

Promoting inclusion
through extracurricular
activities

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MAKING EUROPEAN SCHOOLS MORE INCLUSIVE

Research on specific ways to enhance
the inclusiveness in schools

2024

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1. Research background

This research was conducted in the framework of the Erasmus + project “Promoting inclusion through extracurricular activities” in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye, East European countries that share many similar aspects of their educational legislation and practices, but also have relevant differences in education based on different cultural values and practices.

In terms of educational inclusiveness, one thing that all four educational systems have in common is the interest and willingness to include children with special educational needs in mainstream education, with only very few special schools that respond to the specific needs of children that really can't be integrated in mainstream schools or are better served in special schools.

The specialists available for children with special educational needs (or other children needing assistance for their integration – migrants, minorities etc.) are also similar among the four participating countries:

- specialists in psychology – in Romania and Türkiye are called school counsellors, in North Macedonia and Serbia are called psychologists; their number vary from very few in North Macedonia, present in most urban schools in Serbia, almost in all schools in Romania (after a major increase of their number in 2024, but in rural school there still can be a school counsellor in 4/5 schools), present in absolutely every school in Türkiye, many times more than one in a school. In all four countries, the specific tasks of school counsellors / school psychologists are very general and job description includes many activities related to pupils, parents and teachers, with inclusion being only one of the many activities they need to implement;
- speech therapists are more or less absent in North Macedonian schools, very few in Serbia and only in special schools, with tasks related to assistance of teachers from mainstream schools, few in Romania and Türkiye, mainly in urban schools; their tasks are only related to correcting language issues and therefore indirectly contributing to inclusion, without having specific tasks in the job description in this direction;
- social workers are totally absent in all four countries (even if they are, maybe, the most important specialists involved in inclusion in many specific cases); there are very few social workers in other educational institutions – for instance, in Romania, some of the C.J.R.A.E. have one social worker that theoretically assist all schools in the county

with social services. Most cases, is social work is needed, schools ask for assistance from mayors' offices, but the services are provided in the available time and with the available resources.

- support teachers for children with special educational needs, clearly the most important specialists involved in the inclusion of this category of children, are absent in Türkiye (their tasks being the responsibilities of school counsellors), one or two per municipality in North Macedonia and very few in Serbia and Romania, completely outnumbered by the large number of children with S.E.N.

Therefore, the general image about inclusion in the four participating countries is dominated by the lack or low number of specialists working for educational inclusion in Romanian, North Macedonian, Serbian and Turkish schools; the legislation is more or less present and the interest for inclusion exists, but it seems that all countries have difficulties in finding the necessary resources to apply this legislation and hire enough specialists to provide quality and enough services for educational inclusiveness.

The low number of specialists in educational inclusiveness is obviously associated with the existing specialists choosing their activities according to the priorities, and usually the main priority is related to the inclusion of children with special educational needs. Therefore, in all four countries involved in this research, educational inclusiveness is more or less associated with the inclusion of children with S.E.N., in most cases neglecting other categories of children needing additional support (migrants, minorities etc.). Also, in most cases, even teachers and other specialists in education wrongly identify children with S.E.N. with children with disabilities, without being able to differentiate special educational needs and disabilities. Unfortunately, this social perception existent even in education excludes the possibility of providing educational support for children without disabilities, as they are not perceived as having special educational needs. For instance, in Romania, in the past years the number of remigrant children is constantly increasing (Romanian children coming back to their native country after a period of migration), but as most of them are without disabilities is hard for many people, even teachers, to understand the existence of special educational needs in the case of those kids and the need for additional support for them.

Another important aspect related to educational inclusion in the four investigated countries is the absence of school involvement in identifying and evaluating the special educational needs, in all cases an external institution being responsible for evaluation and establishing this special needs. In Romania, this external institution is C.J.R.A.E. that

exist in each county and in Türkiye is a local agency belonging to the Ministry of Education, while in North Macedonia and Serbia this task is done by the municipality – even more, in North Macedonia an approval from the Ministry of Education is needed.

Therefore, after analysing the educational inclusiveness in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye one can argue that the educational systems do not lack the legislation of regulations necessary for inclusion, therefore the interest for this topic is more or less present, but they lack the resources, especially the human resources (but conditioned by the lack of financial resources). There are some specialists in the schools, but their number is considered to be completely insufficient for all the activities that are needed to facilitate the educational inclusiveness. Considering the lack of resources, it is more or less understandable that the existing specialists are selecting their activities based on their priorities or school priorities, focusing on children with disabilities and children with special educational needs and less on other categories of children needing support for inclusion.

2. Research methodology

2.1. Objectives

Main objective of our analysis is to identify the most effective actions that could be implemented in order to enhance the educational inclusiveness in the four countries included in our research: Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye through a multi-dimensional and multi-respondent analysis.

Operational objectives are:

1. to identify pupils', parents' and specialists' perspective on educational inclusiveness, with focus on the recommended actions to enhance the inclusion based on specific knowledge that each educational actor has;
2. to investigate the cross-cultural differences in knowledge on educational inclusiveness and potential action to enhance it;
3. to analyse the awareness regarding the positive consequences of inclusion and the specific perception of different educational actors and in different countries.

2.2. Data collection tools

The research methodology was multi-method (with quantitative and qualitative data collected) and multi-evaluator, in order to facilitate an in-depth knowledge regarding the analysed issue.

The research was multi-method as it involved two ways of collecting data from subjects – questionnaires (quantitative data) and focus-groups (qualitative data), apart from the desk research consisting in the literature review regarding the inclusion in each involved country.

The research was multi-evaluator as it involved collecting data from pupils, parents and various categories of educational specialists; the direct involvement of children and their parents is the main innovation of this research, as we overcome the general tendency to ask the specialists when we want to find out something about the education, as they are the “experts” that know everything and are able to make the best decisions, and we got to the point where we consider that insights from direct beneficiaries (pupils) and indirect beneficiaries (parents) can be very useful in making decisions for education.

2.2.1. Questionnaire

Quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire that included 6 different sections:

- one section measuring the accuracy of *knowledge about educational inclusion* (7 questions – affirmation associated with a Likert scale from 1 – totally disagree to 5 – totally agree);
- one section measuring the perception of necessity and importance of educational inclusiveness (2 questions with Likert scale);
- one section measuring the *evaluation of educational inclusion* (5 questions – affirmation associated with a Likert scale from 1 – totally disagree to 5 – totally agree);
- one section measuring the *evaluation of social inclusion* (6 questions – affirmation associated with a Likert scale from 1 – totally disagree to 5 – totally agree);

- one section measuring the *evaluation of positive consequences of educational inclusion* (9 questions – affirmation associated with a Likert scale from 1 – totally disagree to 5 – totally agree);
- one section investigating the potential action to enhance the educational inclusiveness (respondents are asked to select the most important 3 actions from a list of 12 proposed actions or to propose another action if its more appropriate, in their opinion, than the ones in the list).
- additionally, for specialists, there is one more section that collects data about the profession and experience in that profession.

The questionnaires for pupils, parents and specialists are very similar, with only minor adjustments in some sentences (e.g. “my colleagues” in questionnaire for pupils vs. “children” in questionnaire for parents and specialists).

The questionnaires are presented in Appendix 1.1. The questionnaires were translated into national languages.

2.2.2. Focus group

Qualitative data was collected through a focus-group in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of the analysed topic. Questions in focus group were related to meaning and importance of inclusion, general evaluation of educational and social inclusion, suggestions for increasing the educational inclusion.

The list of questions for focus-groups is presented in Appendix 1.2. Focus groups were implemented in national languages.

2.3. Subjects

Chart number 1 presents the number of respondents in each country and in each category of respondents (pupils, parents, specialists).

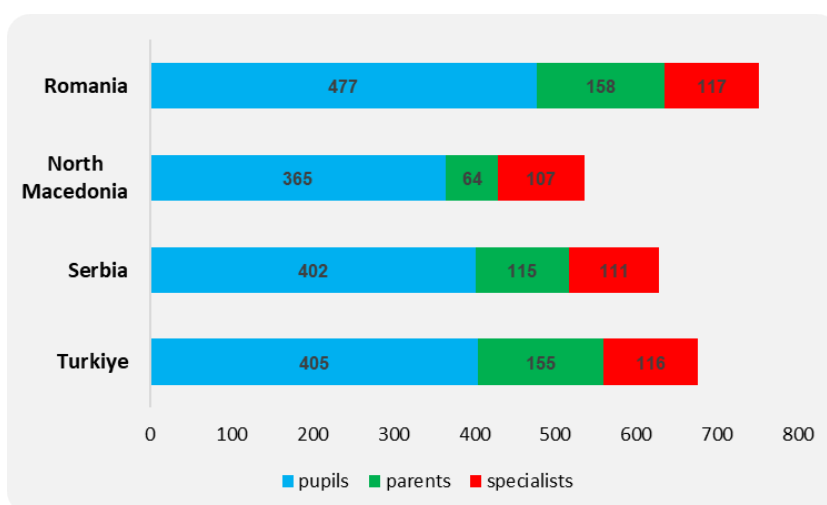


Chart no. 1: Distribution of subjects

The sample included 2.592 subject in total, ensuring the representativity of collected data; by status, there were 1649 pupils, 492 parents and 451 specialists; by status, there were 752 Romanian respondents, 536 North Macedonian, 628 Serbian and 676 Turkish.

The sample of specialists included 315 teachers, 21 managers, 37 school counsellors, 7 social workers, 7 representatives of other educational institutions (school inspectorates / directorates, other institutions for children with SEN), 5 representatives of local businesses or NGO, 5 representatives of local authorities, 9 representatives of cultural institutions, 2 representatives of local law forces, 43 other specialists (mostly from kindergartens or primary education). By experience, the specialists sample included 79 specialists with less than 5 years' experience, 52 with 6-10 years' experience, 129 with 11-20 years' experience and 191 with more than 20 years' experience.

2.4. Data collection

The partnership intended to use online questionnaires (google form) to collect data. Still, considering the national legislation and practice in Türkiye that doesn't allow use of digital questionnaires for pupils, in the end the partnership decided to collect data from pupils through printed questionnaires (in all countries) and to collect data from parents and specialists through online questionnaires.

The partnership planned one focus group in each country, with the participation of teachers, parents, pupils, representatives of local authorities; in total, there were 5 focus groups implemented (2 in Romania, 1 in other countries) with a total of 39 participants.

3. Research data

3.1. Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion

3.1.1. General information

Chart number 2 presents the percentage of respondents in our sample according to their level of knowledge regarding what educational inclusion means (1.00-1.49 – very low level, 1.50-2.49 – low, 2.50-3.49 – average, 3.50-4.49 – good, 4.50-5.00 – very good level):

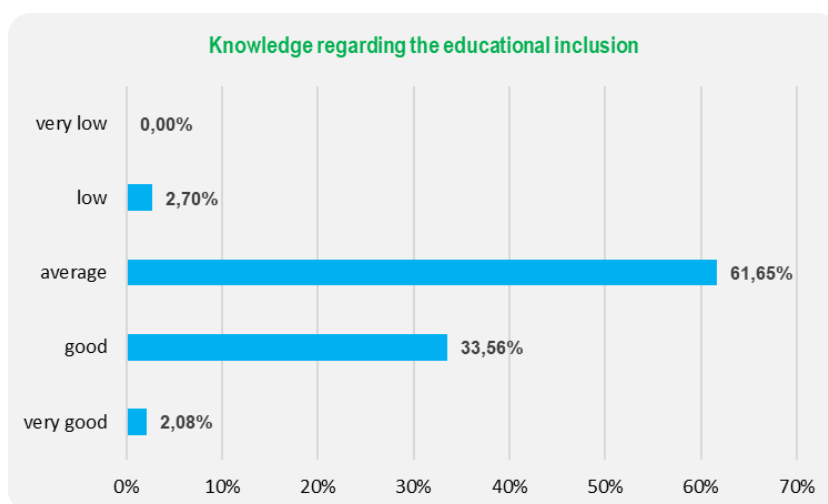


Chart no. 2: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion

The distribution of scores shows that the vast majority of respondents have at least an average level of knowledge regarding the educational inclusion, but this information is not necessarily positive considering that the sample includes also specialists in education, and their level of knowledge regarding the educational inclusion was expected to be bigger than average.

In the focus groups, the educational inclusion is related to various aspects, most of them correct, but none of them exhaustive:

- “to plan lessons and design education in an equal way without discrimination according to disadvantaged groups, individual differences and characteristics of all students”, “to focus on the development of the whole student in all necessary areas”, “to develop each student in his/her own rhythm”, “to provide additional support to students with special needs without marginalising any student”;
- “to be multi-opinionated, to have more options, to have different ideas”; “to have one's own thoughts, characteristics and feelings”; “to have different students together, having students with different interests and abilities in the same environment”;
- inclusiveness, for many, is about creating a space where everyone feels welcome and valued, regardless of their background, abilities, or differences; it’s about “making sure that everyone has equal opportunities to participate”, about “removing barriers that might prevent people from being involved” or about “fostering an environment where people from diverse groups feel respected, included, and given a chance to contribute equally”. An interesting point of view is that “inclusiveness means embracing diversity, ensuring that no one is left out, and making sure that every individual feels they belong and are important”;
- educational inclusiveness is related to “the importance of adapting teaching methods so that everyone can participate and succeed”, to “the necessity of providing equal opportunities in the classroom, ensuring that students with different learning styles or challenges are supported” or to “the need for schools to make sure all students can learn together, regardless of their challenges”, therefore emphasising somehow on the responsibility of teachers and schools for the educational inclusiveness;
- “respecting all children and providing equal conditions for learning, education and advancement” based on “the ability of the school to provide a good education to children regardless of their differences, abilities, living conditions, material possibilities and developmental disabilities”.

Still, one of the main observations from the focus group is that most of the participants declare themselves as very familiarized with the topic of inclusion, considering that they are well aware of its meaning, attitudes that are rather dissonant with the results from the questionnaire showing an average level of knowledge on this topic.

Nevertheless, it's important to admit that most of the participants in focus-groups agreed that inclusiveness not only refers to the children with special educational needs, mentioning also “students with poor socio-economic status”, “students with good or poor academic achievement”, “migrant students”, “different ethnic groups”, “those who live in rural areas”, “any students from “socially disadvantaged backgrounds”, in most focus groups the general conclusion being the inclusion is for “all students”, for “anyone facing challenges in school”.

3.1.2. Comparison by category of respondents

Chart number 3 presents the average scores of pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score).

As expected, there are significant differences among the three categories of respondents (OneWay Anova $F_{(2, 2589)}=41.39$, $p<0.001$) the level of knowledge is significantly higher in case of specialists compared with pupils (Bonferroni post hoc test $p<0.001$) and with parents ($p<0.001$), with no significant difference between pupils and parents ($p=1.00$). However, the average score for specialists is 3.55 on a scale from 1 to 5, corresponding to an average to good knowledge about what is educational inclusion; needless to say, we expected to get a much higher score from this category of respondents.

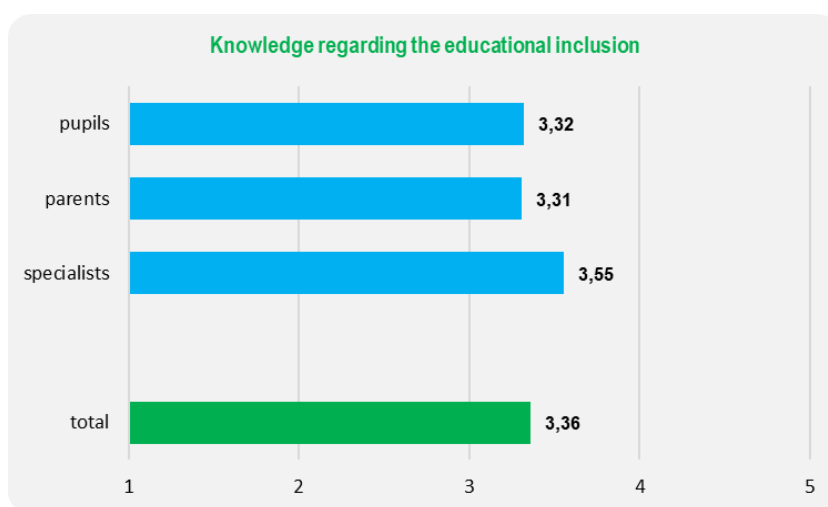


Chart no. 3: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion by educational status

This data can be the perfect argument for the researchers that support the investigation of specialists when researching in education: the specialists have significantly more knowledge, therefore they know better and asking other categories of respondents is not necessary. Still, on the one hand, we could argue that better knowledge does not necessarily mean better solutions, and we are mainly after solutions in this research, and, on the other hand, we need to emphasise that the knowledge that specialists have on this specific topic of educational inclusion is not by far what we expected, with their level of knowledge being a little bigger than the theoretical average of the scale (3,55 on a scale from 1 to 5, with the theoretical average of 3).

3.1.3. Comparison by county

Chart number 4 presents the average scores of respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

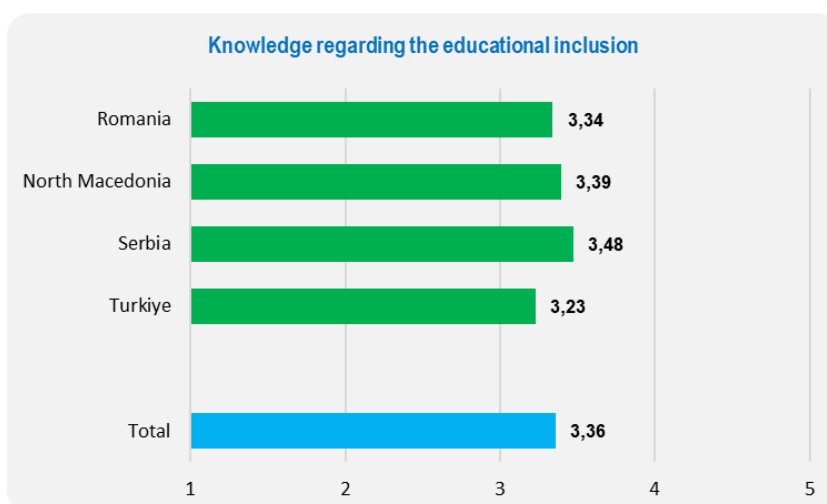


Chart no. 4: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion by country

There are significant differences among the level of knowledge regarding educational inclusion in different countries ($F_{(3,2588)}=26.64$, $p<0.001$), with Serbia having the largest average score (significantly higher than Romania ($p<0.001$), North Macedonia ($p=0.025$) and Türkiye ($p<0.001$)) and Türkiye having the smallest average score (smaller than Romania ($p<0.001$), North Macedonia ($p<0.001$) and Serbia). Average level of

knowledge regarding educational inclusion is similar in Romania and North Macedonia ($p=0.456$).

To synthesise, knowledge regarding educational inclusion is the biggest in Serbia, little smaller in Romania and North Macedonia and the smallest in Türkiye.

On the one hand, we could argue that cultural and ethnic diversity in Serbia created a necessity of inclusion in order to make education effective; still, cultural and ethnic diversity is present also in North Macedonia, but many of the schools there are still segregated based on nationality so the inclusion is not necessarily a big priority in schools, the level of knowledge regarding the educational inclusion being similar with Romania, where cultural and ethnic diversity is much smaller.

On the other hand, we could argue that Türkiye has the lowest level of knowledge regarding the educational inclusion based on the specific context the country is now facing, with the large waves of migrations from Siria. Official data about Syrian refugees in Türkiye estimates this population at about 4 million (3,6 mil. According to the EU - https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/europe/turkiye_en), but unofficially Turkish people speak about a number at least twice as big. Therefore, as one of the Turkish specialists from the focus groups mentioned “Türkiye has major issues in providing food and shelter for those migrants, we cannot think enough about their educational inclusion... we don’t think about school when we cannot feed them!”. This could be one of the main explanations of the lack of knowledge regarding the educational inclusion in Türkiye (compared with the other involved countries), added to the explanations suggested by some of the specialists from the partner institutions that observed that in Serbia, North Macedonia and Romania there were many trainings for teachers on educational inclusion in the past many years, while in Türkiye this director for teachers training, although present, is much newer.

Still, the comparative lack of knowledge regarding the educational inclusion in Türkiye is rather surprising considering that Turkish schools have by far the largest number of specialists that deal with inclusion, with even more school counsellors in one school while the other three countries hope to have at least one per school; but probably their knowledge regarding inclusion is not shared with their colleagues, as trainings on this topic were implemented only in the last years.

3.1.4. Data from pupils

Chart number 5 presents the average scores of pupils in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

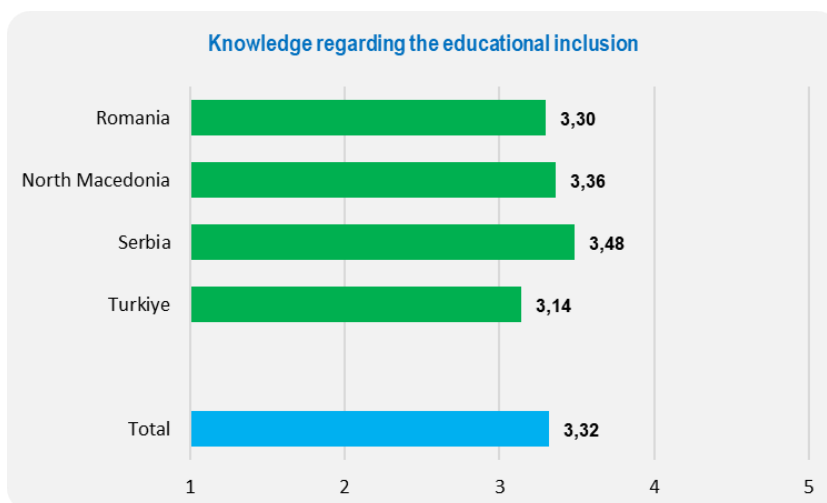


Chart no. 5: Pupils' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion by country

There are significant differences among the pupils' level of knowledge regarding educational inclusion in different countries ($F_{(3,1645)}=39.97$, $p<0.001$), with Serbian pupils having the largest average score (significantly higher than Romania ($p<0.001$), North Macedonia ($p=0.002$) and Türkiye ($p<0.001$)) and Turkish pupils having the smallest average score (smaller than Romania ($p<0.001$), North Macedonia ($p<0.001$) and Serbia). Average pupils' level of knowledge regarding educational inclusion is similar in Romania and North Macedonia ($p=0.303$).

