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ÉCOLE INCLUSIVE
POUR LES ÉLÈVES EN
SITUATION DE HANDICAP

Inclusive education policy in Sweden?

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The national education policy of Sweden – a 'paradigm shift'/a landscape in transformation

- In tension between education as a 'public good' and education as a 'private good'
- Educational reforms in three major areas:
 - Decentralisation – a transfer of power from state to municipalities and local schools
 - The introduction of school choice
 - The introduction of private actors, i.e. a marketisation of the school system

 ***Students with disabilities should receive their education in regular class, no separate organisational solutions***

- Segregated solutions for SES (special educational support) only if there are special reasons (Swedish Education Act)
- A majority, of the students in need of special support in the compulsory school participate in their regular class more than 50% of the time (Swedish National Board of Education, SNBE, 2015)

However

- segregated organizational forms of SES has increased during the last three years (Official Statistics of Sweden/OSS)
- The number of independent schools specializing in student groups with different SEN has increased during the last decade (SNBE, 2014)
- Around 1% of all students receive their education in compulsory school for children with intellectual disability. 80% of these students attend special classes
- the number of disability groups served by national special schools has increased (Swedish Education Act; Official Government Report/OSGR 30, 2007; OSGR 87, 2007)



Inclusive education should meet the social needs of all pupils and pupils should be able to influence their school situation

- A greater share of students with disabilities state that they seldom or never have fun with their friends or classmates
- A greater share of students with disabilities state that they are afraid of other students and get bullied
- A smaller share of students with disabilities state that they have a friend who they can talk to about everything, get support etc. (Swedish National Institute of Public Health, 2011)
- Social exclusion and bullying in regular school main reasons for choosing independent schools specializing in student groups with different educational needs (SNBE, 2014)
- 15.2% of the independent compulsory schools stated that they had refused admittance to students with special educational needs in a three year period, i.e. students with special educational needs have less opportunity to influence their school situation (Göransson, Magnússon & Nilholm, 2012)

Inclusive education should meet the academic needs of all students

- Around 23% of the students leave the comprehensive school without attaining the goals in one or several subjects, i.e. the school has not met their academic needs (OSS)
- Around 13% of the students are not qualified for upper secondary school when leaving the comprehensive school, i.e. the school has not met their academic needs (OSS)



Research on inclusive education

- 14 years ago a review of research literature on inclusive education by Dyson, Howes and Roberts (2002) concluded that there seemed to be very few studies that could establish any firm links between a certain action or factor and the participation of the students
- Twelve years later a review showed similar results: a scarcity of research that succeeds in establishing factors and/ or interventions that increase levels of inclusion in schools and/or classrooms in relation to a specified definition of inclusion (Göransson & Nilholm, 2014)

The development of inclusive education in Sweden – conclusions

- The inclusiveness of the Swedish education system can be questioned both regarding its organizational development and to the extent it meets the social and academic needs of students with disabilities/in need of special support
- The ‘inclusion’ discourse needs to recover ground from the ‘standards’ discourse in the national educational policy arena
- There is need for additional research that shows in a methodologically sound way how school and/or classrooms can become more inclusive by showing that a given inclusive practice (or practices) has some real benefit for the students in terms of inclusiveness

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