system. There have to be changes within the educational systems to get to the North Star “inclusion.” The ideas are there, and they know how to deal with “inclusion”, with person centred planning, individual learning, intelligences and learning types. However, the systems cannot deal with it because there are resources missing; the main resource is money. If there is enough money, they can pay more teachers; better and more open schools (which mean bigger classes, for different learning types and learning styles) can be built, more materials provided, and so on.
In Austria, there is the same problem. Integration of special needs children exists, but it is not functioning that well. 20 years ago they adopted the law for integration in public schools, but it is still not that easy. There are just a few schools, which are dealing very well with integration.

It seems that the main problem is that there are two different kinds of schools: special needs schools but also “normal” schools. If there are special needs children integrated in schools, the Special-Needs-Centre has to pay money to the school. The Special-Needs-Centre has to pay for their school, but also for the integration in schools.

The integration functions well, because there is more money for integration, but also no other possibility. Maybe this is the way for a well-functioning system in Tyrol or Austria. Integration or better Inclusion can be the way to get people with special needs together with those without. There are a lot of teachers, especially special-needs-teachers who are committed to creating a school of inclusion. However, there is a problem in the structure as there are so many different types of school in Austria. The first step could be launching comprehensive schools, which start at 6 and end at the age of 15. Pupils would no longer have to decide which school to attend; whether to go to “Gymnasium” or to secondary school. It is an important decision, because there is still a kind of social separation in Austria. If that problem can be solved, it may be easier to advance with inclusion.

The next step is that future teachers, including secondary school teachers, have to be prepared for pupils with special needs. It is obvious that that it is not that easy to work with disabled children, but they have to be prepared for that during their studies.

There are many things, which have to be changed to get an inclusionary education system. There have to be changes in the structure of the education system, and a change of the education of future teachers, in order to get to the North Star “inclusion”. However, there is the small matter of funding, although some of the political parties of the country have promised to change the situation.
4.2 Group from the Czech Republic

The Erasmus Intensive Programme was very inspiring, because we gained many new ideas about special education. We could also compare how SEN works in different countries and therefore we can improve it in our own country.

We especially liked the “field studies” and our visits to primary and special schools. As we said, we could compare how SEN works here and in our own country, because we could see many interesting things, strategies, attitudes and ideas in schools here. It was a good opportunity for us to see how other schools work. In the following, we would like to compare our schools with the schools we visited.

We could see many differences, for example lesson planning, special exercise books, tools, etc. It was nice to get to know how many tools (multiple desks, special worksheets, etc.) and demonstrative tools pupils can use. Children in the Czech Republic do not use so many aids. Here, pupils were allowed to work with multiple desks as well. They used it for addition and multiplication and it really helped children to improve their mathematical skills and develop their ability to move (i.e. the development of soft and gentle finger movements of children whilst typing). Pupils could lie on the carpet and do mathematics but they could move around in the class as well, not just sit on the chair. We would change this in our country, because Czech pupils have to sit on the chair during the whole lesson.

We really loved the structure of the lessons we observed. In the Czech Republic, you usually have a subject, for example maths or English and students have to do the task. There are some different structures like introduction, revision, new topic, practising and evaluation in our country, but it deals with the only one subject. In here, we liked the structure of lessons which included tasks covering various subjects (e.g. writing a letter to a train to improve their writing skills or making pompoms to improve children’s manual working skills, etc.) The good thing was that every pupil could choose which task they wanted to do and when (during the lesson).

The most impressive activity for us was planting tulips, children really enjoyed this activity. At the beginning of the lesson, teachers started to speak about tulips and flowers. She asked...
children what tulips needed to survive. They discussed this topic together and pupils were very active. Then the teacher explained the children the following tasks: They were supposed to craft the tulips, stick them on the green sheet of a sheet of paper and then add the stalk. Children looked excited. When they were making tulips, two pupils went into the next room and they planted the real tulips there. Everyone got a flowerpot and filled it with soil. Then he/she put a young tulip in that and watered it. We liked this part of the lesson so much!

Our group agreed that we would include more time for practical lessons into our education programme, because it is really important. In our opinion, the education programme in the Czech Republic focuses on acquiring skills and extending the knowledge of students, but not on improving their manual skills. We think that it is important to develop all students’ learning skills and not just some of them. The lesson we saw showed a good way of doing this. Another experience we would like to bring with us to our country is the amazing break time. Children spent their break time outside and were playing various games. Even though the weather was cold, everyone was smiling. In our country, this is possible but not in every school and not all the time, just in warmer months. We hope we will be able to make some ideas come true in our country.