The cross-country differences between pupils' levels of knowledge reflect the differences in the whole population, with Serbia pupils being the best informed, followed by Romanian and North Macedonian and Turkish pupils the least informed.

Chart number 6 presents the percentage of pupils in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye with incorrect, undecided and correct answers to each question regarding the meaning of educational inclusion.

Data shows that some aspects of educational inclusion are adequately perceived by pupils, while others are harder to understand. For instance, around 3/4 of pupils are aware of educational inclusion referring to including all children in education, providing adequate support for all children and making all children feel welcomed, secured and valued in mainstream education.

However, only a small minority of children responding our questionnaire are aware that inclusiveness is only possible if additional support is given for children with special educational needs (24%), that inclusiveness is not reached if children with SEN are segregated in special classes in mainstream schools (16%) and is not reached if children with SEN are in special schools (20%). Also, less than half of our respondents correctly know that inclusiveness is not related only with the children with SEN (42%).

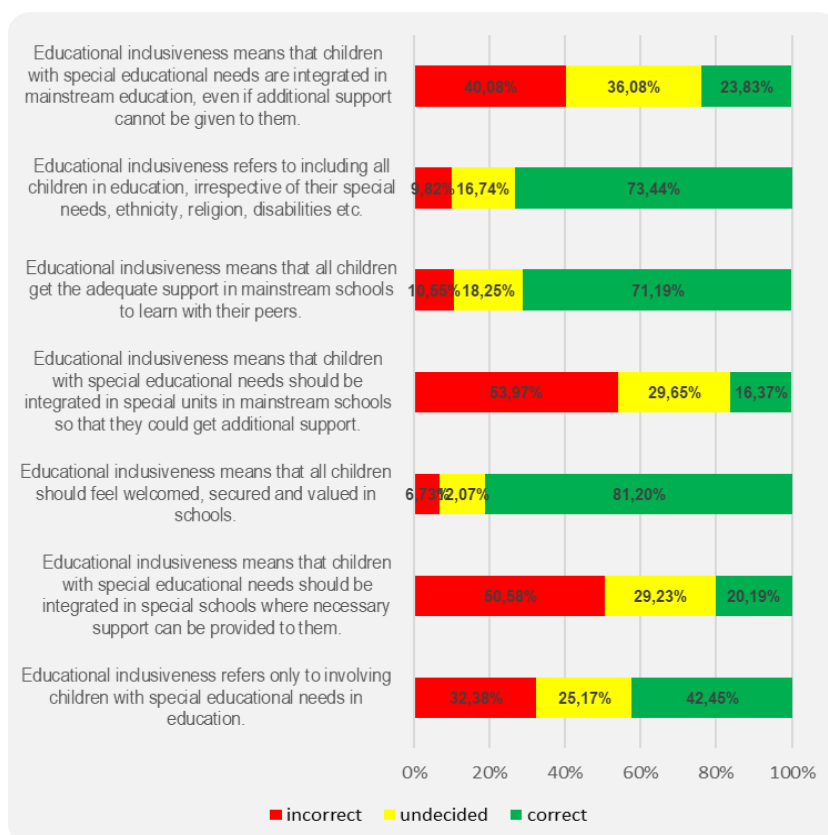


Chart no. 6: Pupils' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion – item analysis

This data shows that pupils have a general idea about inclusiveness, are somehow aware of the basic facts about educational inclusion (all children with support and feeling welcomed and secured), but majority of them lack a real understanding of this concept.

3.1.5. Data from parents

Chart number 7 presents the average scores of parents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion:

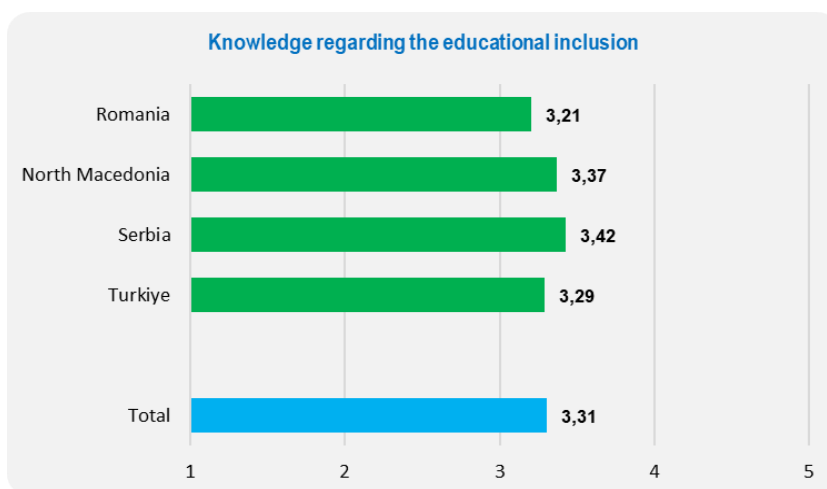


Chart no. 7: Parents' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion

There are significant differences among the parents' level of knowledge regarding educational inclusion in different countries ($F_{(3,488)}=4.32$, $p=0.005$), but this general difference is explained only through the significant difference between Serbia and Romania ($p=0.004$); the rest of between countries differences are not statistically significant.

The inter-country differences in parents knowledge regarding educational inclusion is different that the differences observed in the whole population, so parents have a specific perception regarding the inclusion, with the only significant difference being that Serbian parents are more informed compared with the Romanian ones (probably, the parents from the country with the biggest cultural and ethnic diversity are more informed compared with the parents from the country with the smallest ethnic and cultural diversity). Surprisingly or not, Turkish parents are not less informed compared

with parents from other countries, arguing that information about educational inclusiveness could be available in Türkiye also, if there is an interest for this topic.

Chart number 8 presents the percentage of parents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye with incorrect, undecided and correct answers to each question regarding the meaning of educational inclusion:

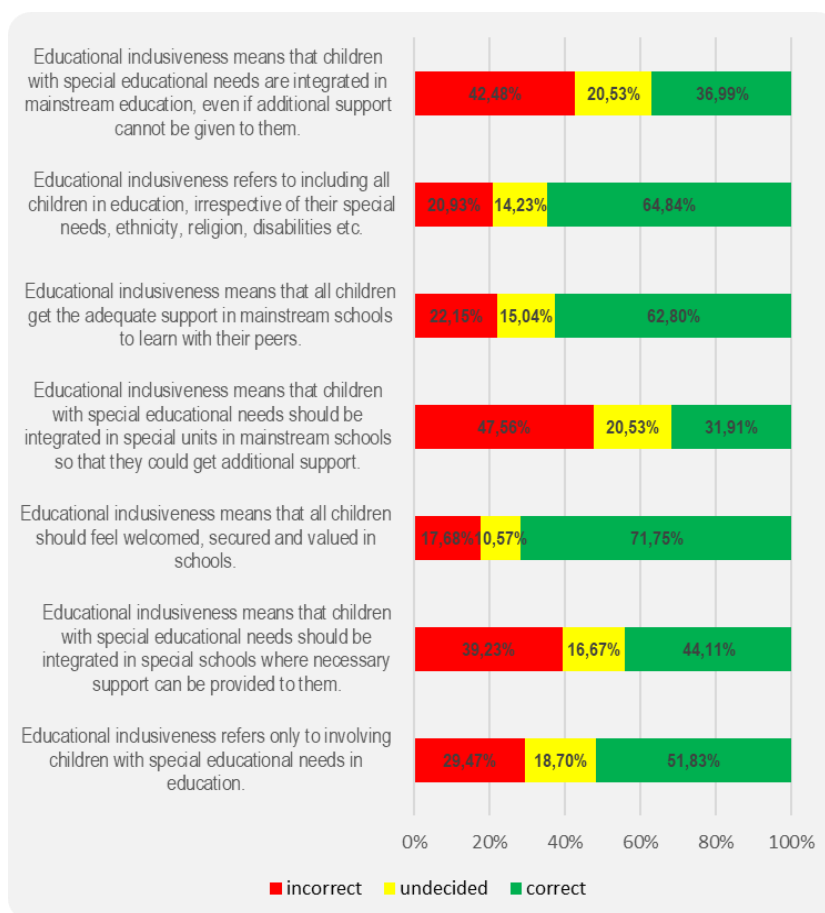


Chart no. 8: Parents' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion – item analysis

Parents' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion is very similar with pupils' knowledge, probably due to the fact that kids get most of their information regarding the social inclusion from their parents.

Like pupils, most of the parents know that inclusion refer to including all children in education (65%), providing additional support for those who need it (62%) and making

all children feel welcomed, secured and valued (71%). In the same time, only a minority of parents are aware that we cannot discuss about inclusiveness if additional support is not provided (37%), if children with SEN are segregated in special classes in mainstream schools (32%) or in special schools (44%). Still, those results were somehow expected considering that the sample of parents includes all categories of parents, with different level of education, studies, social integration etc.

Those results show that even if parents have a general idea about educational inclusiveness, there is still a lot of work to be done in terms of correctly informing them about this aspect, about the importance of educational inclusiveness and specific aspects that make inclusion not only necessary, but important for all pupils. This aspect is even more important as our data showed similar knowledge in parents and children, suggesting that parents inform their children about inclusion, therefore less informed parents mean less informed pupils and next generations could continue to have an inadequate perception of educational inclusiveness.

3.1.6. Data from specialists

Chart number 9 presents the average scores of specialists in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

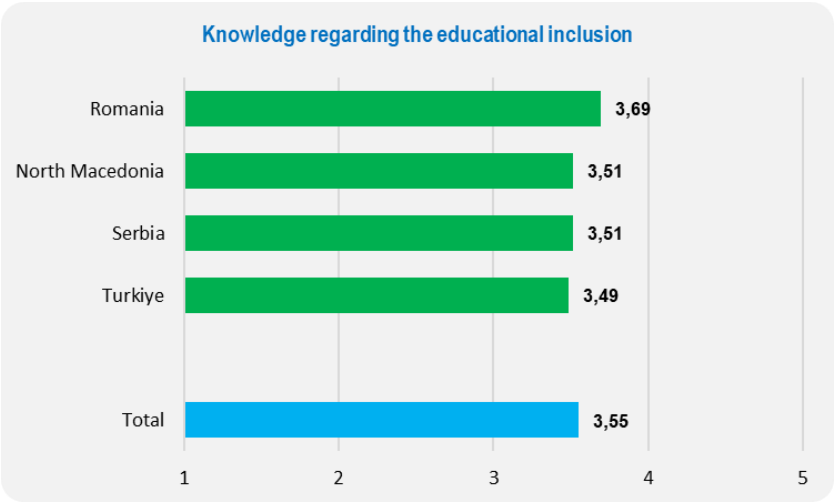


Chart no. 9: Specialists’ knowledge regarding the educational inclusion

Comparative analysis shows the existence of significant variance among the four countries ($F_{(3,447)}=3.11$, $p=0.026$), but this general difference is explained only through the significant difference between Romania and Türkiye ($p=0.042$); the rest of between countries differences are not statistically significant.

The slightly more informed Romanian specialists are probably the result of many trainings on educational inclusiveness done in the past 10-15 years in Romania, most of them on European projects, as inclusion was one of the main priorities in education at least in the last decade, with probably most of the teachers, if not all, attending at least one specific training on inclusion in this period.

Therefore, we could consider that specialists in the four countries have similar knowledge regarding the educational inclusiveness, with maybe a small advantage for specialists in Romania (advantage that is significant only in comparison with the Turkish specialists).

Chart number 10 presents the percentage of specialists in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye with incorrect, undecided and correct answers to each question regarding the meaning of educational inclusion.

The item analysis of specialists' answers shows that, unfortunately, there still is a lot of work until the majority of educational specialist will fully understand the meaning and importance of educational inclusiveness.

On the one hand, one could appreciate as positive the fact that 83% of specialists consider that educational inclusiveness means that all children should feel welcomed, secured and valued, that 75% know that inclusiveness means inclusion of all children in education and 70% know that inclusion means adequate support for all children to learn with their peers. Still, on the other hand, the same results could be read as 10% of specialists mentioning that inclusiveness is possible even if not all children feel welcomed, secured and valued in their schools, 15% of specialists considering that educational inclusiveness is possible even if not all children are included in education and 18% of teachers consider that inclusiveness is possible even if not all children get adequate support.

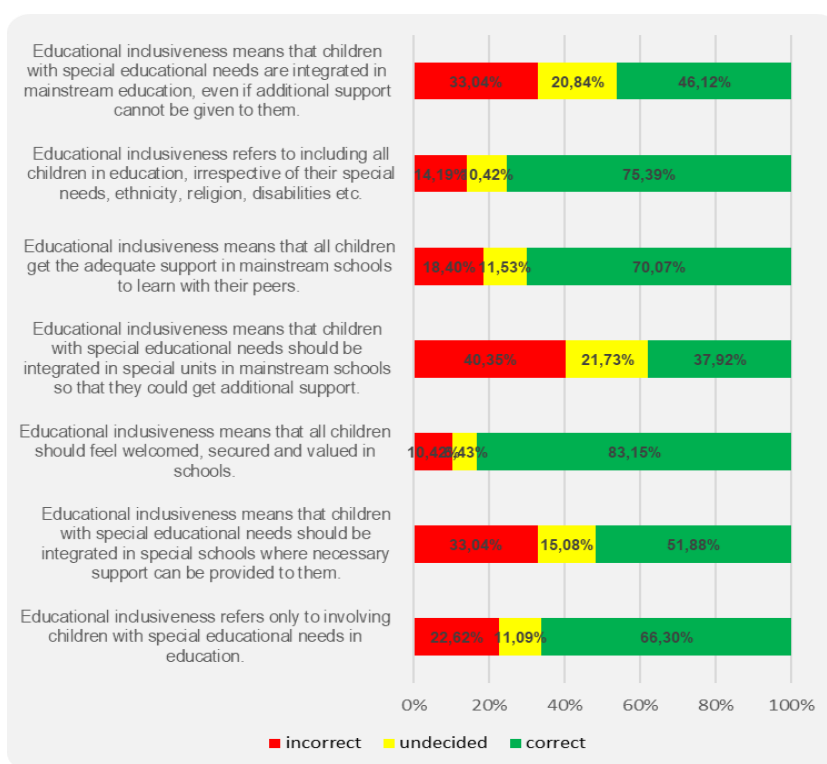


Chart no. 10: Specialists' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion – item analysis

Even more important is that:

- 33% of specialist consider that inclusiveness is reached if all children with SEN are in mainstream schools, even if additional support is not provided for them (with other 21% not being able to decide in this regard);
- 40% of the specialists agree that educational inclusiveness is reached if children with SEN are in special classes in mainstream schools (and other 21% are not able to decide in this regard);
- 33% of the specialists consider that educational inclusiveness is reached if children with SEN are in specials schools (with other 15% not being able to decide);
- 22% of specialists are not aware that educational inclusiveness refers to other aspects than SEN, with other 11% not being able to decide in this regard.

Considering that the respondents are specialist, most of them teachers, school counsellors etc., the lack of knowledge in all aspects regarding the educational inclusiveness is surprising and somehow sad, as it shows that many of the main

responsible for creating an inclusive environment in our schools are more or less unfamiliar with what is the educational inclusiveness. Unfortunately, when less than half of specialist are aware that inclusion is conditioned by additional support and the rest consider that bringing a child with SEN in mainstream education is enough to ensure its inclusion it is very clear that a lot of work is still needed to even start discussing about making the schools really inclusive.

Chart number 11 presents the average scores of each category of specialists on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion.

As visible in the chart, our data seems to suggest that teachers have the lowest awareness regarding the meaning of educational inclusion compared with all other categories of specialists. Unfortunately, the low number of respondents in most of the groups makes the statistical analysis less relevant, with only the comparison between teachers and other specialists from schools (counsellors, speech therapist etc.) having a statistical relevance. This analysis shows significantly higher scores for counsellors compared with teachers (independent samples t test $t(350)=5.24$, $p<0.001$), but this difference was expected as counsellors and speech therapists work directly with children with SEN for their integration and inclusion in mainstream schools, and therefore a better knowledge regarding inclusiveness was expected.

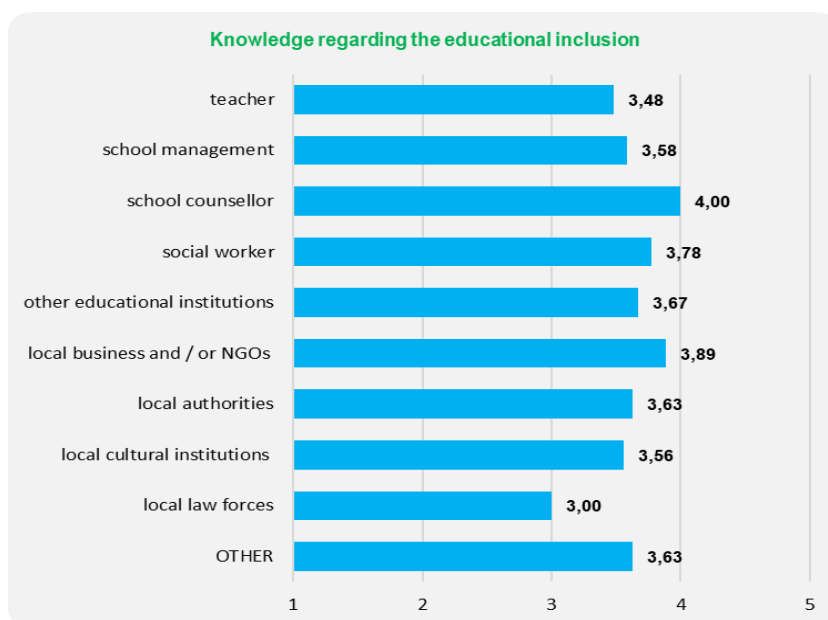


Chart no. 11: Specialists' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion by social role

Chart number 12 presents the average scores of specialists on the scale regarding the knowledge about the educational inclusion according to their experience in their educational role:

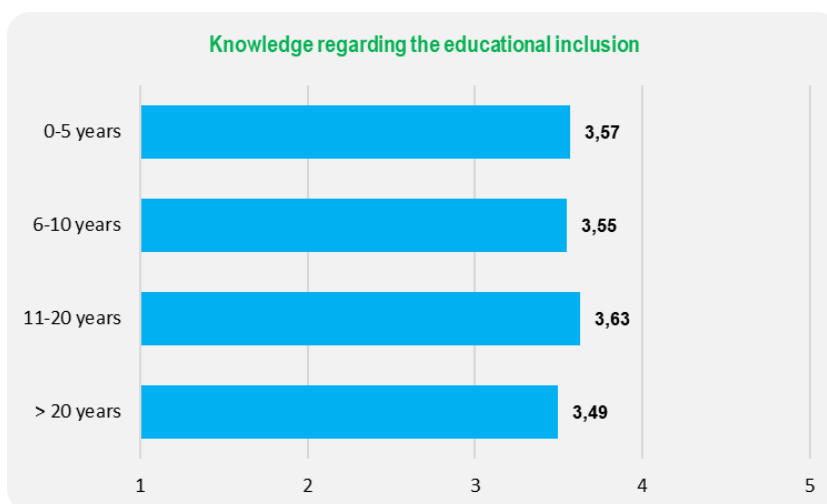


Chart no. 12: Specialists' knowledge regarding the educational inclusion by experience

Statistical analysis shows no significant influence of experience on knowledge regarding the educational inclusion ($F_{(3,447)}=1.39$, $p=0.244$); more or less surprising, having more experience in education does not ensure a better knowledge regarding the educational inclusiveness.

3.2. Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion

3.2.1. General information

Chart number 13 presents the percentage of respondents in our sample according to their level of perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (1.00-1.49 – very low level, 1.50-2.49 – low, 2.50-3.49 – average, 3.50-4.49 – good, 4.50-5.00 – very good level):

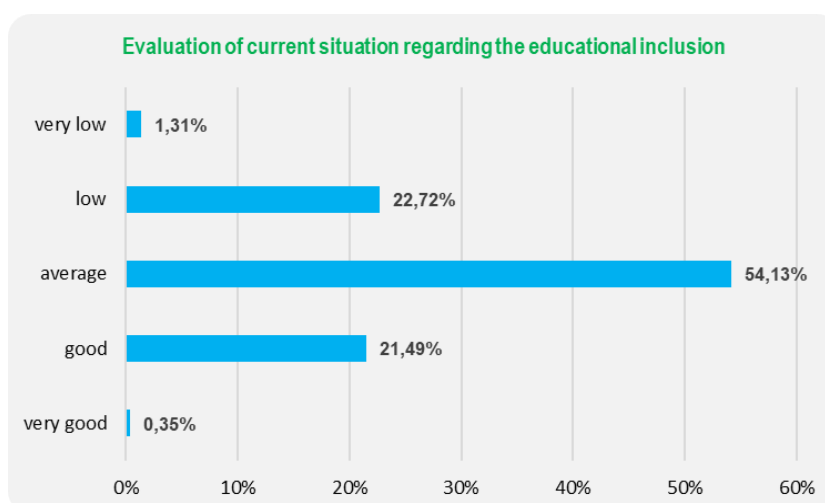


Chart no. 13: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion

The distribution of scores is more or less similar to the normal curve, with more than half of the respondents evaluating the educational inclusion in their country as being “average”; still, around a quarter of respondents have a positive perception of the educational inclusion in their country, while the other quarter have a negative perception about this aspect.

Considering the efforts done officially in all involved countries to enhance the quality of education especially through facilitating the educational inclusiveness through various national or local initiatives, including changing in the legislation, having only a quarter of respondent satisfied about this topic is far from positive, therefore the involved national systems of education should continue working on this topic.

The focus groups showed a specific pattern of responses regarding the level of educational inclusion, with most of the respondents starting with a positive evaluation and then refining it by taking into consideration many limits:

- “our schools are inclusive, at least the ones where all facilities are available and barriers are removed”;
- “there is a general effort towards inclusiveness ... but, often, schools lack the resources, training, and support needed to truly accommodate all students, especially those with special needs or from minority backgrounds”; also, “there can be a lack of awareness among teachers about how to effectively support diverse learners, leading

to inadequate teaching practices” and “many schools may not have the necessary facilities or programs in place to create a genuinely inclusive environment”;

- “schools in our country are inclusive. There is a difference in the practice and support of inclusion in some areas due to lack of resources, education and training of teachers”.

