

CONFÉRENCE DE COMPARAISONS INTERNATIONALES

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SITUATION DE HANDICAP

Challenges and possibilities of inclusive schools: towards inclusion in Austria

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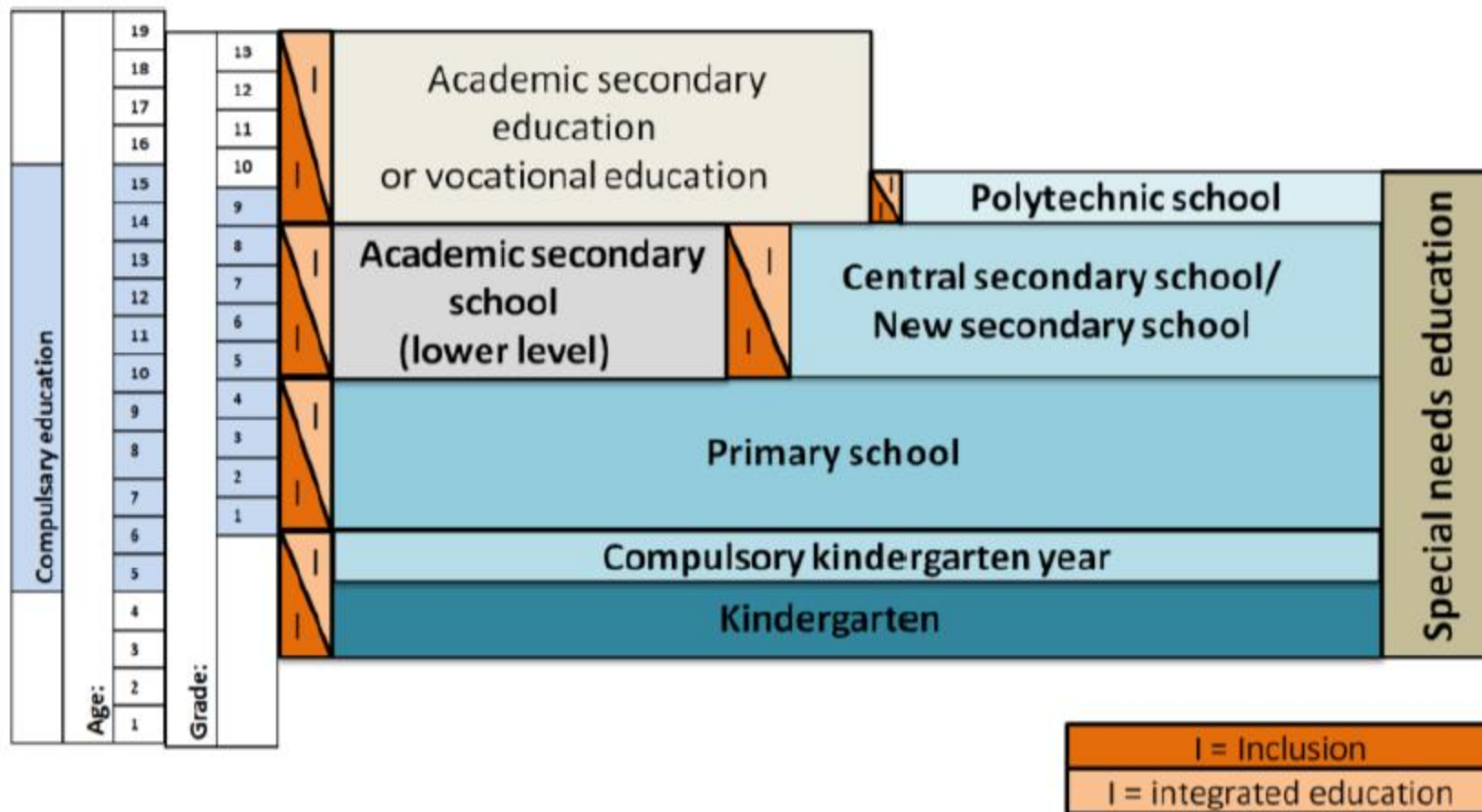
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Segregation-Integration-Inclusion

- Segregation: pupils identified as having SEN are taught separately, namely in a special school. Special schools usually are located in another building than mainstream schools.
- Integration: the placement of a specific child (in our case a student with special educational needs) in mainstream schools, i.e. into an existing system which may be rather inflexible and uncompromising
→ one tries to integrate formerly rejected, excluded and side-lined children into society
 - STATE
- Inclusion: *inclusive setting* describes an already existing system prepared for different individuals and their unique requirements
 - PROCESS