The lecture on learning styles helped us a lot to understand children’s needs. Finally, we realised why children sometimes behave differently. They do not mean to be naughty, they just have different personalities and each of them has an individual learning style like adults. It is true, that kids are usually “global” and “tactile” and we try to make them “analytical” and “visual”. We force them to behave in a way which is often the opposite of what they are. Why do we do that? We can only change small details in a class, which could help a lot. We think that some teachers in the Czech Republic are quite conservative and they do not know much about learning styles.
We also like the idea of individual planning for each child in a class. In the Czech Republic, we only prepare an individual plan for children with a disability or learning disorder. However, we think that it is very useful for every child, because each of them is at a different level and each of them needs a different time management. They are not the same and therefore the learning strategy cannot be the same. If children work according to their own learning plan, there is no need to rush, no need to compare with others, no need to be stressed. Just take your time and do your best. We are sure that it would be better for children in the Czech Republic as well.

We were also discussing the differences between social systems in our countries. In the Czech Republic, we have a problem with funding early childhood intervention centres. In Czech Republic, early childhood intervention centres are controlled by the Ministry of Labour and Social affairs, but the organisations are mainly non-profit, so they try hard to find money for their services. We think that our government should provide most of the money for these services and not just the smallest percent of all grants. The service of early childhood intervention centres is such an important help for families with child with a disability, so we should start saving up money in this field.

4.3 Group from Denmark

Conclusions

Dunn and Dunn:
We all have different learning styles. It is hard to find anyone with the same learning style. At the end of the workshop about learning styles, we had to choose which one best suits us. The task was to find someone who has exactly the same things on their list. There were a few similar couples, but nobody had an exact match. There was always at least one difference.
Trauma:
Cristina Gulløv mentioned an important case about a 38-year-old woman. The subject is incontinent. After a while, doctors found out that there was something wrong in the brain of the woman. The doctors found out that her brain reacted to some features in a man’s face. It is not always obvious what people’s real problems are.

Person centred planning helps people with disabilities, because the focus is on their dreams. The team who helps the disabled person outline what is possible in the next couple of days, month, and half year. Disabled people need other people to support them and help them with the different tasks.

Cultural differences: We are all different and have to be aware of differences. These differences become obvious when people from other cultures meet each other.

Multiple Intelligences: We have to be aware of differences between the pupils.

Suggestions for SEN improvement in our home country
During this ERASMUS Intensive Programme, we gained new knowledge about inclusion, and ideas, inspirations, tools, etc. in how SEN could be improved in our home country. In Denmark, we are on the way to inclusion, and a lot of the things we saw and were discussing during these weeks already exist in Denmark. Nevertheless, we also gained some new perspectives, knowledge and ideas in how SEN can be improved in Denmark. We chose three things which we would like to highlight and which we find most relevant for the improvement of inclusion in our home country:

1. Special needs teacher education
All of the other countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Spain) that participated in this ERASMUS Intensive Programme have an education for special needs teacher. In Denmark, we do not have this specialised form of education but we have Special Pedagogy as a subject in General Teacher Education. We think that it would be a good idea if the Danish government conducted a study to find out if a separate education for special needs
teachers could improve the conditions for implementing inclusion in the Danish school system.

2. Tools and equipment

During this program, we saw a lot of different methods and tools used in inclusion. We gained a lot of theoretical knowledge and some specific practical tools and methods. Some of these things are new to us and gave us a lot of inspiration about how inclusion can be improved in the Danish education system. For example, we learned a lot about how digital competences can be useful in working with students with special needs. In Denmark, the number of schools in which every pupil gets a tablet is increasing, and therefore there is a great demand on applications which can help pupils with special needs. The basic equipment and tools we saw in the schools during the field studies also gave us ideas about how to organise classrooms to improve the conditions for inclusion.

3. School structure

In Denmark, there is an upcoming school reform which will contain some significant changes in the structure of primary schools. They are talking about changing it to an all-day school structure. We could experience this type of school structure when we went to different Austrian schools. It was very inspiring and exiting to see how all-day school is working. We could see a lot of advantages. At the same time, during the field studies we also saw different kinds of learning styles and education forms in the schools. The Montessori education, developed by the Italian educator Maria Montessori, was especially inspiring. We think that this type of education could contribute to the improvement of inclusion in the Danish school system.

4.4 Group from Hungary

Conclusions
We noticed many differences in the diagnostic system and teacher training. In Hungary, special education teacher training lasts four years. After graduation we become special needs education teachers. In our country, we can choose from eight faculties.