Other evaluation takes into consideration the difference between theory and practice: “Although we seem inclusive in theory, we have serious problems in practice. Support education rooms are quite inadequate. The physical facilities of schools and classrooms are not suitable for all students. Our country is not in that position in terms of awareness level”.

Regarding what is needed for inclusion, for schools to be really inclusive, the participants in the focus groups mentioned very different aspects:

- human resources (teachers and other specialists): “inclusive teachers with professional qualifications ... there should be in-service trainings. There should be volunteer and willing teachers”; “schools need proper training for teachers so they can effectively support all students, especially those with special needs or from diverse backgrounds”, “more support programs in place, such as counselling and mentorship”, “the presence of additional professional staff (defectologist, speech therapist...)”

- resources: “more resources are crucial, like special education staff and learning materials that cater to different learning styles”, “increased physical facilities”, “schools need to ensure that facilities are suitable for all students, including those with physical disabilities”, “various didactic tools and materials, modern technologies”

- accurate analysis of needs: “needs should be determined correctly”;

- cooperation with local community: “other stakeholders of education should support inclusion, non-governmental organisations and families should be included in education”, “schools need to engage families in the inclusion process and listen to their concerns and suggestions”, “cooperation with parents, local community, humanitarian organizations”;

- management: “schools should create a welcoming environment by promoting awareness and understanding among students about diversity and inclusion”.

3.2.2. Comparison by category of respondents

Chart number 14 presents the average scores of pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score).

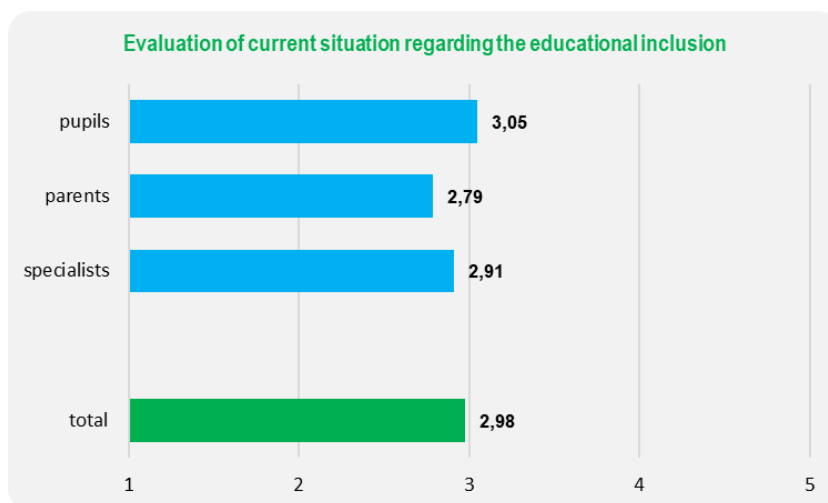


Chart no. 14: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2, 2589)}=32.65$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p<0.001$), for pupils compared with specialists ($p<0.001$), but also for specialists compared with parents ($p<0.001$).

Surprisingly, parents are more reserved in evaluating the educational inclusion in their country, while pupils have the best perception of this issue, with the specialists somewhere in the middle.

On the one hand, we could explain the more positive perception from pupils through considering the fact that today's societies are changing very fast and diversity is becoming more and more present and important in all countries, and children are part of this change and are adapting faster, they are shifting their attitudes faster due to their innocence, but also due to their bigger adaptability. In this perspective, adults are changing slower, therefore the parents are still more trapped in their stereotypes and see the changes harder.

Teachers (educational specialists in general) are in the middle due to their double status, collaborating with the pupils and with the parents in the same time, but also compensating their slower adaptation with their professional initial and continuous training.

This data is important especially by considering that acknowledging the existence of a problem (social, personal etc.) is the first condition in order to start working on solving that problem; therefore, acknowledging the existence of an issue regarding the educational inclusion is the first step into getting involved in potential social solutions for this issue. Hence, according to our data, pupils having the best perception of the educational inclusiveness will be harder to be involved in specific activities focusing on enhancing the inclusion, while parents, that are the most receptive to the existence of this social issues should be the easiest to convince to get involved. Therefore, *schools should take into consideration more the specific measures to involve parents more in the enhancement of educational inclusiveness.*

3.2.3. Comparison by country

Chart number 15 presents the average scores of respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

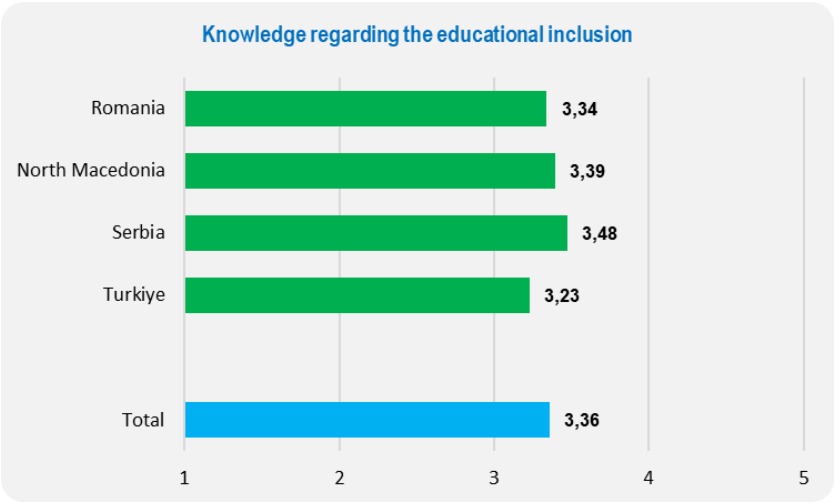


Chart no. 15: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by country

There are significant differences among the four countries involved in this research ($F_{(3, 2588)}=48.31$; $p<0.001$), with the best perception of educational inclusion in Serbia and North Macedonia (without significant differences between those countries), significantly better than in Romania and Türkiye (and better in Romania compared with Türkiye - $p<0.001$).

To synthesise, the educational inclusiveness is perceived as better in Serbia and North Macedonia, slightly less present in Romania and even less present in Türkiye.

The lower level of educational inclusiveness in Türkiye could be explained, on the one hand, by the largest number of migrants in the educational system, “integrated” in mainstream education with more or less concerns about their inclusion, and, on the other hand, by the average number of pupils in classes in Türkiye, that could go as far as 40 or even more (with big variations between schools), so adaptation of teachers activities to the special needs of each child being obviously less possible as the resources (human and material) are divided among much larger classes.

3.2.4. Data from pupils

Chart number 16 presents the average scores of pupils in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score).

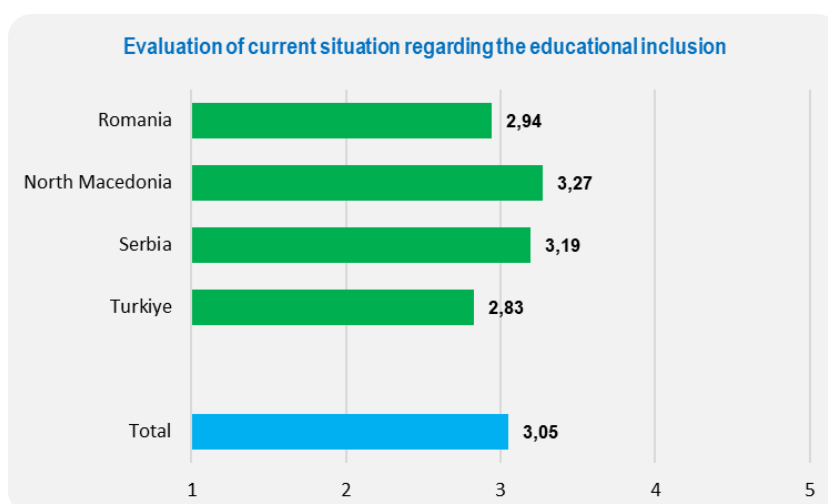


Chart no. 16: Pupils' evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by country

The pupils' evaluation of educational inclusion in their country is similar with the general evaluation: significant differences among the four countries ($F_{(3, 1645)}=44.11$, $p<0.001$), better in North Macedonia and Serbia (without significant differences between them – $p=0.480$), significantly less good in Romania and Türkiye (and better in Romania compared with Türkiye – $p=0.047$).

Data from pupils are similar with aggregated data for all respondents in terms of cross-country differences, with the educational inclusiveness being more obvious for pupils in Serbia and North Macedonia, obvious for the ones in Romania and less obvious for pupils in Türkiye.

3.2.5. Data from parents

Chart number 17 presents the average scores of parents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

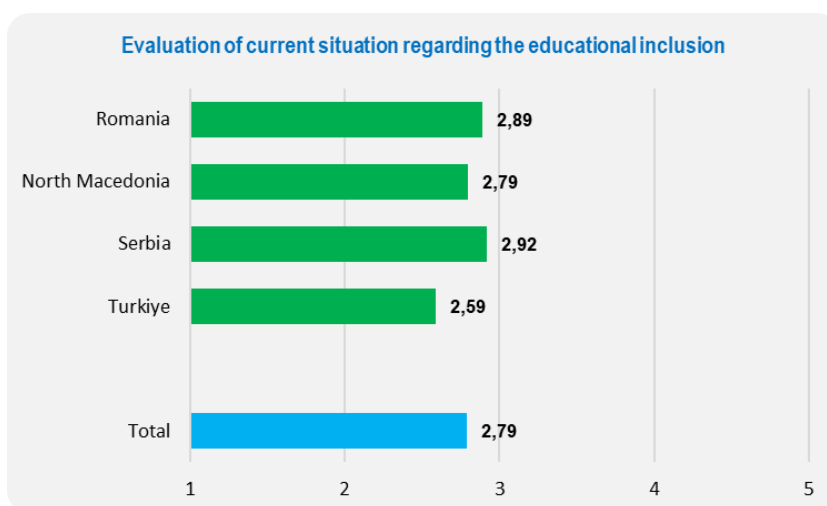


Chart no. 17: Parents' evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by country

Parents' evaluation of educational inclusion is dependent of the country ($F_{(3,488)}=7.88$, $p<0.001$); Serbian and Romanian parents are the most optimist regarding the educational inclusion, with North Macedonian parents having a slightly less optimistic evaluation. Turkish parents are the most reserved in evaluating the educational inclusion, with significant differences from Romanian ($p<0.001$) and Serbian parents ($p<0.001$), but not from North Macedonian ($p=0.196$).

The parents' evaluation of the educational inclusiveness is best in Serbia and Romania, good in North Macedonia and, again, less good in Türkiye. The major change is the shift between Romania and North Macedonia – on average, the perception is better in North Macedonia compared with Romania, but for parents the difference is vice versa. This particular perception of parents could be explained by the consciousness of the segregation in some of the North Macedonia schools, where different nationalities learn in different buildings, in different languages with different teachers, therefore parents evaluating the inclusion as being less present.

3.2.6. Data from specialists

Chart number 18 presents the average scores of specialists in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

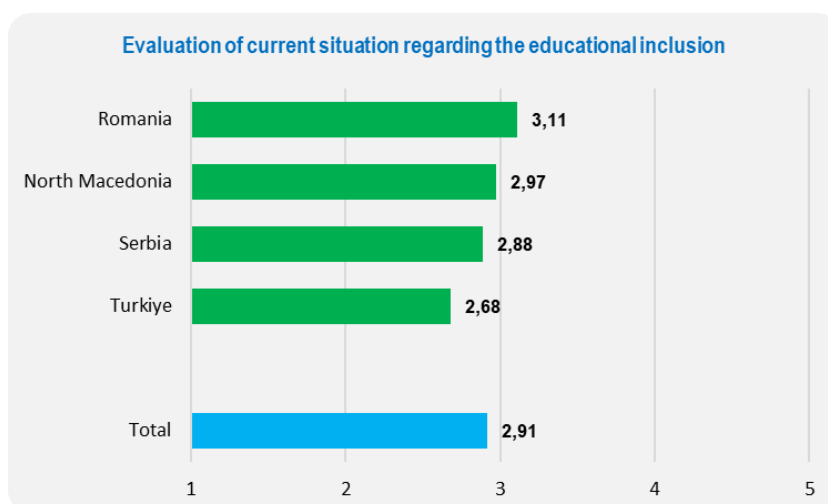


Chart no. 18: Specialists' evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by country

Specialists' evaluation of educational inclusion is dependent of the country ($F_{(3,488)}=8.81$, $p<0.001$); Romanian and North Macedonian specialists are the most optimist regarding the educational inclusion, with Serbian specialists having a slightly less optimistic evaluation. Turkish specialists are the most reserved in evaluating the educational inclusion, with significant differences from Romanian ($p<0.001$) and North Macedonian specialists ($p=0.006$), but not from Serbian ($p=0.116$).

According to the specialists, the educational inclusion is the best in Romania and North Macedonia compared with Serbia and Türkiye. This specific evaluation is very difficult to explain. On the one hand, it could be explained by training (more present in Romania, newer concern in Türkiye), but this explains harder the difference between Serbia and North Macedonia. On the other hand, the difference between the specialists' evaluations could be better explained by the difference in their expectations, as it is expected the specialist that have bigger expectations regarding the educational inclusion will be more critical in their evaluation of the current situation. Nevertheless, it would be important to have additional data in order to further understand these differences and to correctly explain them.

Chart number 19 presents the average scores of each category of specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion:

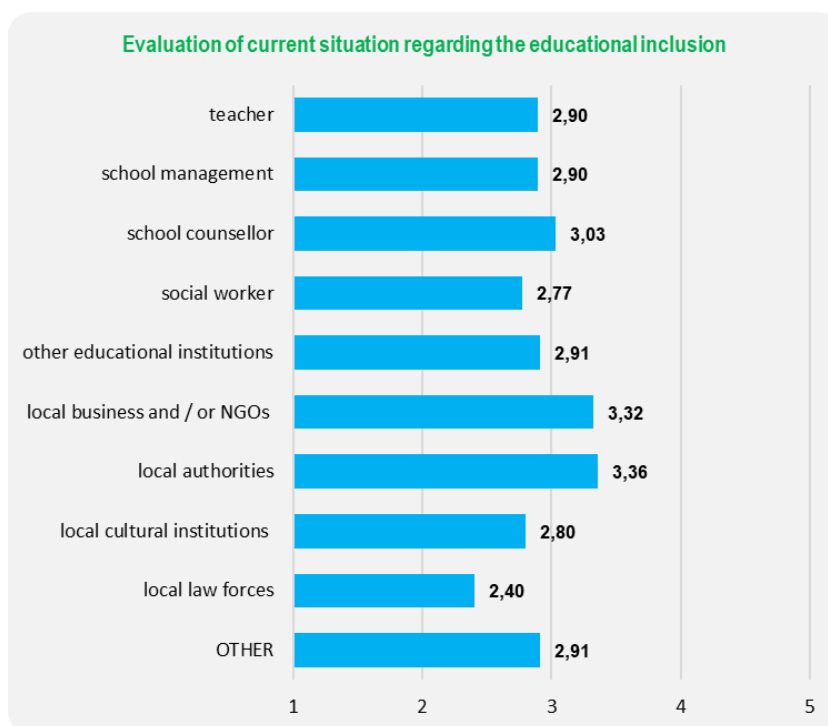


Chart no. 19: Specialists' evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by social role

It seems that educational inclusion is better evaluated by local authorities and NGOs and the most reserved evaluation is done by local law forces, but the number of

respondents in most of the categories is not enough for relevant statistic comparisons. Still, the evaluation done by the representatives of local NGOs is very interesting and needs to be further analysed.

Chart number 20 presents the average scores of specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion according to their experience in their educational role:

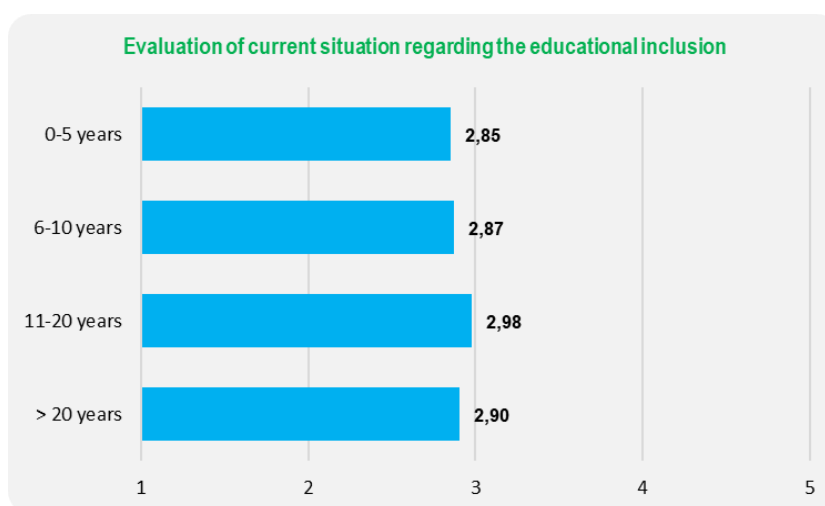


Chart no. 20: Specialists' evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion by experience

Experience has no significant impact on the way specialists evaluate the educational inclusion in their country ($F_{(9,441)}=0.79$, $p=0.631$).

3.3. Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion

3.3.1. General information

Chart number 21 presents the percentage of respondents in our sample according to their level of perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (1.00-1.49 – very low level, 1.50-2.49 – low, 2.50-3.49 – average, 3.50-4.49 – good, 4.50-5.00 – very good level):

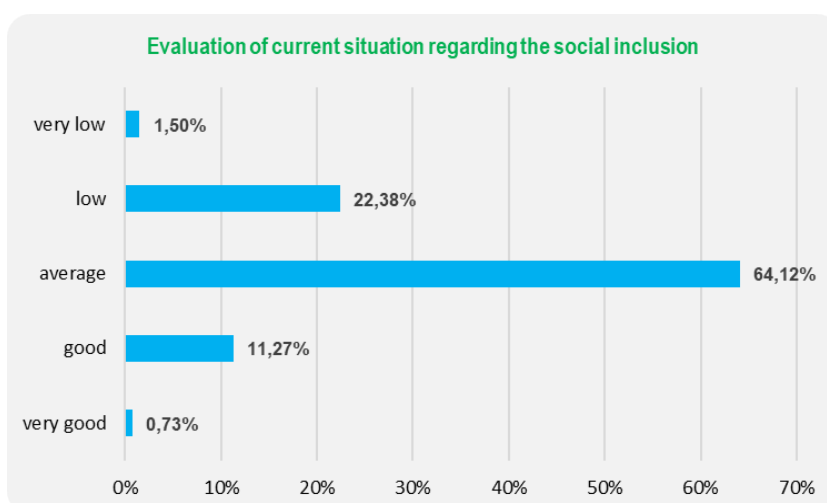


Chart no. 21: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion

The distribution of scores shows that almost 2/3 of the respondents evaluate the social inclusion in their country as being “average”, while more respondents perceived the social inclusion in a negative way (around 24%) compared with the respondent that perceived the social inclusion in a positive way (around 12%).

Therefore, we can argue that the perception of the social inclusion in the four involved countries is moderately negative. Social inclusiveness is evaluated in a significantly more negative way compared with the educational inclusiveness (paired samples t test $t(2591)=13.86$; $p<0.001$).

3.3.2. Comparison by category of respondents

Chart number 22 presents the average scores of pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (as well as a total average score).

There is a significant influence of status on the evaluation of social inclusion ($F_{(2,2589)}=67.95$, $p<0.001$). Social inclusion is evaluated better by the pupils compared with the parents ($p<0.001$) and compared with the specialists ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between the evaluations done by parents and specialists ($p=0.492$).

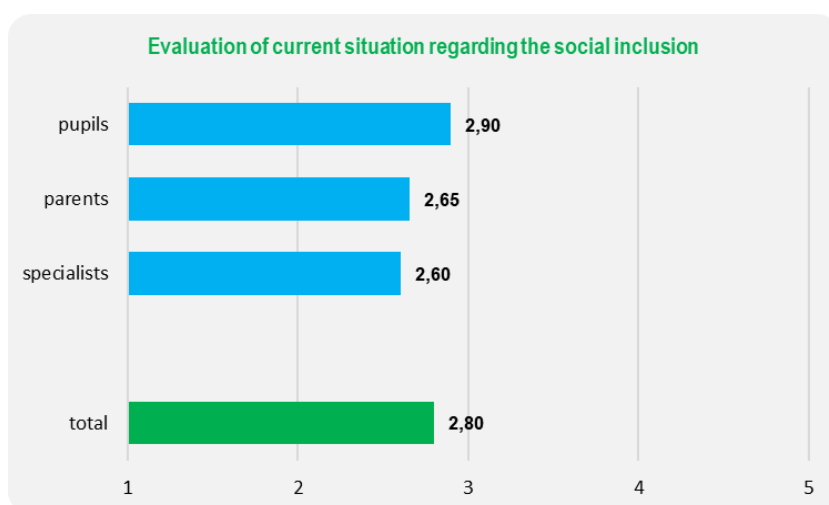


Chart no. 22: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by status

Social inclusion is perceived as better by children compared with adults, most probably due to their better adaptability and perhaps their lack of experience in social contexts that makes them less receptive to social discrimination, prejudice etc.