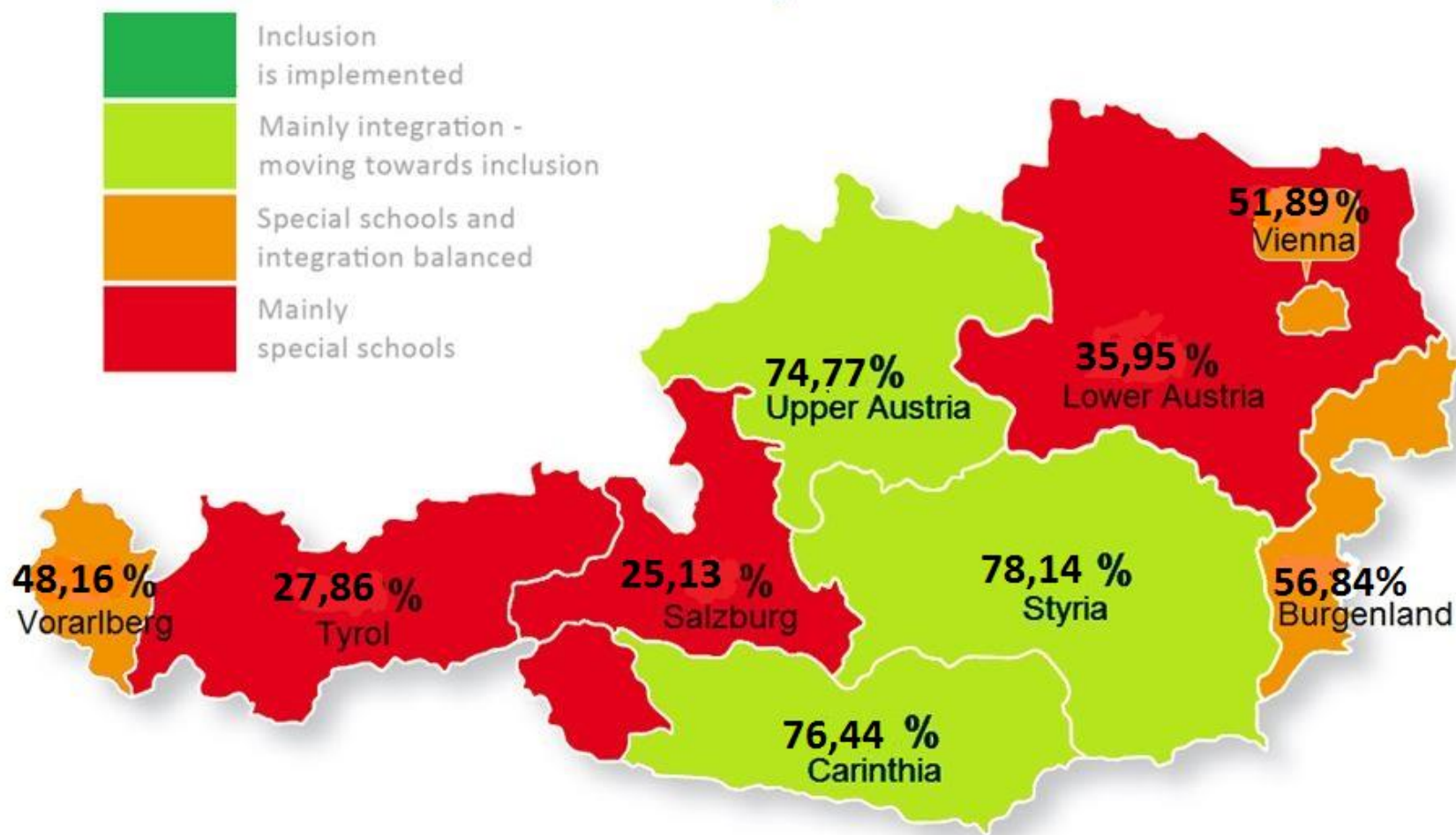
(Lebenshilfe, 2010; Rieser, 2014)

Austrian School System



Paleczek, Krammer, Ederer, & Gasteiger-Klicpera, 2015

➤ Towards inclusion in Austria?