In the Danish system, students have to choose two subjects and after the graduation they will be allowed to teach these two subjects to special needs children. They can teach these subjects until the children reach a certain age. The Danish school system is similar to the Hungarian system because they start with the primary school, then the next level is secondary school (it is high school in Hungary) then the next level is tertiary education (which is university in Hungary), then the next is master’s degree, and the last one is PhD programme.

In the Czech Republic, after one year, teachers have to choose which students’ range they want to work with and after that they specialized in them. These ranges can be the following: special early care, special care for preschool age children, special care for schoolchildren, special care for adults and special care for seniors.

It was very interesting to hear about the Spanish definition of special needs education, because the definition includes immigrants too. In Hungary, people with disabilities and disorders belong mostly to this category. In Spain, the main professionals are teachers of therapeutic pedagogy and teachers of audition and language.

**Our definition of special needs education**

A child or student with special need is defined as a child or student who needs special treatment and who has one or more of the following conditions according to the statement of the professional diagnostic committee: physical or sensory impairment, intellectual disability, speech and language disorder, severe and multiple disabilities, autism spectrum disorder or other psychological developmental disorder (severe learning disability, attention deficit disorder, behavioural disorder).

**Suggestions for SEN improvement in our home country**

- Diagnostic system
In our country, we have an assessment team. This means that there are professionals (doctors, psychologists and special education teachers) who examine the child and make a statement. An advantage of this system is that we can make an objective diagnosis, because more professionals examine the child. The disadvantage is that they do not use the same instruments for examining the child in different committees and that is the reason for the differences between the statements. In other countries, there is no assessment team, so the monitoring is much more subjective. However, in these countries the child does not need to wait long for a statement, because the special education teacher does it.

- **Viewpoints**

In Hungary, integration is a new trend; however, in other countries it is old. They would like introduce inclusionary schools. Integration means teaching children together in the same place, but the teacher does not teach them individually. Inclusion means that every child gets individual support, so everyone gets exercises according to their abilities.

- **Teacher training system**

It was interesting to hear opinions about the ICD system (International Classification of Diseases = BNO in Hungary). It is a diagnostic system which is used in health care system, but in Hungary we used it to diagnose disorders. In other countries, it belongs to the old system, but in Hungary we use it in the current system. In Austria, they have teaching practices from the first year. In Hungary, we have it from the third year, but in the first semester we visit schools, in order to be able to choose a faculty we want to study (learning difficulties, intellectual disorders and speech and language therapist).

**4.5 Group from Spain**

The Erasmus Intensive Programme provided us the opportunity to learn about the differences in special needs education in European countries. There are notable differences which will be summarized in the following:

- **Policies:** Some countries have policies which are developed for the integration of students in ordinary and special schools (such as Denmark, Czech Republic, Austria
and Hungary). However, in other countries policies are developed for the inclusion of special need students in ordinary schools (like Spain).

- **Definition and categories:** The definitions and categories of special needs and disabilities vary in each country. However, most countries make a distinction between six and ten types of special needs.

- **Specific school of special need students:** The transformation of special schools into resource centres is a common trend in Europe (Austria and Czech Republic are two examples). In Spain, schools are obliged to co-operate with ordinary schools in special education.

- **Curricular adaptations:** Most countries use an individual curricular adaptation for students with special needs.

- **Teachers:** Teachers responsible for working with students with SEN can be:
  - Specialists in specific centres or external services (e.g. Austria and Czech Republic)
  - Specialists working in the ordinary school (e.g. Denmark and Spain)

We also would like to write about the different lectures which we attended. The theory of multiple intelligences is a very important and relevant topic when it comes to inclusive education. Schools should not focus on verbal intelligence only but on the other intelligences as well.

This idea was presented in the lecture on learning strategies. It showed the need for a school and a way of learning which is more flexible and open to all possibilities. The atmosphere in the classroom can turn learning into a fun experience; children will get the necessary knowledge and abilities to become a good person thanks to a flexible, natural, open and spontaneous atmosphere in the classroom.

The method presented by Mrs Windisch in her lecture and workshop is very significant because it is the best way to achieve our aim. This method includes a kind of group planning which promotes a successful, practical and loyal team work. That is the reason why this method is a very good way to plan your ideas and efforts in order to establish an inclusive education.
Finally, we would like to explain some aspects which we think could improve our methods. It is interesting to know the other educational systems, methodologies, implementation tools in the different countries that participated in the IP. It helps us to improve our methods of intervention. We also would like to highlight the contribution of the IP to the development of empathy and teamwork. Teamwork implies the inclusion of more than one person, which means that this objective cannot be achieved without the help of other people, so cooperation is needed.

The organisation of the Erasmus intensive programme was excellent. We think that everything was planned very well. This is a good example for us when we have to organise any activities in our daily lives.
We educate people with responsibility