3.3.3. Comparison by country

Chart number 23 presents the average scores of respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (as well as a total average score):

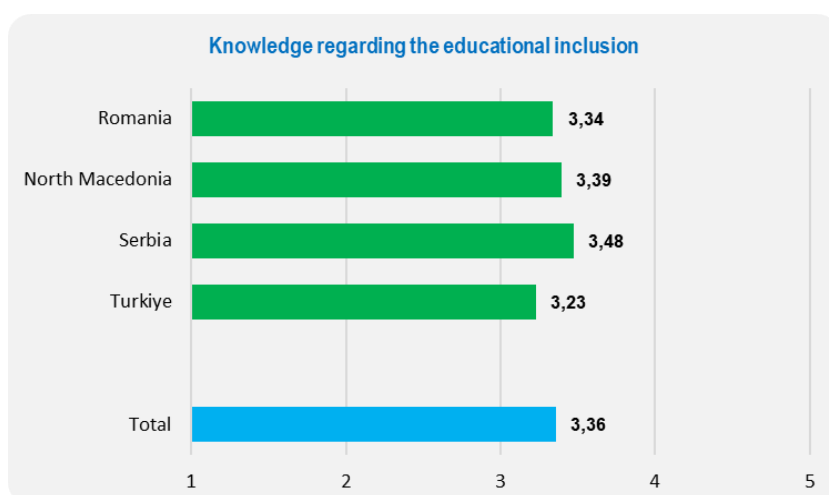


Chart no. 23: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by country

Statistical analysis show significant differences among the four involved countries ($F_{(3, 2588)}=8.89$, $p<0.001$), with Turkish respondents evaluating the social inclusion in a significantly more moderate way compared with the ones from Romania ($p=0.046$), North Macedonia ($p<0.001$) and Serbia ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences among those last three countries.

Social inclusion is perceived as less present in Türkiye compared with Serbia, North Macedonia and Romania, most probably as a reflection of the difficulties this country has in integrating the millions of legal and illegal migrants and refugees from Syria, the social inclusion being threatened by the lack of resources.

3.3.4. Data from pupils

Chart number 24 presents the average scores of pupils in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (as well as a total average score):

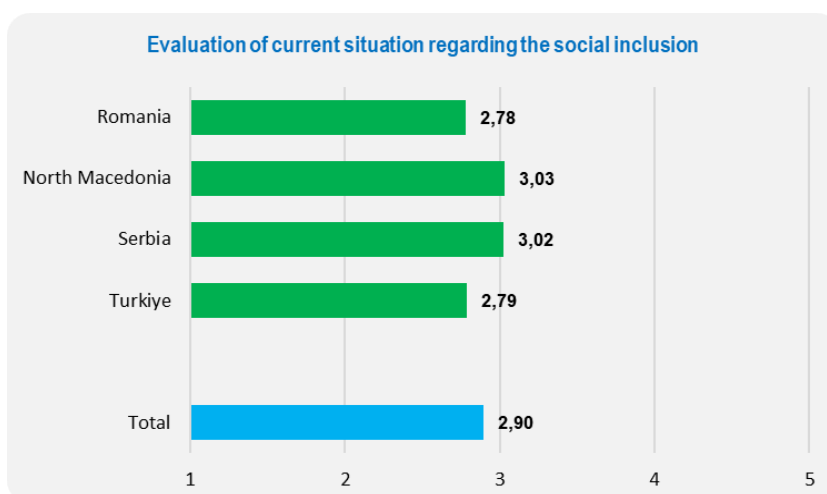


Chart no. 24: Pupils' evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by country

The pupils' evaluation of social inclusion is significantly influenced by country ($F_{(3, 1645)}=28.48$, $p<0.001$), with North Macedonian pupils evaluating social inclusion in a more optimistic way compared with Romanian ($p<0.001$) and Turkish ($p<0.001$) and also the Serbian pupils having a better evaluation compared with Romanian ($p<0.001$) and Turkish pupils ($p<0.001$). There are no significant differences between North Macedonian and Serbian pupils ($p=1.000$) and between Romanian and Turkish pupils ($p=1.000$).

Pupils in Serbia and North Macedonia perceive the social inclusion as better compared with pupils in Türkiye and Romania. This result can be associated with the cultural and ethnic diversity that are more present in Serbia and North Macedonia; children are more receptive to this diversity and society seems to be more inclusive for them.

3.3.5. Data from parents

Chart number 25 presents the average scores of parents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (as well as a total average score):

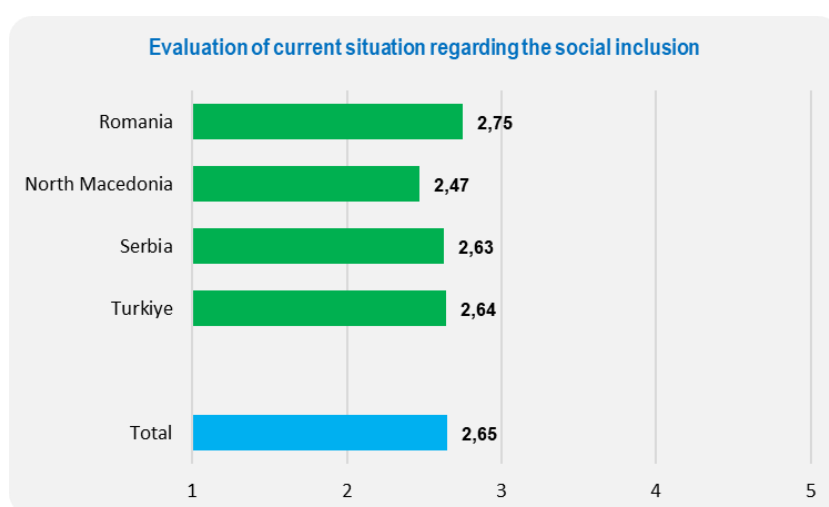


Chart no. 25: Parents' evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by country

Statistical analysis shows a significant influence of country on perception of social inclusion ($F(3, 488)=4.08$, $p=0.007$), with the only significant difference between Romanian and North Macedonian parents ($p=0.004$).

Parental evaluation of social inclusion has a limited cross-country variance, as parents seems to be critical to this aspect in all investigated countries, maybe a little less in Romania, probably due to the very large number of projects and national initiatives on inclusion that created a more positive attitude towards this aspect.

3.3.6. Data from specialists

Chart number 26 presents the average scores of specialists in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (as well as a total average score):

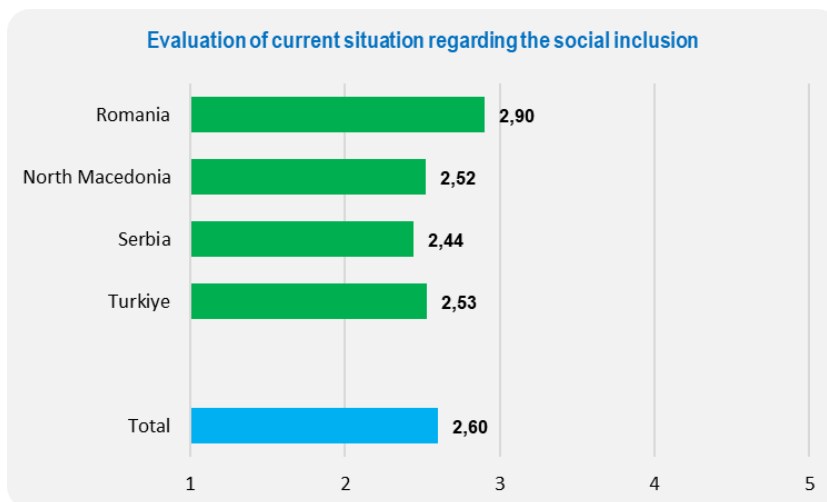


Chart no. 26: Specialists' evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by country

Statistical analysis show significant differences among the four involved countries ($F(3, 447)=12.55$, $p<0.001$), with the Romanian specialists evaluating the social inclusion in a significant better way compared with the North Macedonian ($p<0.001$), Serbian ($p<0.001$) and Turkish specialists ($p<0.001$).

The specialists' perception regarding the social inclusion is significantly better in Romania compared with Serbia, North Macedonia and Türkiye; this doesn't mean that social inclusion is better in Romania, but only that specialists evaluate it better.

This perception is most likely influenced by the very large number of international and national initiatives that explicitly focused on social (and educational) inclusion, on the very large number of projects dedicated to enhancing the social inclusion, especially in the years following 2007 when Romania become part of EU (out of the four countries in our analysis, it's the only one in EU). On the one hand, we could argue that this better perception of social inclusion in Romania reflects a social reality, as social inclusion could really be better in Romania as a result of the numerous projects and interventions in this area in the past years, or, on the other hand, we could argue that this is just a

perception based on the fact that this concept is more “familiar”, more “visible” to Romanian specialists due to its mediatization.

Chart number 27 presents the average scores of each category of specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion:

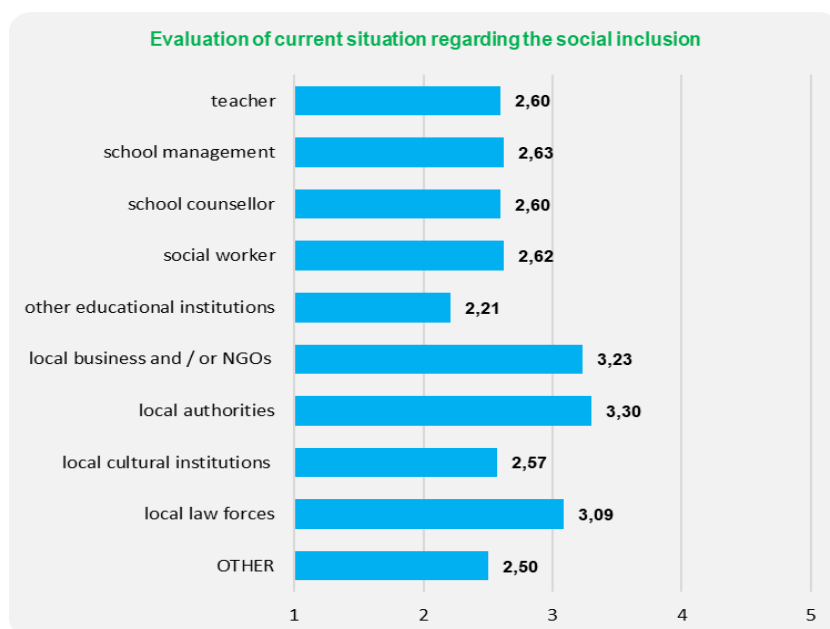


Chart no. 27: Pupils' evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by social role

Social inclusion seems to be better perceived by the representatives of local authorities and representatives of local business and NGOs, while the least positive evaluation seems to belong to the representatives of other educational institutions and local cultural institutions. As mentioned, the number of specialists in each category does not allow relevant comparisons, but, again, especially the positive evaluation from NGOs is worthy of future more detailed analysis.

Chart number 28 presents the average scores of specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion according to their experience in their educational role:

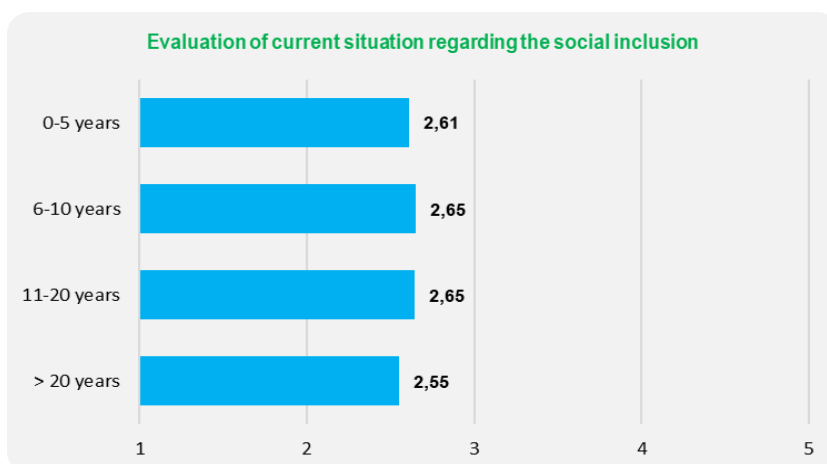


Chart no. 28: Pupils' evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion by experience

Statistical analysis show no significant influence of experience on the evaluation of social inclusion ($F_{(3,447)}=0.72$, $p=0.541$).

3.4. Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion

3.4.1. General information

Chart number 29 presents the percentage of respondents in our sample according to their level of perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (1.00-1.49 – very low level, 1.50-2.49 – low, 2.50-3.49 – average, 3.50-4.49 – good, 4.50-5.00 – very good):

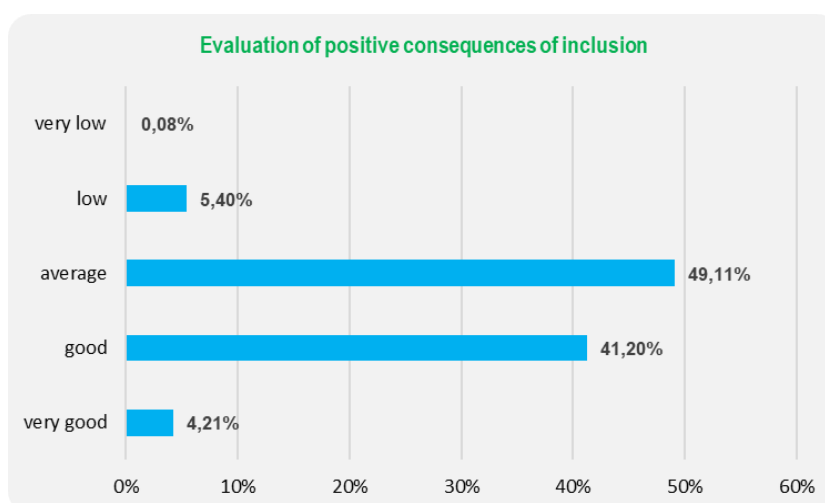


Chart no. 29: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion

The distribution of answers suggests a rather positive perception of the positive consequences of inclusion; only about 5% of respondents have a negative or very negative perception on this topic, while 45% have a positive or very positive perception of the consequences of inclusion.

Still, almost half of the respondents are yet to be decided on this topic, strongly suggesting that the information on educational inclusion is still to reach a large number of persons in the four involved countries.

3.4.2. Comparison by category of respondents

Chart number 30 presents the average scores of pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of educational inclusion (as well as a total average score).

The positive consequences of inclusion are perceived in a way dependent of status ($F_{(2, 2589)}=14.59$, $p<0.001$); they are more visible for the specialists compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and compared with parents ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between pupils and parents ($p=1.000$).

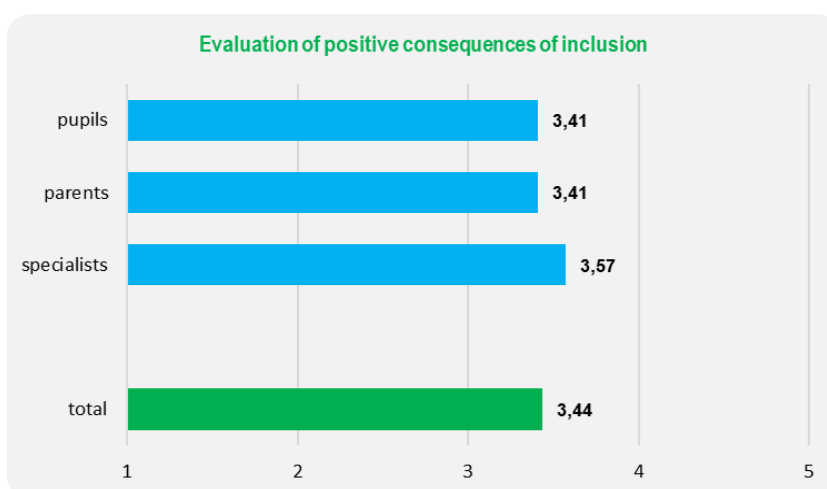


Chart no. 30: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by status

As expected, specialists are more aware of the positive consequences of educational inclusion compared with pupils and parents, and this is, more likely, due to their pedagogical training and general knowledge that makes them more aware of what changes in an inclusive society and in an inclusive school.

On the one hand, this result means that specialists will be more likely to get involved in projects or activities dedicated to enhancing the educational inclusion (as they are more aware of the positive changes these activities might trigger), but, on the other hand, this result shows that there is a need for informing pupils and parents regarding the positive consequences or inclusion.

3.4.3. Comparison by country

Chart number 31 presents the average scores of respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (as well as a total average score):

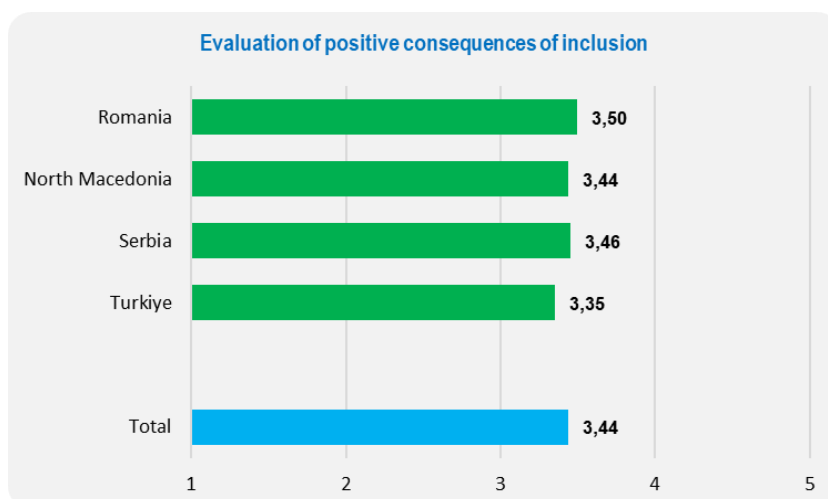


Chart no. 31: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by country

Statistical analysis show that the perception of positive consequences of inclusion is dependent on the county ($F_{(3,2588)}=7.48, p<0.001$). Comparing the countries two by two, the significant differences are only between Türkiye and Romania ($p<0.001$) and Türkiye and Serbia ($p=0.008$).

This difference among the four investigated countries is more or less similar to the difference registered in evaluating the educational and social inclusion. Therefore, one could argue that this evaluation of the importance of inclusion is just a way for the respondents to maintain their cognitive consonance – if education and society are inclusive, then the positive consequences of inclusion are bigger, if society and education are less inclusive, then the positive consequences of inclusion are less obvious, less visible.

3.4.4. Data from pupils

Chart number 32 presents the average scores of pupils in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (as well as a total average score):

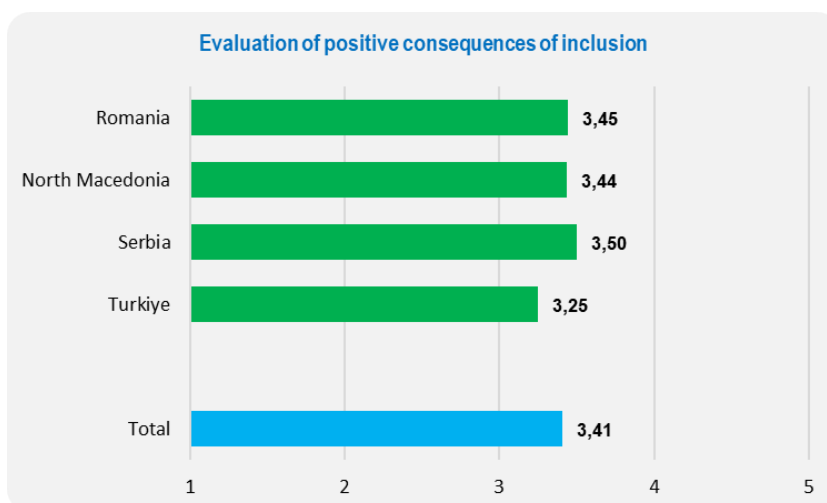


Chart no. 32: Pupils' evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by country

Pupils' evaluation of the positive consequences of inclusion is significantly influenced by country ($F_{(3, 1645)}=19.47$, $p<0.001$), but this influence is only due to the less positive evaluation done by Turkish pupils compared with the Romanian ($p<0.001$), North Macedonian ($p<0.001$) and Serbian pupils ($p<0.001$).

Again, this evaluation reflects the evaluation of the educational inclusion, with pupils from Türkiye that evaluated the educational inclusion as being less present now evaluating the positive consequences of inclusion as being less present.

3.4.5. Data from parents

Chart number 33 presents the average scores of parents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (as well as a total average score):

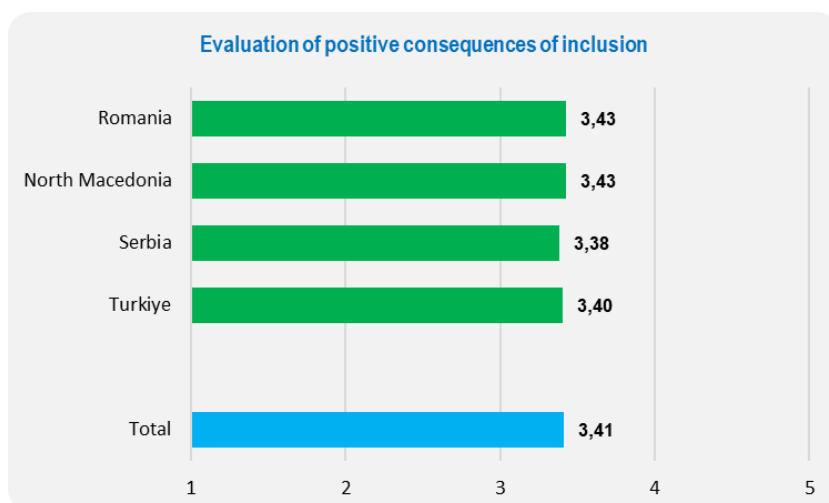


Chart no. 33: Parents' evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by country

Statistical analysis show that the parents' perception of positive consequences of inclusion is not influenced by country ($F_{(3,488)}=0.14$, $p=0.938$).

3.4.6. Data from specialists

Chart number 34 presents the average scores of specialists in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (as well as a total average score):

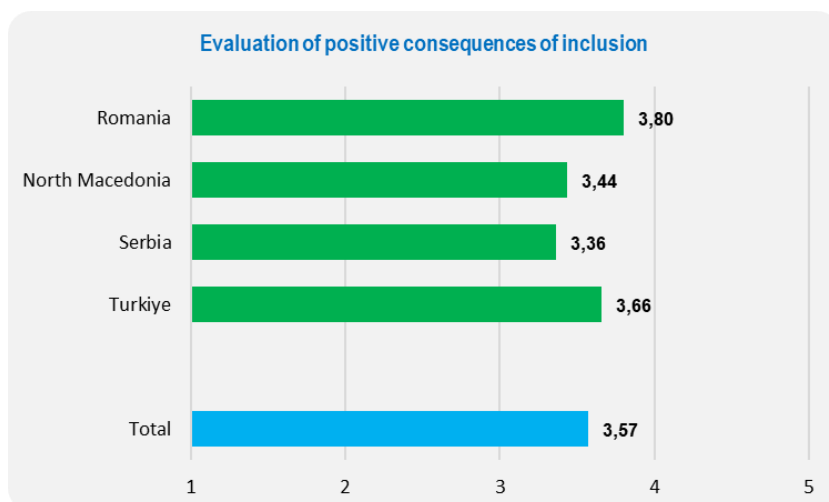


Chart no. 34: Specialists' evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by country

Specialists' perception of consequences of inclusion is significantly influenced by country ($F_{(3,447)}=10.58$, $p<0.001$), with Romanian specialists having a more positive perception compared with North Macedonian ($p<0.001$) and Serbian ($p<0.001$) and also Turkish specialists having a more positive perception compared with Serbian ($p=0.005$). There are no significant differences between Romanian and Turkish specialists ($p=0.619$), Turkish and North Macedonian ($p=0.071$) and North Macedonian and Serbia ($p=1.000$).

This result shows are somehow influenced by the specialists' evaluations of the level of educational inclusion in each country (as Romanian specialists were evaluating the educational inclusion better and now are evaluating its consequences also better than Serbian and North Macedonian). But there is also a major difference, as Turkish specialists, that evaluated the educational inclusion as being less present as in other countries, now evaluate the positive consequences of inclusion better than in Serbia or North Macedonia. This result shows that evaluation of educational inclusion and awareness of the positive consequences of educational inclusiveness are different things and specialists are able to see this difference.

Chart number 35 presents the average scores of each category of specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion.

Data in chart 35 suggest that the positive consequences of inclusion are more visible for the representatives of NGOs and less visible for representatives of local law forces, but, again, number of specialists in each category makes the comparisons less relevant. Still, the fact that NGO see the consequences of inclusion better than the educational institutions is worthy of a more detailed analysis in future research.

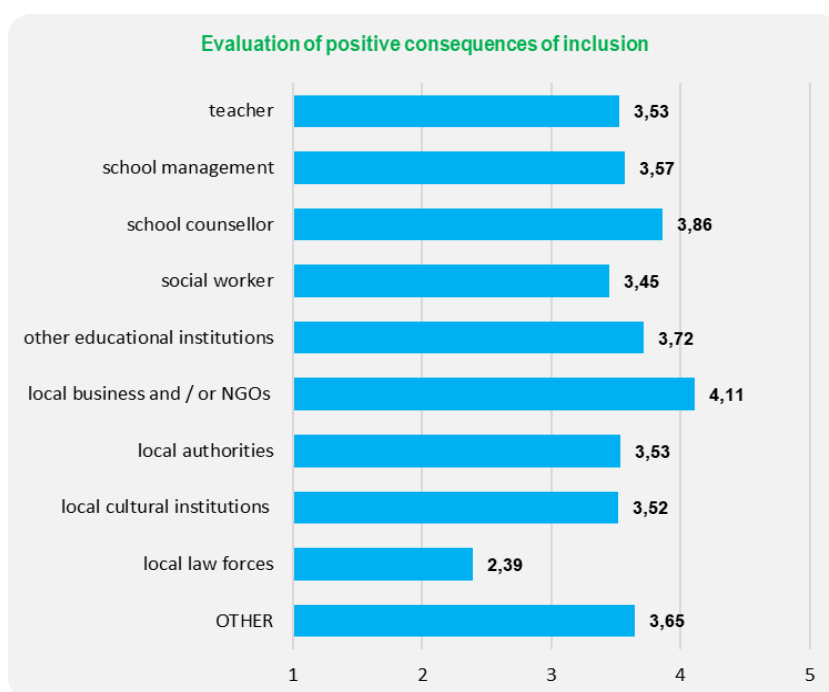


Chart no. 35: Specialists' evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by social role

Chart number 36 presents the average scores of specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion according to their experience in their educational role:

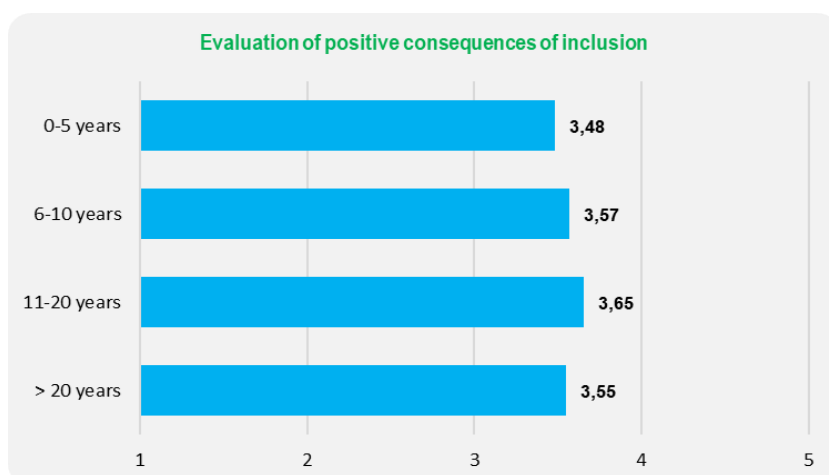


Chart no. 36: Specialists' evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion by experience

Statistical analysis show no significant influence of experience on the evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion ($F_{(3,447)}=1.10$, $p=0.347$).

3.5. Potential solutions – suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion

Chart number 37 presents the percentage of respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion (each respondent had the opportunity to choose three actions):

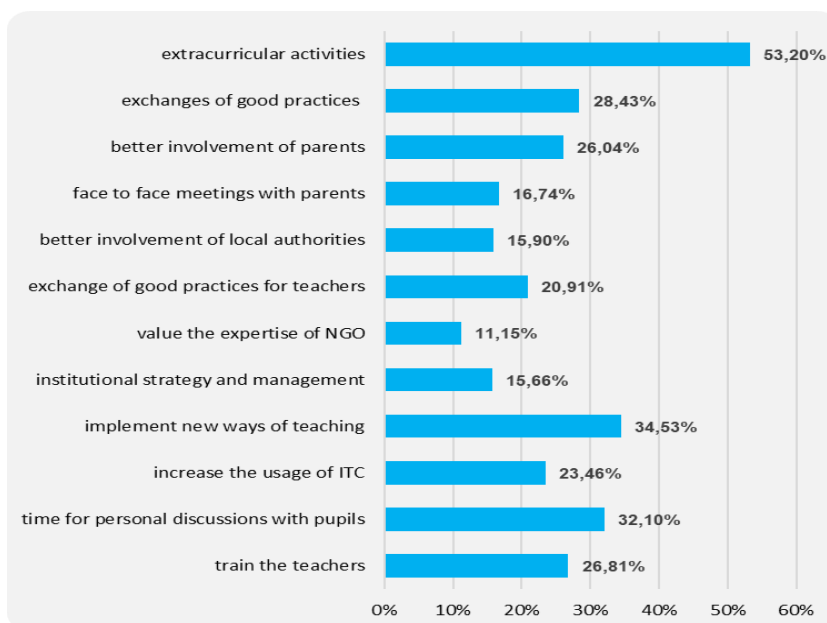


Chart no. 37: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion

Data in chart 37 show that the best action to enhance the educational inclusiveness is, by far, the implementation of extracurricular activities, with more than half of the respondents mentioning this solution as one of the three most effective ones. Other activities that might have positive effects on inclusion are the implementation of new ways of teaching with interactive activities, allowing more time for teachers to have personal discussions with kids, exchanges of good practices and a better involvement of parents.

In the focus groups, respondents mentioned very diverse things:

- teachers and parental trainings: “increasing teacher-parent-student cooperation, organising trainings for parents, providing in-service trainings for teachers”, “parents should co-operate more with the school”, “schools need to invest in training teachers on inclusive practices. This way, they can better understand and support the diverse needs of all students”;
- activities to improve social inclusion: “general informative public seminars should be organised for all citizens”, “training should be given to all stakeholders”;
- involving other experts: “there should be more co-operation with NGOs”;
- getting more resources: “it’s important to have more resources available, like materials to help students who require extra support in their learning”, “physical facilities should be improved. There should be more materials and activities”, “accessibility must be improved. Schools should ensure that their facilities and programs accommodate all students, including those with physical disabilities”
- celebrating diversity: “Schools should promote a culture of acceptance and respect by organizing activities that celebrate diversity, so students learn the value of inclusiveness from a young age”.

It is important to mention what the target of those activities to enhance educational inclusion should be according to our participants in the focus groups, as they define the ideal school as “a proactive educational environment where all stakeholders of education (students, teachers, administrators, parents, etc.) can tell their problems within the institution and find solutions together, an environment where everyone is valued and trusts each other”, “schools with all opportunities for all students, where all stakeholders feel happy and peaceful, where activities are organized for all student”, “schools that internalised the universal values and carry out activities to raise good people”, “a safe place where children will be happy and accepted, where the teacher is a leader, and the students are researchers in discovering knowledge, providing conditions for individual development and advancement”.

Chart number 38 presents the percentage of respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion, segregated for pupils, parents and specialists:

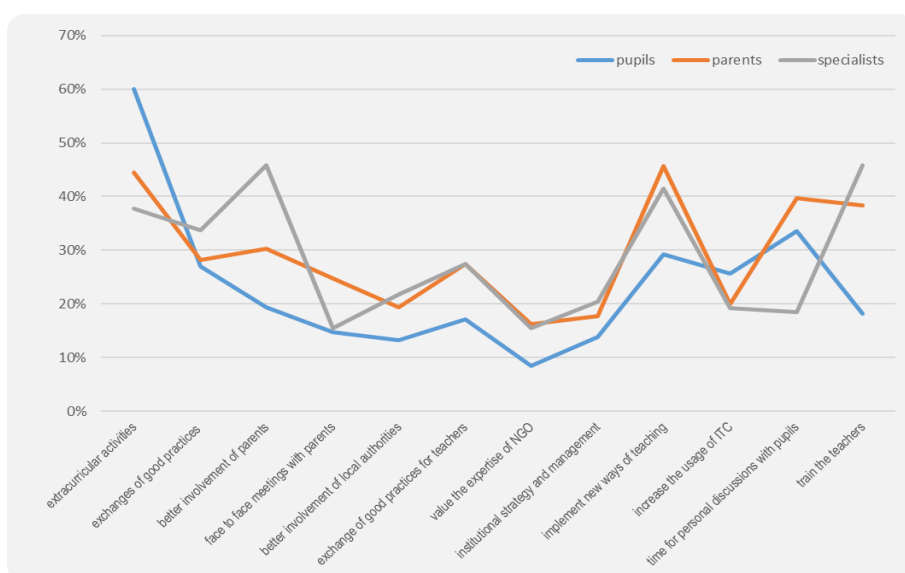


Chart no. 38: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion by status

Statistical analysis shows significant differences among the three educational actors for all 12 analysed dimensions (with p varying from $p < 0.001$ to $p = 0.021$), with the general tendency that parents agreeing more with most of the actions and pupils agreeing less with most of them.

Few notable exceptions are present:

- pupils evaluate most of the actions in a more reserved way, but have the best evaluation of having more extracurricular activities as a solution to enhance inclusiveness;
- specialists evaluate most of the actions in a more positive way, but have the most reserved evaluation on having more time for personal discussions teachers - pupils;
- parents evaluate most of the actions in a moderate way, but have the most positive evaluation of having more time for personal discussions between teachers and pupils;

On another perspective, we could observe that the most important actions to promote educational inclusiveness for each category of respondents are (in descending order of frequency of response):

- for pupils: more extracurricular activities (by far the most selected action), more time for personal discussion teachers-pupils, new ways of teaching – interactive activities and exchange of good practices with other schools.

- for parents: new ways of teaching – interactive activities, more extracurricular activities, more time for personal discussion teachers-pupils and train the teachers;
- for specialists: better involvement of parents, train the teachers, new ways of teaching – interactive activities and more extracurricular activities.

One could observe that extracurricular activities are important for all categories of educational actors, but much more important for pupils compared with teachers; also, allowing more time for teachers to have personal discussions with pupils is important for pupils and parents, not so important for teachers themselves, specialists considering more important the involvement of parents.

Chart number 39 presents the percentage of respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion, segregated for respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye:

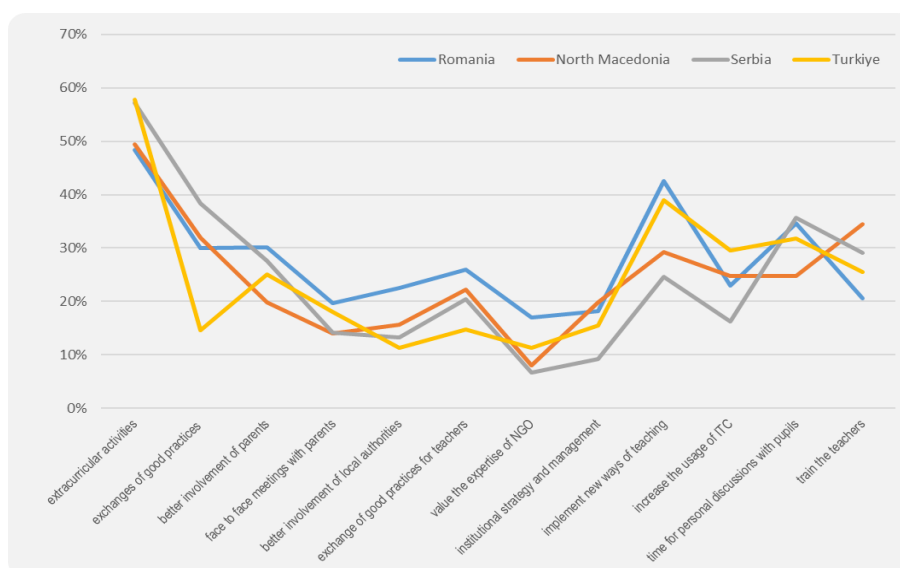


Chart no. 39: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion by country

Statistical analysis shows significant differences among the four countries for all 12 analysed dimensions (with $p < 0.001$ in all cases), with the general tendency of Romanian respondents making the most positive evaluations and Serbian respondents making the most reserved ones.

As general observations, one could mention that for all four countries, the most selected potential action to enhance educational inclusion is having more extracurricular activities.

Other cross-country differences are related to:

- Turkish participants having the most reserved evaluation of the potential of exchanges of good practices among schools or teachers to enhance inclusion (compared with the other 3 countries);
- Romanian participants having the most positive evaluation of the potential of NGOs expertise to enhance educational inclusiveness (compared with the other 3 countries);
- Serbian participants valuing less the importance of using ITC to enhance educational inclusion (compared with the other 3 countries);
- Romanian participants having less confidence in the role of teachers training to promote educational inclusion.

3.6. Perception of importance and necessity of educational inclusion

Chart no. 40 presents the percentage of each answer regarding the perceived importance of educational inclusion.

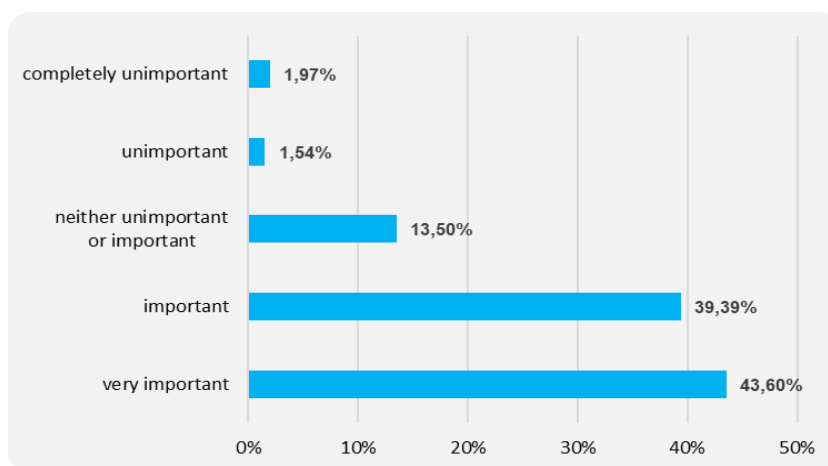


Chart no. 40: Perceived importance of educational inclusiveness

The educational inclusiveness is perceived as important or very important by the vast majority of our respondents (around 85%), with only around 3-4% of respondents

considering that is unimportant or completely unimportant. This result shows that the social perception of educational inclusion is positive, confirming the effect of diverse strategies implemented in each country to promote the role of educational inclusion in the development of quality of education.

The importance of inclusiveness is linked, based on the responses in the focus groups, to “every child deserving a chance to learn and grow, no matter their background” and “every student should understand, listen and empathise with each other”, based on the facts that “it’s not just a trend; it’s essential. When kids learn together, they understand and appreciate each other more”, “inclusiveness helps create a supportive environment. Kids learn valuable life skills, like empathy and teamwork” and “it’s needed because all children have different needs. Schools should adapt to help everyone succeed, not just a select few”. One conclusion could be that “inclusiveness is important because it provides the same rights, acceptance, equal conditions for learning and advancement, but also obligations in one community”.

Chart no. 41 presents the average evaluations done by pupils, parents and teachers on the importance of educational inclusion.

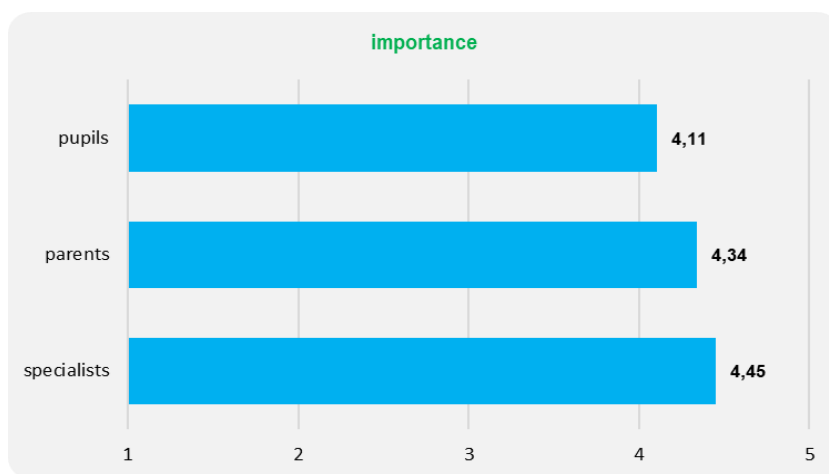


Chart no. 41: Perceived importance of educational inclusiveness by status

There is a significant influence of status on the evaluation of the importance of educational inclusion ($F_{(2,2589)}=34.27$, $p<0.001$). Educational inclusiveness is significantly more important for parents compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and for specialists

compared with pupils ($p<0.001$), with no significant difference between parent and specialists ($p=0.136$).

Chart no. 42 presents the average evaluations done on the importance of educational inclusion by respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye.



Chart no. 42: Perceived importance of educational inclusiveness by country

Statistical analysis shows that the importance of educational inclusiveness is perceived differently from country to country ($F_{(3,2588)}=16.08$, $p<0.001$). Comparing the countries two by two, the results show that educational inclusiveness is perceived as more important in Romania compared with North Macedonia ($p<0.001$), Serbia ($p<0.001$) and Türkiye ($p<0.001$), without significant differences among those three countries.

Chart no. 43 presents the percentage of each answer regarding the perceived necessity of educational inclusion.

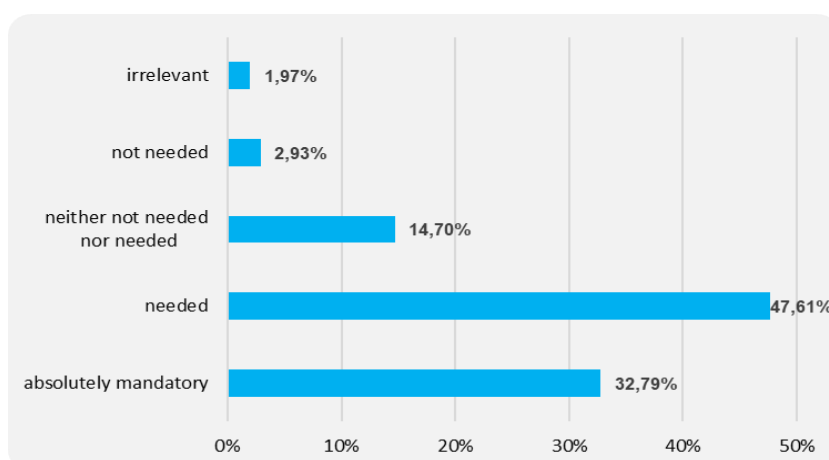


Chart no. 43: Perceived necessity of educational inclusiveness

The educational inclusiveness is perceived as needed or absolutely mandatory by the vast majority of respondents (approx. 80%), with only about 4-5% of the respondents considering that educational inclusion is not needed or irrelevant. These results confirm the positive social perception of educational inclusiveness, as it is considered necessary for the quality of education by all educational actors (pupils, parents, specialists).

Chart no. 44 presents the average evaluations done by pupils, parents and teachers on the necessity of educational inclusion.

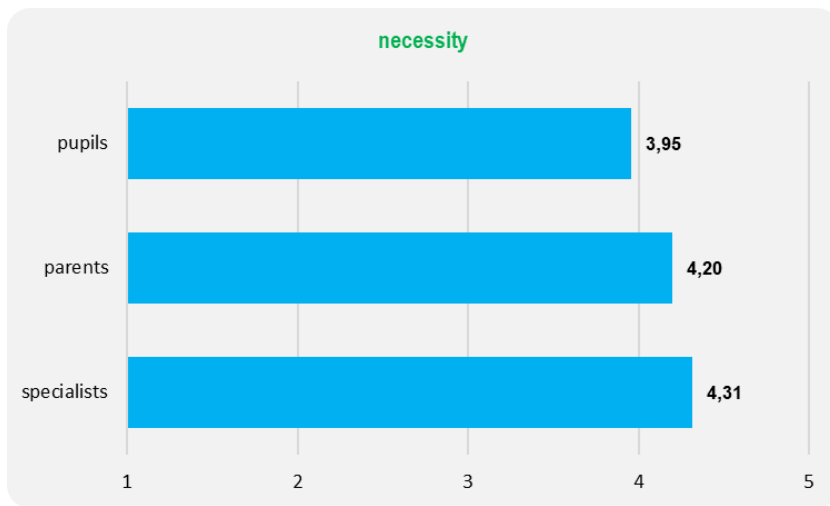


Chart no. 44: Perceived necessity of educational inclusiveness by status

There is a significant influence of status on the evaluation of the necessity of educational inclusion ($F_{(2,2589)}=38.55$, $p<0.001$). Educational inclusiveness is significantly more needed for parents compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and for specialists compared with pupils ($p<0.001$), with no significant difference between parent and specialists ($p=0.119$).

Chart no. 45 presents the average evaluations done on the necessity of educational inclusion by respondents in Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye.

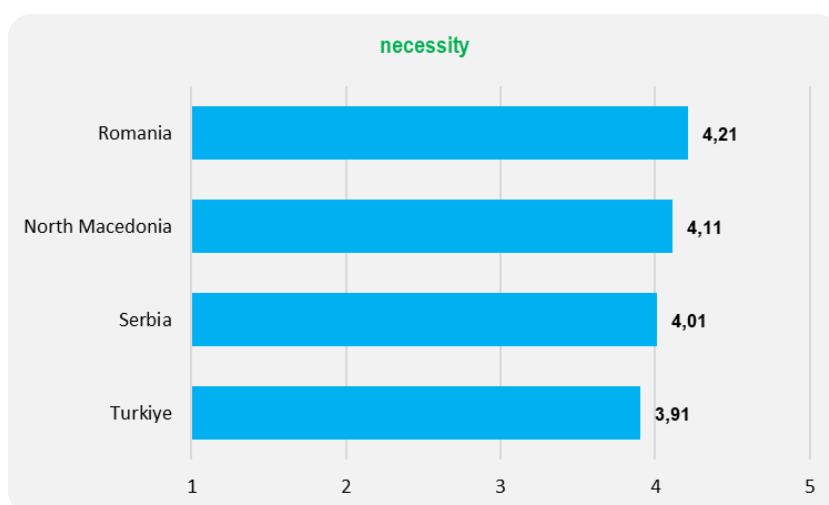


Chart no. 45: Perceived necessity of educational inclusiveness by country

Statistical analysis shows that the necessity of educational inclusiveness is perceived differently from country to country ($F_{(3,2588)}=16.47$, $p<0.001$). Comparing the countries two by two, the results show that the educational inclusiveness is perceived as more needed in Romania and North Macedonia (no differences between them, $p=0.245$) compared with Serbia and Türkiye (no differences between them, $p=0.181$).

There is a strong connection between the perception of the two aspects regarding the educational inclusiveness, importance and necessity (Pearson correlation $r=0.67$, $p<0.001$), and this correlation is positive and significant for all categories of educational actors (pupils ($r=0.64$; $p<0.001$), parents ($r=0.73$; $p<0.001$) and teachers ($r=0.68$; $p<0.001$)).

4. Country report – Romania

Chart number 46 presents the average scores of Romanian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

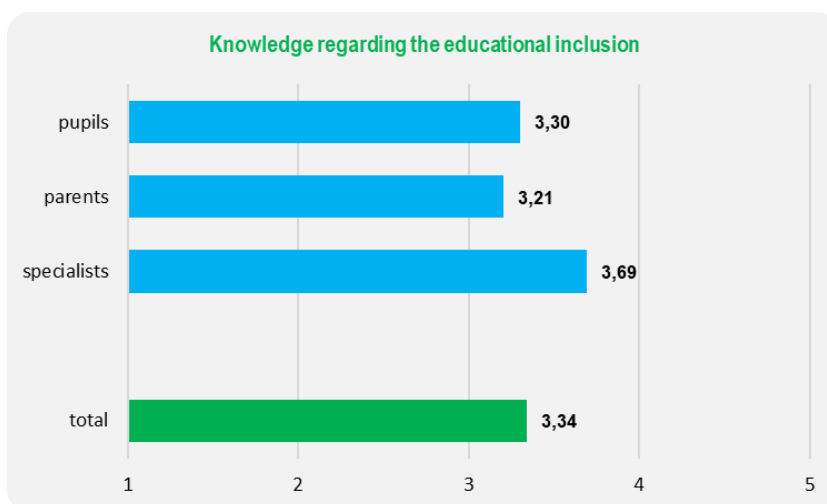


Chart no. 46: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion in Romania by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,749)}=40.28$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for specialists compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and compared with parents ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between pupils and parents ($p=0.099$).

Chart number 47 presents the average scores of Romanian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

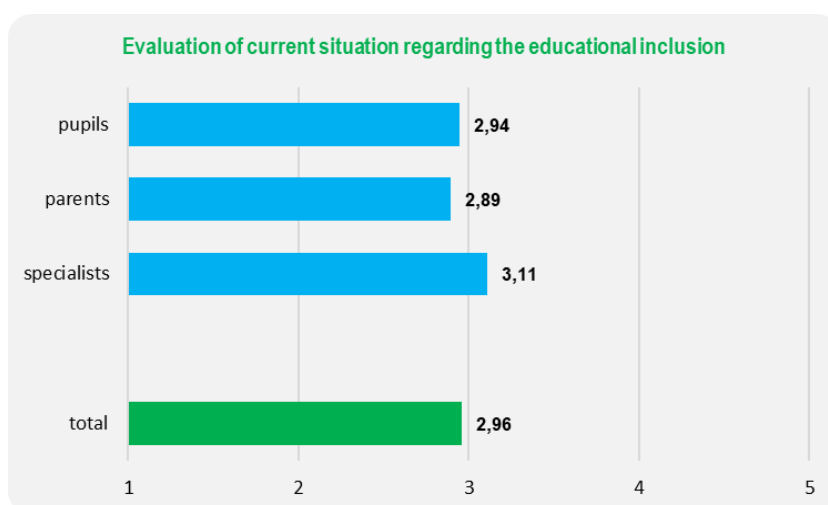


Chart no. 47: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion in Romania by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,749)}=4.02$; $p=0.018$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for specialists compared with pupils ($p=0.042$) and compared with parents ($p=0.021$), with no significant differences between pupils and parents ($p=1.000$).

Chart number 48 presents the average scores of Romanian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion (as well as a total average score):

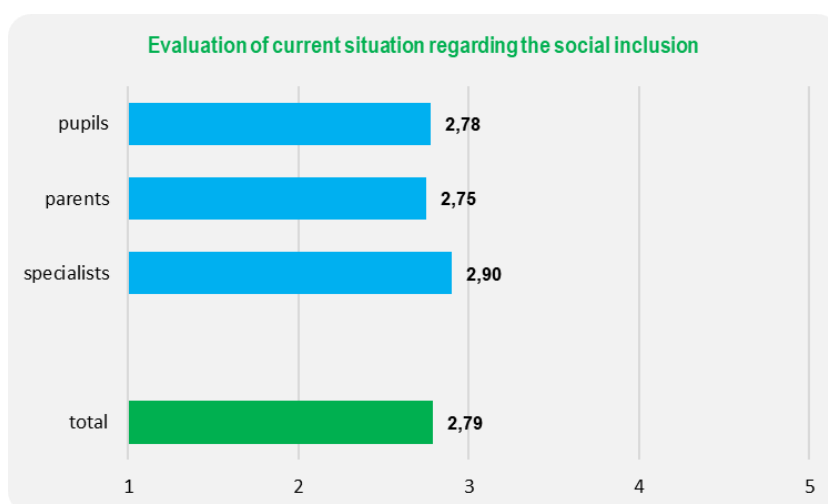


Chart no. 48: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion in Romania by status

Statistical analysis show no significant differences among the three categories of respondents regarding their evaluation of social inclusion in Romania ($F_{(2,749)}=2.34$; $p=0.097$).

Chart number 49 presents the average scores of Romanian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (as well as a total average score):

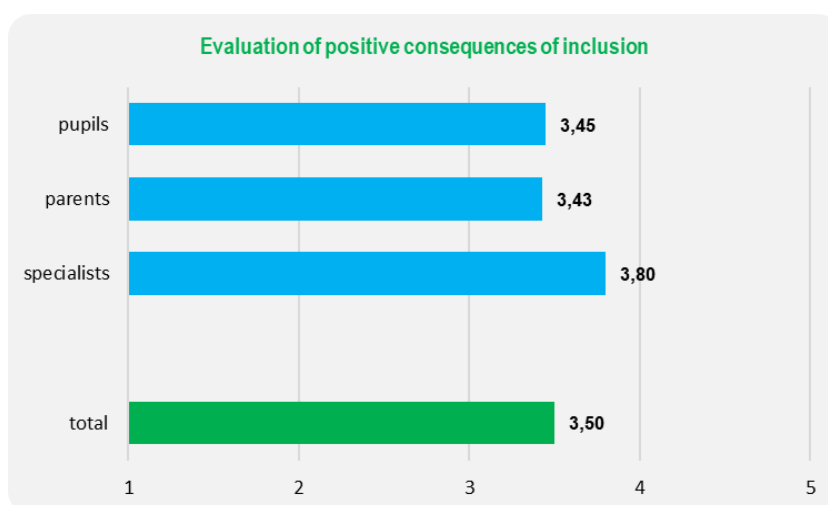


Chart no. 49: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion in Romania by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,749)}=22.28$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for specialists compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and compared with parents ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between pupils and parents ($p=1.000$).

Chart number 50 presents the percentage of Romanian respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion:

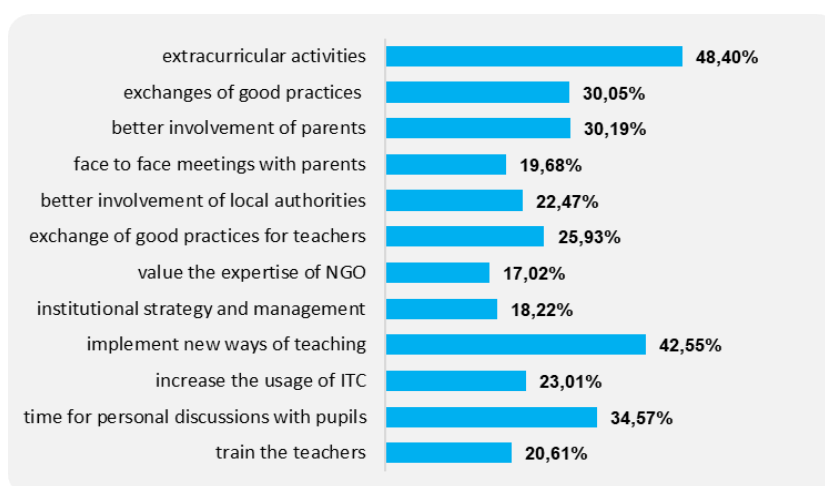


Chart no. 50: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in Romania

As visible in the chart, in Romania, the most effective ways to enhance the educational inclusiveness are: extracurricular activities, implement new ways of teaching – interactive activities, allowing more time for teachers to have personal discussions with pupils.

Chart number 51 presents the percentage of Romanian respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion, segregated for pupils, parents and specialists:

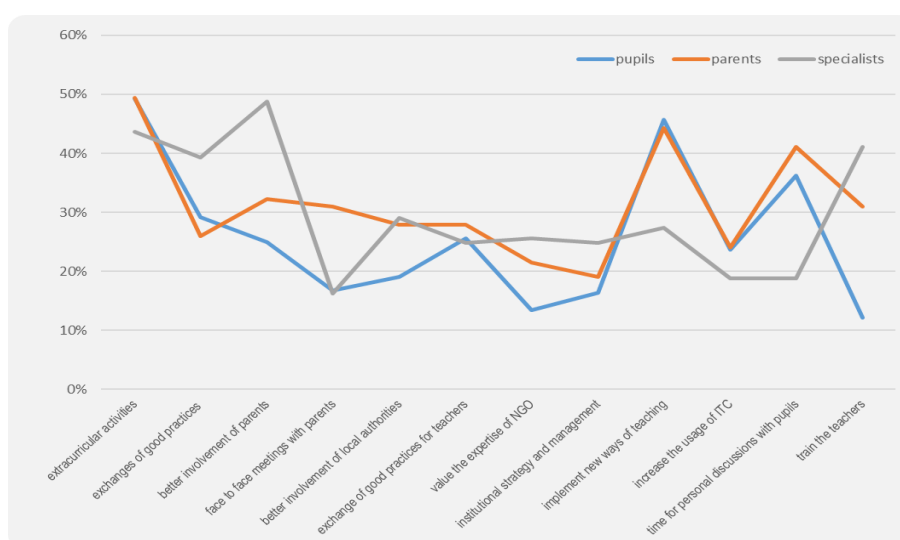


Chart no. 51: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in Romania by status

Analysing each category of respondent individually, one could observe that, in Romania, the perceived most important actions to enhance educational inclusiveness are:

- for pupils: extracurricular activities, new ways of teaching – interactive methods, time for personal discussions teachers-pupils, exchange of good practices among schools,
- for parents: extracurricular activities, new ways of teaching – interactive methods, time for personal discussions teachers-pupils, involving parents;
- for specialists: involving parents, extracurricular activities, train the teachers, exchange of good practices among schools.

Analysing in a comparative manner the responses of the three educational actors, one could observe that, in Romania, regarding the potential solutions to increase the educational inclusiveness:

- pupils' hierarchy is very similar with parents' hierarchy, with the first three options being identical: extracurricular activities, interactive methods, personal discussions;
- specialists' first choice is related to parents, more or less passing the responsibility to the parents that should be more involved (in their opinion);
- general consensus on extracurricular activities as one of the best actions to enhance inclusiveness in Romanian schools.

5. Country report – North Macedonia

Chart number 52 presents the average scores of North Macedonian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

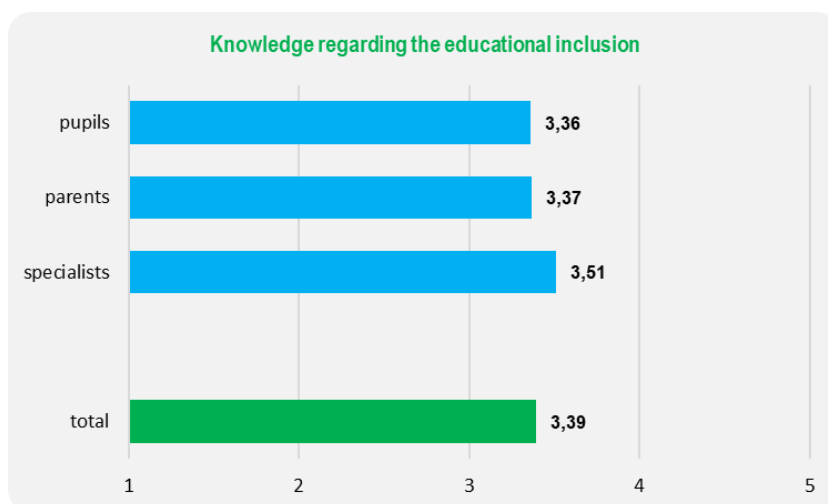


Chart no. 52: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion in North Macedonia by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,533)}=3.85$; $p=0.022$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for specialists compared with pupils ($p=0.019$), with no significant differences between specialists and parents ($p=0.193$) and between pupils and parents ($p=1.000$).

Chart number 53 presents the average scores of North Macedonian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

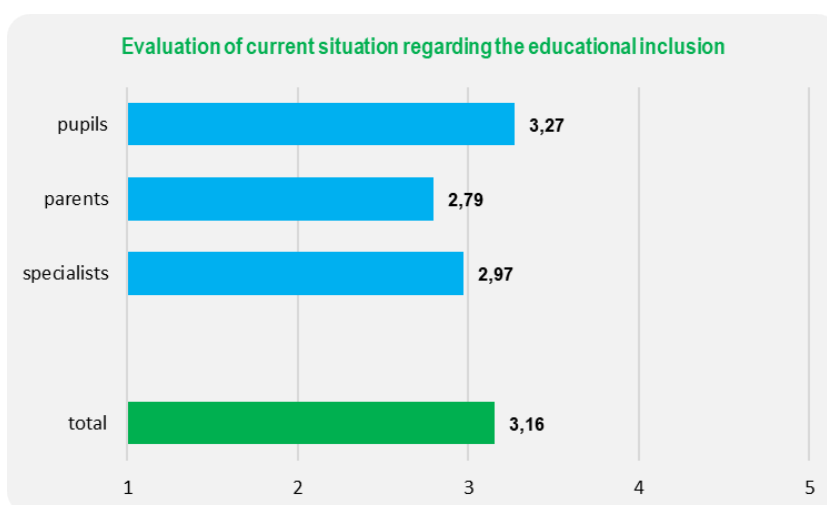


Chart no. 53: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion in North Macedonia by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,533)}=28.26$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p<0.001$) and compared with specialists ($p<0.001$) with no significant differences between specialists and parents ($p=0.120$).

Chart number 54 presents the average scores of North Macedonian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion:

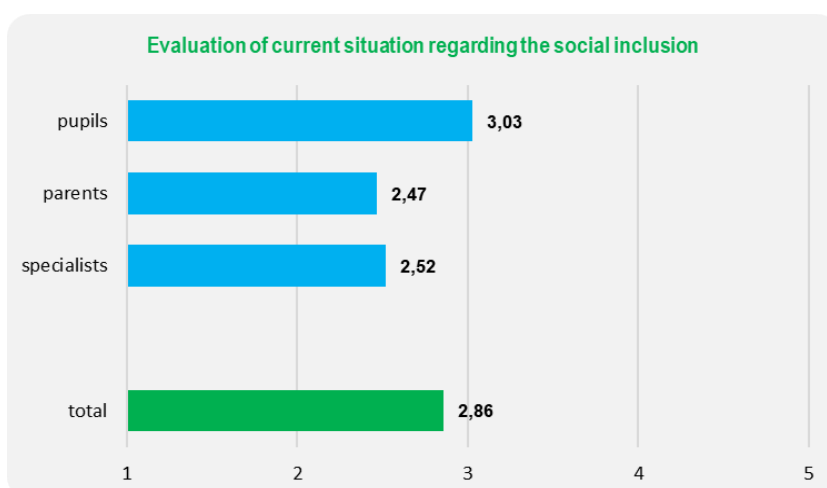


Chart no. 54: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion in North Macedonia by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,533)}=62.37$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p<0.001$) and compared with specialists ($p<0.001$) with no significant differences between specialists and parents ($p=1.000$).

Chart number 55 presents the average scores of North Macedonian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion (as well as a total average score):

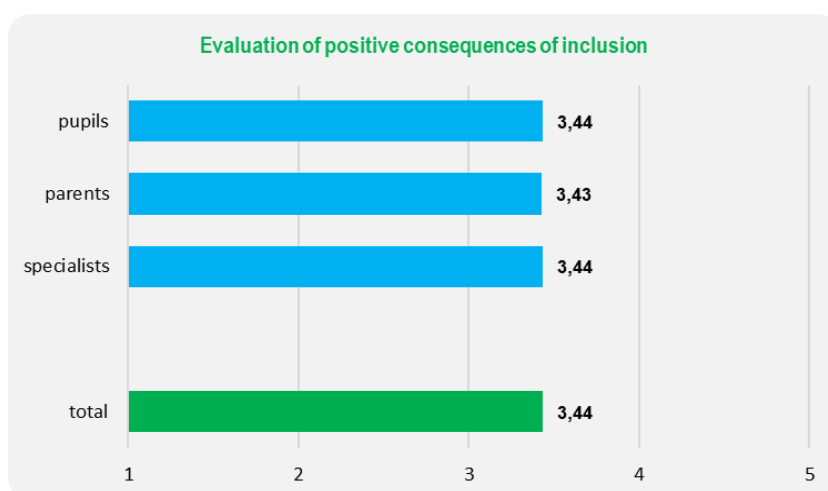


Chart no. 55: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion in North Macedonia by status

Statistical analysis show no significant differences among the three categories of respondents regarding their evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion in North Macedonia ($F_{(2,533)}=0.01$; $p=0.988$).

Chart number 56 presents the percentage of North Macedonian respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion:

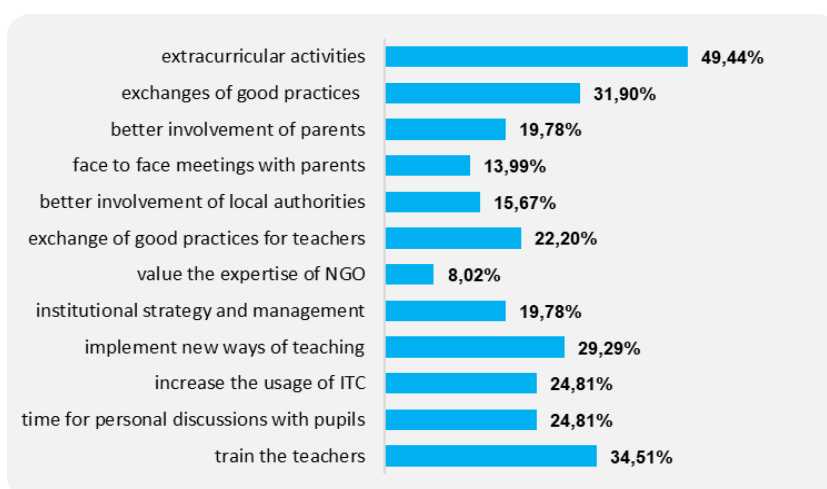


Chart no. 56: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in North Macedonia

As visible in the chart, in North Macedonia, the most effective ways to enhance the educational inclusiveness are: extracurricular activities, train the teachers and exchange of good practices.

Chart number 57 presents the percentage of North Macedonian respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion, segregated for pupils, parents and specialists:

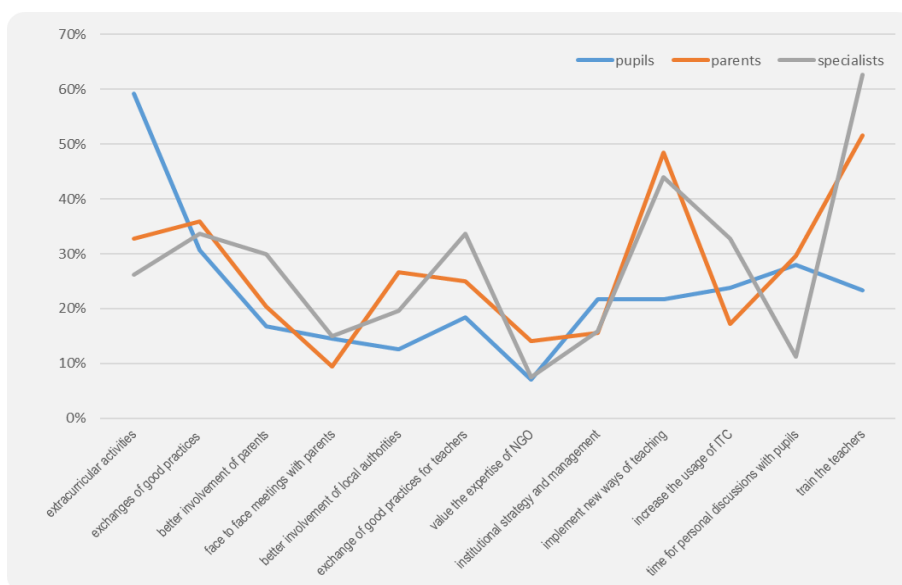


Chart no. 57: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in North Macedonia by status

Analysing each category of respondent individually, one could observe that, in North Macedonia, the perceived most important actions to enhance educational inclusiveness are:

- for pupils: extracurricular activities, exchange of good practices among schools, time for personal discussions teachers – pupils, using digital tools and resources;
- for parents: train the teachers, new ways of teaching – interactive methods, exchange of good practices among schools, extracurricular activities;
- for specialists: train the teachers, new ways of teaching – interactive methods, exchange of good practices among schools, exchange of good practices among teachers;

Analysing in a comparative manner the responses of the three educational actors, one could observe that, in North Macedonia, regarding the potential solutions to increase the educational inclusiveness:

- specialists' hierarchy is very similar with parents' hierarchy, with the first three options being identical: teachers training, interactive methods, exchange of good practices among schools;
- extracurricular activities are most important for pupils, important for parents and less important for specialists;
- involving schools in exchanges of good practices are important for all educational actors.

6. Country report – Serbia

Chart number 58 presents the average scores of Serbian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

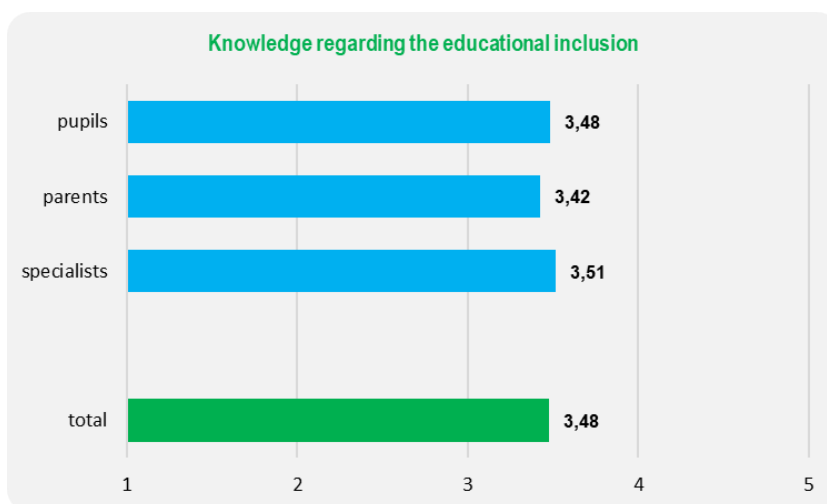


Chart no. 58: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion in Serbia by status

Statistical analysis show no significant differences among the three categories of respondents regarding their knowledge regarding educational inclusion in Serbia ($F(2,625)=0.84$; $p=0.432$).

Chart number 59 presents the average scores of Serbian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

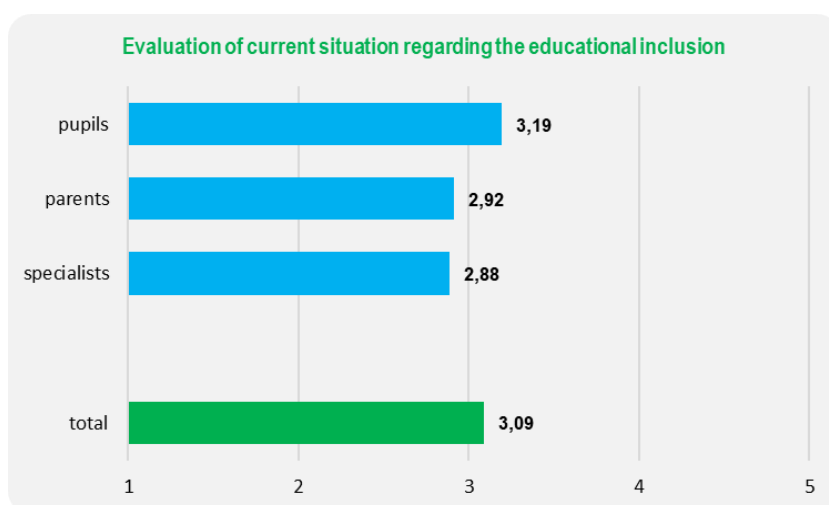


Chart no. 59: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion in Serbia by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,625)}=16.14$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p<0.001$) and compared with specialists ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between specialists and parents ($p=1.000$).

Chart number 60 presents the average scores of Serbian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion:

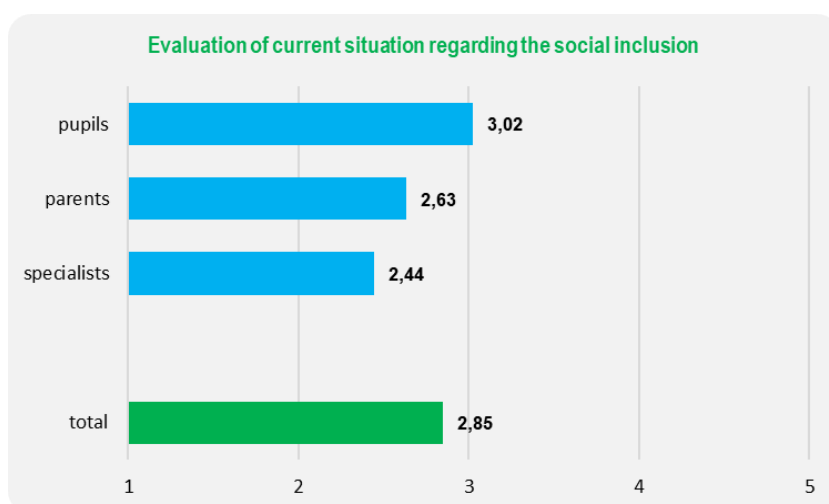


Chart no. 60: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion in Serbia by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,625)}=65.78$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p<0.001$) and compared with specialists ($p<0.001$), and for the parents compared with the specialists ($p=0.021$).

Chart number 61 presents the average scores of Serbian pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion:

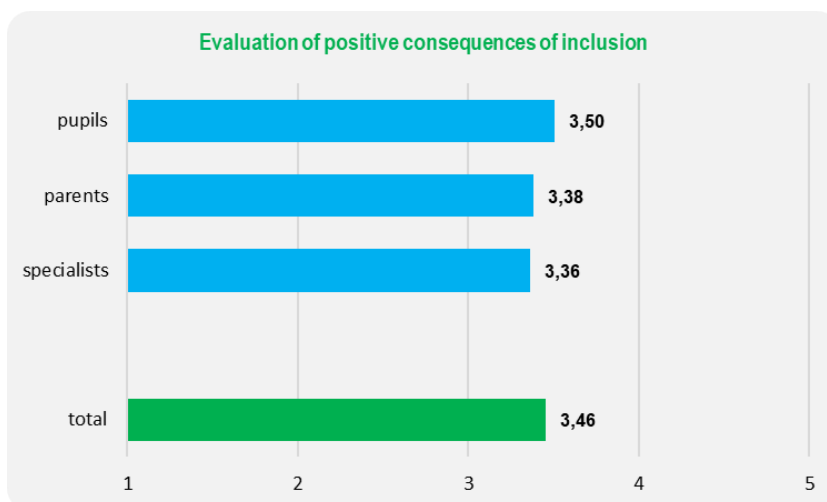


Chart no. 61: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion in Serbia by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,625)}=4.69$; $p=0.01$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with specialists ($p=0.034$), with no significant differences between pupils and parents ($p=0.078$) and between specialists and parents ($p=1.000$).

Chart number 62 presents the percentage of Serbian respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion:

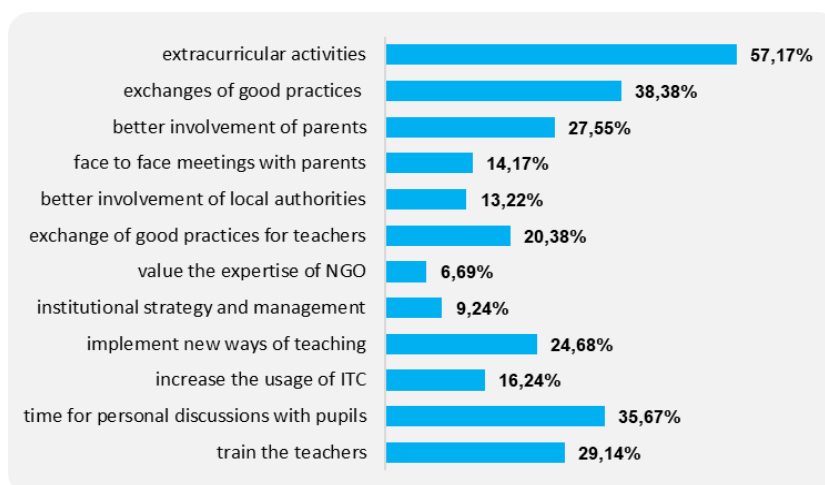


Chart no. 62: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in Serbia

As visible in the chart, in Serbia, the most effective ways to enhance the educational inclusiveness are: extracurricular activities, exchange of good practices, allowing more time for teachers to have personal discussions with pupils.

Chart number 63 presents the percentage of Serbian respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion, segregated for pupils, parents and specialists:

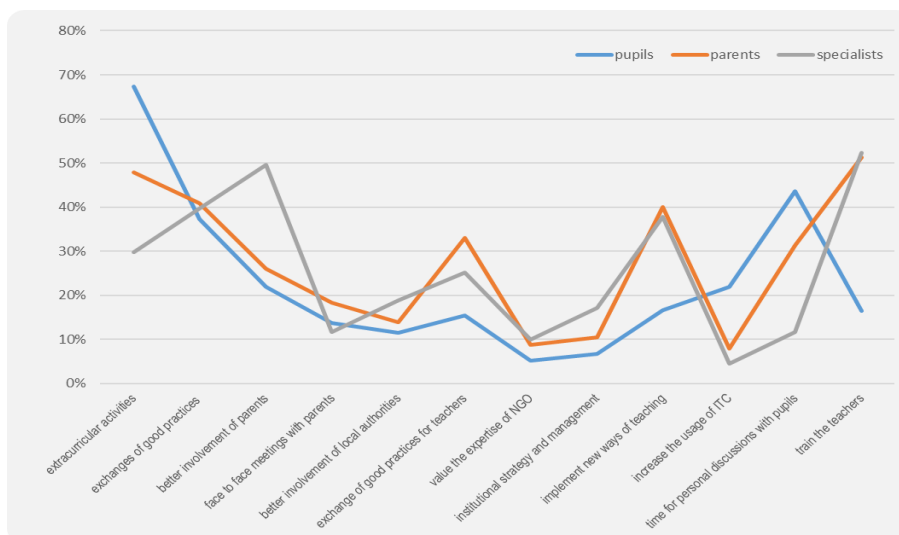


Chart no. 63: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in Serbia by status

Analysing each category of respondent individually, one could observe that, in Serbia, the perceived most important actions to enhance educational inclusiveness are:

- for pupils: extracurricular activities, time for personal discussions teachers – pupils, exchange of good practices among schools;
- for parents: train the teachers, extracurricular activities, exchange of good practices among schools, new ways of teaching – interactive methods;
- for specialists: train the teachers, involving the parents, exchange of good practices among schools, new ways of teaching – interactive methods.

Analysing in a comparative manner the responses of the three educational actors, one could observe that, in Serbia, regarding the potential solutions to increase the educational inclusiveness:

- specialists' hierarchy is very similar with parents' hierarchy, with 3 of 4 main choices being identical: teachers training, exchange of good practices, interactive methods;
- pupils' hierarchy is very different, valuing extracurricular activities, personal discussions, exchanges of good practices;
- exchange of good practices among schools is the only option present in the evaluations done by all three educational actors.

7. Country report – Türkiye

Chart number 64 presents the average scores of Turkish pupils, parents and specialists on the scale on the scale that evaluates the knowledge regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

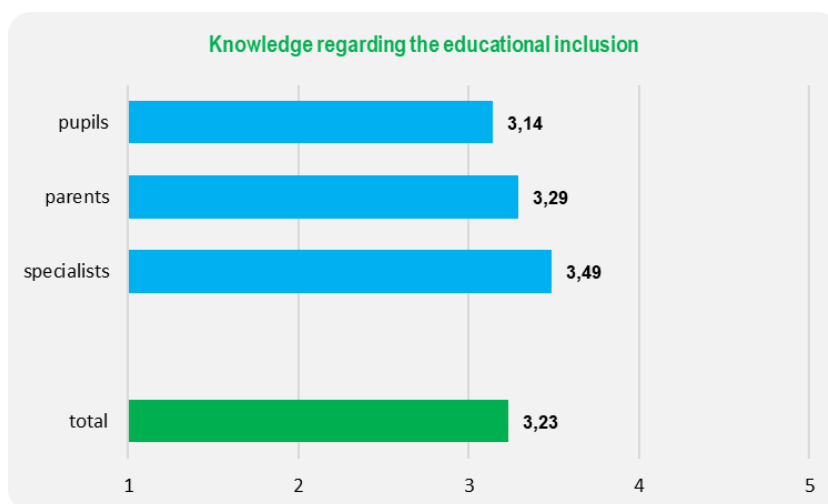


Chart no. 64: Knowledge regarding the educational inclusion in Türkiye by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,673)}=26.63$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for specialists compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and compared with parents ($p=0.002$), and for parents compared with pupils ($p=0.002$).

Chart number 65 presents the average scores of Turkish pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the educational inclusion (as well as a total average score):

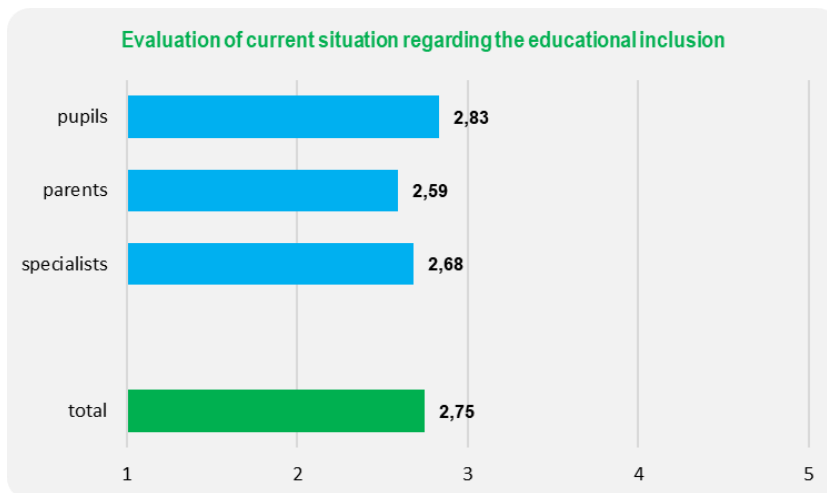


Chart no. 65: Evaluation of current situation regarding the educational inclusion in Türkiye by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,673)}=8.08$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between pupils and specialists ($p=0.102$), and between parents and specialists ($p=0.783$).

Chart number 66 presents the average scores of Turkish pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the current situation regarding the social inclusion:

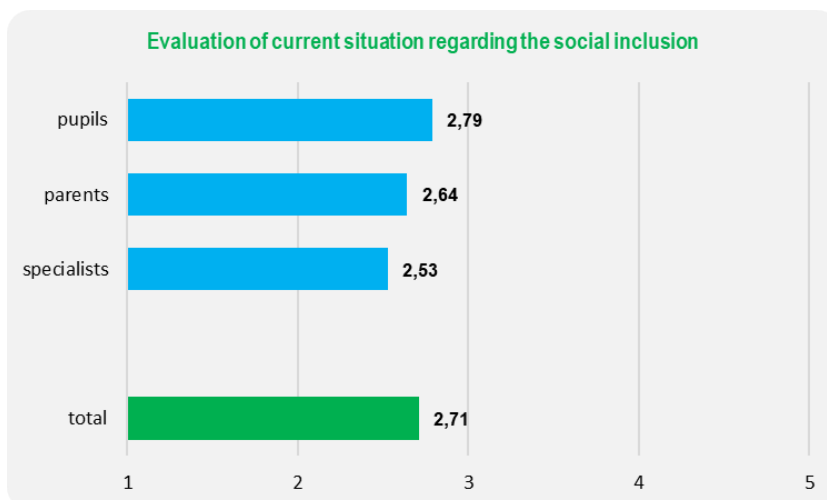


Chart no. 66: Evaluation of current situation regarding the social inclusion in Türkiye by status

Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,673)}=11.12$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for pupils compared with parents ($p=0.02$) and compared with specialists ($p<0.001$), with no significant differences between parents and specialists ($p=0.280$).

Chart number 67 presents the average scores of Turkish pupils, parents and specialists on the scale that evaluates the perception of the positive consequences of inclusion:

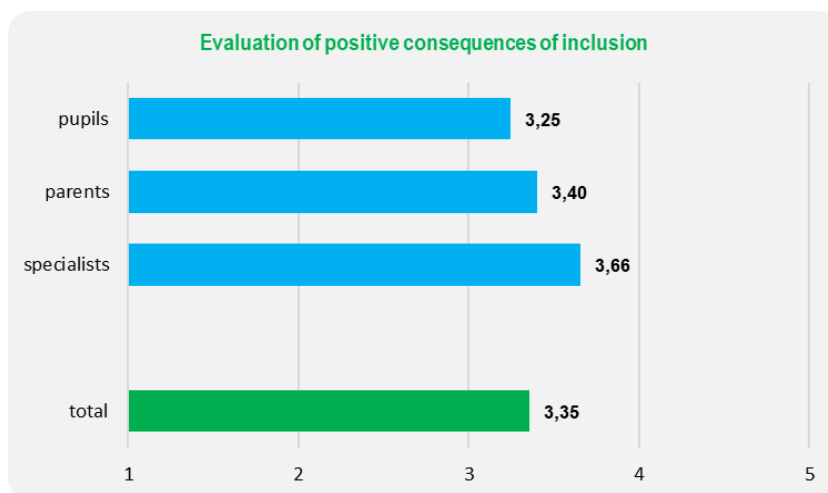


Chart no. 67: Evaluation of positive consequences of inclusion in Türkiye by status

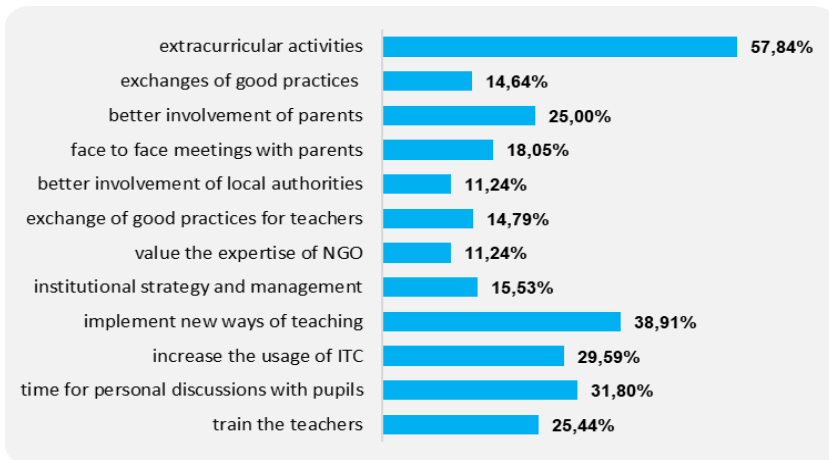
Statistical analysis show that there are significant differences among the evaluations done by the three categories of respondents ($F_{(2,673)}=17.79$; $p<0.001$), with Bonferroni post hoc tests showing that the scores are higher for specialists compared with pupils ($p<0.001$) and compared with parents ($p=0.006$), and also for parents compared with pupils ($p=0.039$).

Chart number 68 presents the percentage of Turkish respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion:

Chart no. 68: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in Türkiye

As visible in the chart, in Türkiye, the most effective ways to enhance the educational inclusiveness are: extracurricular activities, implement new ways of teaching –

interactive activities, allowing more time for teachers to have personal discussions with



pupils.

Chart number 69 presents the percentage of Turkish respondents that selected each potential action as one of the three most important solutions to enhance the educational inclusion, segregated for pupils, parents and specialists:

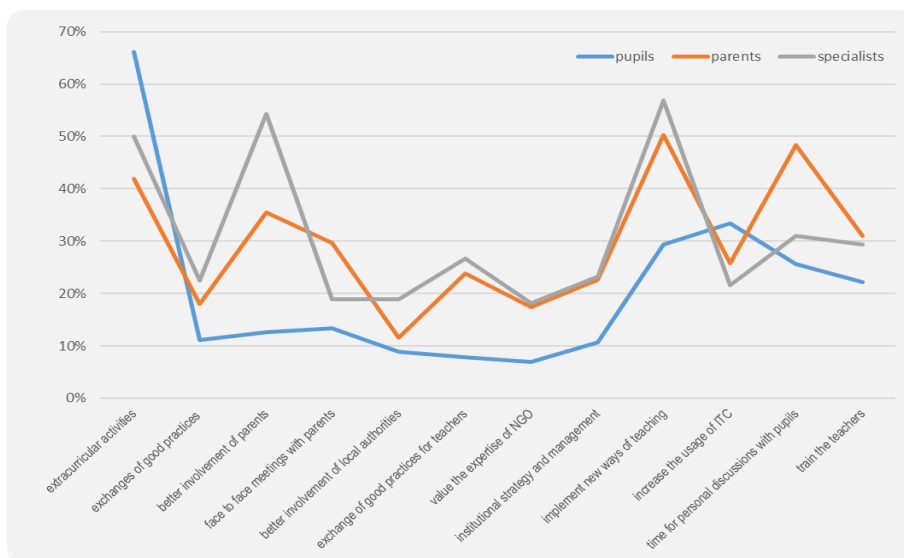


Chart no. 69: Suggested actions to enhance the educational inclusion in Türkiye by status

Analysing each category of respondent individually, one could observe that, in Türkiye, the perceived most important actions to enhance educational inclusiveness are:

- for pupils: extracurricular activities, using of digital tools and resources, new ways of teaching – interactive methods, time for personal discussions teachers – pupils;

- for parents: new ways of teaching – interactive methods, time for personal discussions teachers – pupils, extracurricular activities, involving parents;
- for specialists: new ways of teaching – interactive methods, involving parents, extracurricular activities, time for personal discussions teachers – pupils.

Analysing in a comparative manner the responses of the three educational actors, one could observe that, in Türkiye, regarding the potential solutions to increase the educational inclusiveness:

- pupils, parents and teachers have relatively similar hierarchies, with 3 of 4 main options being identical (even if in different order): interactive methods, extracurricular activities and personal discussion;
- parental involvement is more important for specialists and parents compared with pupils;
- using digital tools and resources is only important for pupils, not for parents and specialists.

8. Discussion and conclusions

The educational inclusiveness is perceived by most of the educational actors as being an important and necessary aspect of a good quality education. The importance and necessity of educational inclusiveness are more obvious for adults (parents and teachers) than for pupils, and more obvious in Romania and less obvious in Türkiye.

Educational actors (pupils, parents, teachers) have an average level of knowledge regarding the educational inclusiveness, even if most of them have the general impression of a deeper understanding of this concept. As expected, the knowledge about inclusion is significantly higher for specialists compared with pupils and parents, but still even specialist lack a lot of important information about this concept. All educational actors have the general ideas about inclusiveness, such as inclusiveness means that all children should feel welcomed, secured and valued, it means that all children are part of the educational activities and it involves adequate support for all children to learn with their peers. Still, the social perception of inclusion needs a lot of updates, as many of the educational actors still think that inclusion means putting all kids in mainstream education, even if adequate support is not possible for those who need it, that it means putting kinds with special educational needs in special classes in mainstream schools or even in specials schools; also, many educational actors, even specialists, are not aware that inclusiveness refers to all children, not only the ones with special educational needs.

Putting that information together one could realise that the efforts done in the past decades in promoting educational inclusiveness are yet to reach their goals; if many people, including specialists, still consider that inclusion is just about putting a special child in mainstream education without providing any additional or adequate support to him, it's clear that the educational systems still have a lot of work and additional actions need to be takes, maybe starting with the teachers. According to our data, there are two things that will make this systemic intervention harder. On the one hand, almost 20% of the respondents are not sure about the importance and necessity of educational inclusiveness (or even not agree to those), and they will be almost impossible to motivate to fully understand inclusiveness and apply its principles in education. On the other hand, educational actors, especially teachers, are convinced they fully understand the concept of educational inclusiveness (in the focus groups, nobody mentioned that they would need more information, all answered that the

concept is very well known in education), and also this makes learning more difficult, as nobody is easy to motivate to learn about a topic considered very well known.

On this premises, one could also stress out that the intervention might be a little more difficult in Türkiye compared with Romania, North Macedonia and Serbia, as both the importance and necessity of inclusiveness are less obvious for the Turkish participants; still, this might be just a temporary situation explained by the social and cultural context influenced by the very large number of migrants and refugees in this country, especially Syrians, and lack of resources making the general population more worried about providing food and shelter so educational inclusiveness is not a real priority.

The social perception of educational inclusiveness is rather moderate, with most respondents evaluating it as average, with significant differences between the perception of the three categories of educational actors involved in our research. Educational inclusiveness is perceived in the most positive way by the pupils, the specialists are a little more reserved while the parents are the most critical and evaluate the educational inclusiveness in the most negative way (compared with pupils and specialists). On the one hand, this aspect is important for policy makers as it suggests that it will be much difficult to involve pupils to activities focusing on educational inclusion, as they consider that this might already be present. On the other hand, our data suggests that policy makers focusing on inclusion should really rely on parents to assist them, their rather negative perception of the actual level of educational inclusiveness making them more likely to get involved and more motivated to participate to activities or projects to enhance educational inclusiveness.

Cross country analysis showed that the educational inclusiveness is perceived as better in Serbia and North Macedonia, slightly less present in Romania and even less present in Türkiye; we could understand the lower level of educational inclusiveness in Türkiye by thinking to the large number of migrants yet to be integrated and to the large number of pupils in Turkish classes, that could go as far as 40 or even more (big differences between schools being present). In theory, the acceptance of a lower level of inclusiveness in Turkish schools should facilitate systemic projects for developing this aspect of education, but, unfortunately, such systemic actions could be very difficult to implement while the general context is not changing and the number of refugees is still increasing, putting more and more pressure on the limited resources that Türkiye has.

Social inclusion is perceived in a rather moderately negative way, with most respondents evaluating it as average, but enough evaluating it as low or very low. Social inclusiveness is evaluated as being significantly lower than educational inclusiveness, suggesting that somehow the educational system is slightly more effective than the social system in promoting inclusion, which is a gratifying aspect for teachers and a way to acknowledge the efficacy of their work (without disregarding the necessity of future intervention in education)

Social inclusion is perceived as better by children compared with adults, most probably due to their better adaptability and perhaps their lack of experience in social contexts that makes them less receptive to social discrimination, prejudice etc.

Cross country analysis showed that the social inclusion is perceived as less present in Türkiye compared with Serbia, North Macedonia and Romania; again, this is probably linked to the social, cultural and economic context of having more and more refugees with limited resources.

The positive consequences of inclusiveness are not so obvious for all educational actors, as almost half of them, are still to be decided; its true that almost the entire other half agree with those positive consequences, but, still, the large proportion of undecided respondents strongly suggests that information about inclusiveness is still to reach a large part of the population.

As expected, specialists are more aware of the positive consequences of educational inclusion compared with pupils and parents, and this is, more likely, due to their pedagogical training and general knowledge. The plus side of this result is that specialists could be easily involved in projects or activities that have measurable positive consequences (as they are more aware of the positive changes these activities might trigger) but the downside is that there is still a major need for informing pupils and parents regarding the positive consequences or inclusion.

Cross country analysis showed that the positive consequences of educational inclusiveness are perceived as less present in Türkiye, and this evaluation is more or less similar with the one on educational inclusiveness and social inclusiveness; this suggest that the respondents maintained their cognitive consonance by evaluating those three aspects in a correlated way: if education and society are perceived as inclusive, then the positive consequences of inclusion are more visible, if society and

education are perceived as less inclusive, then the positive consequences of inclusion are less obvious, less visible.

Based on our data, we could emphasize on the complex causality of social perceptions regarding inclusion: the positive consequences of educational inclusiveness are more visible for the more informed educational actors and for the ones that evaluate the educational and social inclusiveness better. On the one hand, this suggests that educational inclusiveness could be enhanced if the society themselves become more inclusive, therefore suggesting that there is a need for consistency and coherence between the educational and social interventions for inclusiveness. On the other hand, our data strongly suggests that, as expected, the positive consequences of inclusiveness could be made more obvious in an indirect way, by increasing the level of knowledge about inclusion and increasing the level of educational inclusiveness.

To increase the level of educational inclusiveness, our educational actors mentioned the extracurricular activities as the most reliable solution, followed (far behind) by the implementation of new ways of teaching with interactive activities, allowing more time for teachers to have personal discussions with kids, exchanges of good practices and a better involvement of parents. Still, one could stress out that almost all of those potential activities still have a very important nonformal component (characteristic to the extracurricular activities), as personal discussions and better involvement of parents and even exchanges of good practices being dominated by the nonformal component.

Extracurricular activities are the best solutions for pupils (by far the most selected potential solution), but is also present as top option for parents and specialists; still, parents focus firstly on new ways of teaching – interactive activities, while specialists focus more on better involvement of parents and training the teachers. Pupils' hierarchy clearly stated their preferences, as extracurricular activities will always be selected by pupils when compared with "classic" teaching and learning, while parents' and specialists' hierarchy are more surprising. On the one hand, parents and specialist prove the "fundamental attribution error", with parents mentioning firstly aspects that depend on teachers (new ways of teaching – interactive activities) and specialists mentioning firstly aspects that depend on parents (better involvement of parents). On the other hand, it is noticeable that specialists assume their role in enhancing the

educational inclusiveness and mentioned the need for teachers training and for implementing interactive activities.

Cross country analysis showed that the extracurricular activities are the most important solution to enhance educational inclusiveness irrespective of country.

Considering the input from our respondents, we emphasise that a methodological guide to assist teachers in enhancing the educational inclusiveness in their classes / school should include mostly extracurricular activities, as this is considered to be effective by pupils, parents and specialist. More than that, our data suggest that those extracurricular activities, to be more effective, could be organized in the form of individual activities that facilitate the communication between teachers and pupils, or group activities that use interactive methods and / or include parents.

Appendix 1.1. Questionnaire for specialists

The following questionnaire includes some **questions regarding the educational inclusiveness**. Please read carefully each question and mark the response that better correspond to your opinion.

Please take into consideration that **none of the following questions have good or bad answers**, as each response reflects your personal opinion and evaluation.

All answers are anonymous and will be treated with respect for confidentiality; the research report will only include information regarding groups of respondents and no information about individual responses.

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...

		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1.	Educational inclusiveness refers only to involving children with special educational needs in education.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs should be integrated in special schools where necessary support can be provided to them.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Educational inclusiveness means that all children should feel welcomed, secured and valued in schools.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs should be integrated in special units in mainstream schools so that they could get additional support.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Educational inclusiveness means that all children get the adequate support in mainstream schools to learn with their peers.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Educational inclusiveness refers to including all children in education, irrespective of their special needs, ethnicity, religion, disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs are integrated in mainstream education, even if additional support cannot be given to them.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Educational inclusiveness is:

- ☐ completely unimportant for education
- ☐ unimportant
- ☐ neither unimportant or important
- ☐ important
- ☐ very important for education

9. Educational inclusiveness is:

- ☐ irrelevant for education
- ☐ not needed
- ☐ neither not needed or needed
- ☐ needed
- ☐ absolutely mandatory for education

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...

		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
10.	I think that schools in my country have an adequate level of educational inclusiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I know pupils from my school that are provided with additional support for adequate learning.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I think that the schools in my country need to update in order to make all children feel welcomed, secured and valued in educational activities.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I think that teachers and pupils in my country respect all individuals and help children that need extra support in their learning activities.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I think that, in my country, parents are involved in enough school activities and help their children in their learning activities.	1	2	3	4	5

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
15.	I think that teachers in my country have the necessary skills and knowledge to assist all children in their learning, even the children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Children are sometimes mischievous in their relations with children with disabilities or children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I think that the entire society is inclusive and all people are willing to assist their peers in school, job, social relations etc.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The teachers in my country need additional resources to facilitate education for children with special educational needs, children with disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I think that in my country the pupils are understanding and willing to help other children to learn and develop their skills, even the children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I think that, in my country, all people should be more educated to better behave towards children with special educational needs, children with disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
21.	Educational inclusiveness makes all children feel positive, self-confident, trustful.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Educational inclusiveness allows all children to learn better and have better school results.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Inclusive schools make all children more motivated to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Being part of an inclusive school only makes children with special educational needs feel better and have more positive emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	An inclusive school makes all pupils think in a more profound way and widen their learning horizons.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Being part of an inclusive school only motivates children with special educational needs or disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Educational inclusiveness makes children aware of their emotions and ready to express their emotions in a way that doesn't hurt others.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Being part of an inclusive school only facilitate learning for children with disabilities or special educational needs (with no impact on learning results for other children).	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Educational inclusiveness makes all children more interested in education and in staying in school.	1	2	3	4	5

30. What could schools do to be more inclusive? (select the most important 3 actions, in your opinion)

- ☐ more extracurricular activities
- ☐ organize exchanges of good practices with other schools
- ☐ involve parents more in the educational activities
- ☐ face to face meetings with parents
- ☐ better involvement of the local authorities
- ☐ involve more teachers in exchange of good practices with their colleagues
- ☐ value the expertise of NGO or other external experts
- ☐ develop their institutional strategy and management
- ☐ implement new ways of teaching, for instance interactive activities
- ☐ increase the usage of digital tools and resources
- ☐ make teachers allocate more time for personal discussions with pupils
- ☐ train the teachers
- ☐ other, namely_____

Profession:

- ☐ teacher
- ☐ school management (director, deputy director, members of school board etc.)
- ☐ other specialists in education, working in schools (school counsellor, speech therapist etc.)
- ☐ social worker
- ☐ representative of other educational institutions (school inspectorates / directorates, institution working with children with special educational needs etc.)
- ☐ representative of local business and / or NGOs involved in education
- ☐ representative of local authorities
- ☐ representative of local cultural institutions (libraries, theaters etc.)
- ☐ representative of local law forces responsible for schools' safety
- ☐ other, namely _____

Your experience in working in this field:

- ☐ 0-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 11-20 years
- ☐ more than 20 years

Thank you for your time!

Appendix 1.2. Questionnaire for pupils

The following questionnaire includes some **questions regarding the educational inclusiveness**. Please read carefully each question and mark the response that better correspond to your opinion.

Please take into consideration that **none of the following questions have good or bad answers**, as each response reflects your personal opinion and evaluation.

All answers are anonymous and will be treated with respect for confidentiality; the research report will only include information regarding groups of respondents and no information about individual responses.

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1.	Educational inclusiveness refers only to involving children with special educational needs in education.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs should be integrated in special schools where necessary support can be provided to them.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Educational inclusiveness means that all children should feel welcomed, secured and valued in schools.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs should be integrated in special units in mainstream schools so that they could get additional support.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Educational inclusiveness means that all children get the adequate support in mainstream schools to learn with their peers.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Educational inclusiveness refers to including all children in education, irrespective of their special needs, ethnicity, religion, disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs are integrated in mainstream education, even if additional support cannot be given to them.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Educational inclusiveness is:

- ☐ completely unimportant for education
- ☐ unimportant
- ☐ neither unimportant or important
- ☐ important
- ☐ very important for education

9. Educational inclusiveness is:

- ☐ irrelevant for education
- ☐ not needed
- ☐ neither not needed or needed
- ☐ needed
- ☐ absolutely mandatory for education

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
10.	I think that schools in my country have an adequate level of educational inclusiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I know pupils from my school that are provided with additional support for adequate learning.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I think that the schools in my country need to update in order to make all children feel welcomed, secured and valued in educational activities.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I think that teachers and pupils in my country respect all individuals and help children that need extra support in their learning activities.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I think that, in my country, parents are involved in enough school activities and help their children in their learning activities.	1	2	3	4	5

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neither agree or disagree ↓	Agree ↓	Totally agree ↓
15.	I think that teachers in my country have the necessary skills and knowledge to assist all children in their learning, even the children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	My colleagues are sometimes mischievous in their relations with children with disabilities or children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I think that the entire society is inclusive and all people are willing to assist their peers in school, job, social relations etc.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The teachers in my country need additional resources to facilitate education for children with special educational needs, children with disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I think that in my country we, the pupils, are understanding and willing to help other children to learn and develop their skills, even the children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I think that, in my country, all people should be more educated to better behave towards children with special educational needs, children with disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree ↓	Disagree ↓	Neither agree or disagree ↓	Agree ↓	Totally agree ↓
21.	Educational inclusiveness makes all children feel positive, self-confident, trustful.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Educational inclusiveness allows all children to learn better and have better school results.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Inclusive schools make all children more motivated to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Being part of an inclusive school only makes children with special educational needs feel better and have more positive emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	An inclusive school makes all pupils think in a more profound way and widen their learning horizons.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Being part of an inclusive school only motivates children with special educational needs or disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Educational inclusiveness makes children aware of their emotions and ready to express their emotions in a way that doesn't hurt others.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Being part of an inclusive school only facilitate learning for children with disabilities or special educational needs (with no impact on learning results for other children).	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Educational inclusiveness makes all children more interested in education and in staying in school.	1	2	3	4	5

30. What could schools do to be more inclusive? (select the most important 3 actions, in your opinion)

- ☐ more extracurricular activities
- ☐ organize exchanges of good practices with other schools
- ☐ involve parents more in the educational activities
- ☐ face to face meetings with parents
- ☐ better involvement of the local authorities
- ☐ involve more teachers in exchange of good practices with their colleagues
- ☐ value the expertise of NGO or other external experts
- ☐ develop their institutional strategy and management
- ☐ implement new ways of teaching, for instance interactive activities
- ☐ increase the usage of digital tools and resources
- ☐ make teachers allocate more time for personal discussions with pupils
- ☐ train the teachers
- ☐ other, namely _____

Appendix 1.2. Questionnaire for pupils

The following questionnaire includes some **questions regarding the educational inclusiveness**. Please read carefully each question and mark the response that better correspond to your opinion.

Please take into consideration that **none of the following questions have good or bad answers**, as each response reflects your personal opinion and evaluation.

All answers are anonymous and will be treated with respect for confidentiality; the research report will only include information regarding groups of respondents and no information about individual responses.

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1.	Educational inclusiveness refers only to involving children with special educational needs in education.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs should be integrated in special schools where necessary support can be provided to them.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Educational inclusiveness means that all children should feel welcomed, secured and valued in schools.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs should be integrated in special units in mainstream schools so that they could get additional support.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Educational inclusiveness means that all children get the adequate support in mainstream schools to learn with their peers.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Educational inclusiveness refers to including all children in education, irrespective of their special needs, ethnicity, religion, disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Educational inclusiveness means that children with special educational needs are integrated in mainstream education, even if additional support cannot be given to them.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Educational inclusiveness is:

- ☐ completely unimportant for education
- ☐ unimportant
- ☐ neither unimportant or important
- ☐ important
- ☐ very important for education

9. Educational inclusiveness is:

- ☐ irrelevant for education
- ☐ not needed
- ☐ neither not needed or needed
- ☐ needed
- ☐ absolutely mandatory for education

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
10.	I think that schools in my country have an adequate level of educational inclusiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I know pupils from my school that are provided with additional support for adequate learning.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I think that the schools in my country need to update in order to make all children feel welcomed, secured and valued in educational activities.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I think that teachers and pupils in my country respect all individuals and help children that need extra support in their learning activities.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I think that, in my country, parents are involved in enough school activities and help their children in their learning activities.	1	2	3	4	5

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...

	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

15.	I think that teachers in my country have the necessary skills and knowledge to assist all children in their learning, even the children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Children are sometimes mischievous in their relations with children with disabilities or children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I think that the entire society is inclusive and all people are willing to assist their peers in school, job, social relations etc.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The teachers in my country need additional resources to facilitate education for children with special educational needs, children with disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I think that in my country the pupils are understanding and willing to help other children to learn and develop their skills, even the children with special educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I think that, in my country, all people should be more educated to better behave towards children with special educational needs, children with disabilities etc.	1	2	3	4	5

Please mention, for each statement, if you agree or disagree...

	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Totally agree
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

21.	Educational inclusiveness makes all children feel positive, self-confident, trustful.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Educational inclusiveness allows all children to learn better and have better school results.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Inclusive schools make all children more motivated to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Being part of an inclusive school only makes children with special educational needs feel better and have more positive emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	An inclusive school makes all pupils think in a more profound way and widen their learning horizons.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Being part of an inclusive school only motivates children with special educational needs or disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Educational inclusiveness makes children aware of their emotions and ready to express their emotions in a way that doesn't hurt others.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Being part of an inclusive school only facilitate learning for children with disabilities or special educational needs (with no impact on learning results for other children).	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Educational inclusiveness makes all children more interested in education and in staying in school.	1	2	3	4	5

30. What could schools do to be more inclusive? (select the most important 3 actions, in your opinion)

- ☐ more extracurricular activities
- ☐ organize exchanges of good practices with other schools
- ☐ involve parents more in the educational activities
- ☐ face to face meetings with parents
- ☐ better involvement of the local authorities
- ☐ involve more teachers in exchange of good practices with their colleagues
- ☐ value the expertise of NGO or other external experts
- ☐ develop their institutional strategy and management
- ☐ implement new ways of teaching, for instance interactive activities
- ☐ increase the usage of digital tools and resources
- ☐ make teachers allocate more time for personal discussions with pupils
- ☐ train the teachers
- ☐ other, namely _____

Appendix 2. Focus group questions

Our discussion is part of a research dedicated to analyzing school inclusion in four European countries: Romania, Türkiye, North Macedonia and Serbia. Keep in mind that we don't focus on finding some "correct" answers, but we focus on identifying your opinions about educational inclusion.

The research is part of the Erasmus + project "Promoting inclusion through extracurricular activities" (2023-1-RO01-KA220-SCH-000158071) that involves schools and other educational institutions, local authorities, NGOs from the four mentioned countries.

[Short presentation of the local partner conducting the focus group and the person moderating the discussions.]

1. What is inclusiveness for you? How would you define educational inclusiveness?
2. [After all discussion from question 1 are ended] Is inclusiveness only linked to children with special educational needs or children with disabilities? Are there any other aspects related to educational inclusion?
3. Is educational inclusiveness important / needed or it's just a passing trend? Why?
4. Are the schools in our country inclusive? [depending on the discussion, pro and con examples are asked]
5. What is needed for inclusion? If a school wants to be more inclusive, what would it need?

6. How would you define the consequences of inclusion on the pupils attending an inclusive school?

[After all discussion are ended] Would those consequences be present only for the children with special educational needs / disabilities or for all pupils in that school?

7. What should be done in order to make schools more inclusive? What changes are needed?

8. Before ending, we have a more general questions for you, as conclusions for our discussion: How would you define the ideal school?

Thank you for your time!