(adjusted from a figure published by Lebenshilfe Österreich, 2010; based on data of 2014/2015 Statistik Austria, 2015)

Pathway towards inclusion 1980s-1990s

- Foundation of the „Initiative Soziale Integration“ - Initiative for Social Integration of disabled children in the early 80's
 - 1985: Creation of the 1st inclusive classroom without authorization from the state department of education in Styria
 - 1987/1988: other inclusive classrooms in the rest of Austria
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- 1990: president of the Styrian state school board visited the first inclusive classroom → starting point of further development at a formal legal level
 - 1992: initiative of the Styrian State parliament to the Austrian government to completely include children with disabilities into regular school life
 - Beginning of the evaluation of inclusive school trials

(Gebhardt, Krammer, Rossmann, & Gasteiger-Klicpera, 2013; ISI – Initiative Soziale Integration, 2014;)

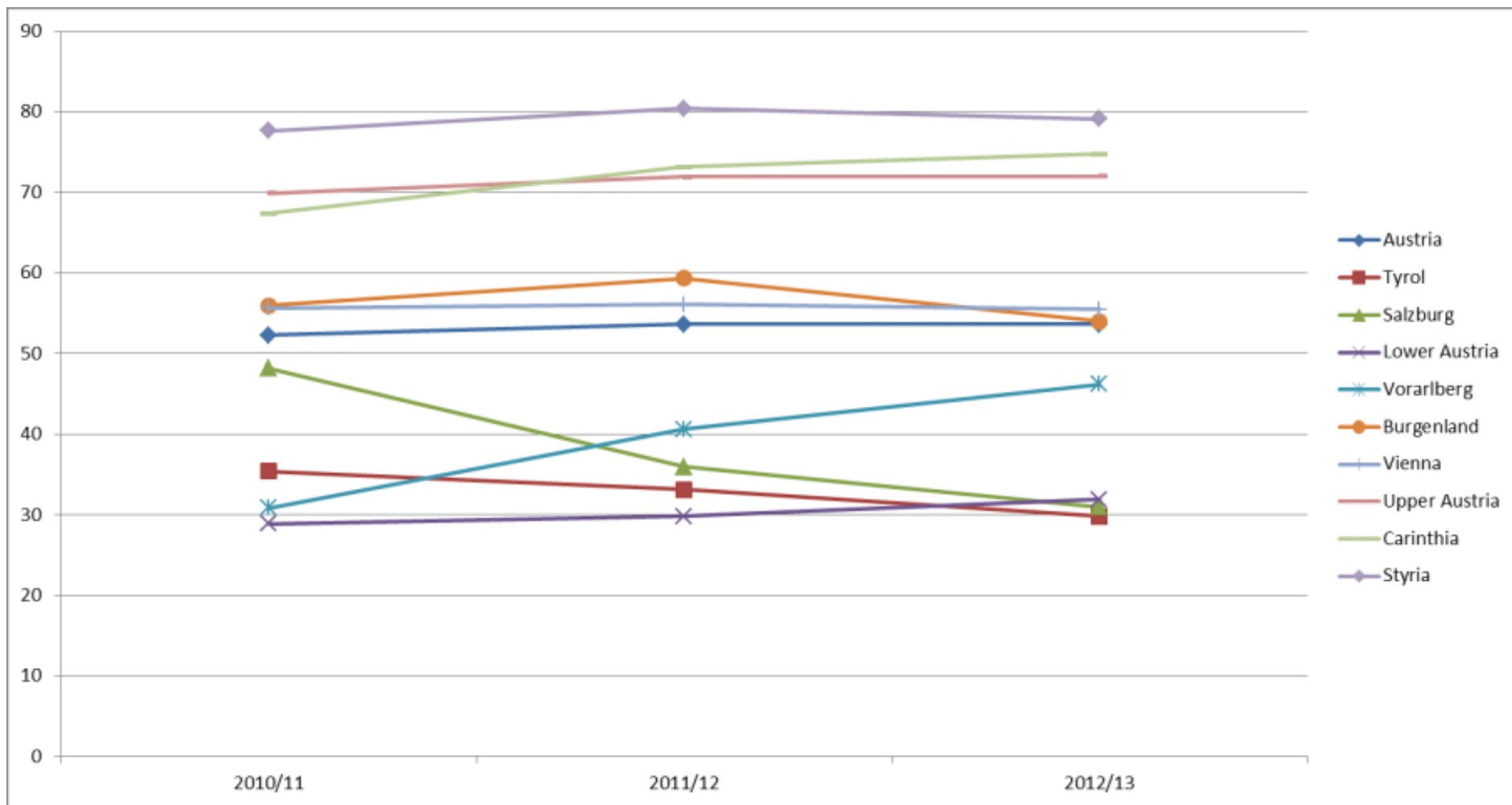
Pathway towards inclusion 2000-2015

- 2008: Austria signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 2010: multi-stage plan: Lebenshilfe
- 2012: National Action Plan on Disability 2012-2020 was published to summarize objectives and specific measures to achieve the aims declared by law in 2008
- 2014: action plan in Styria
- 2015: implementation and evaluation of model-regions in Styria

(Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung, 2015; Federal Ministry of Labour, social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2012; Gasteiger-Klicpera & Wohlhart, 2015; Lebenshilfe, 2010; Republik Österreich, 2008a, 2008b;)



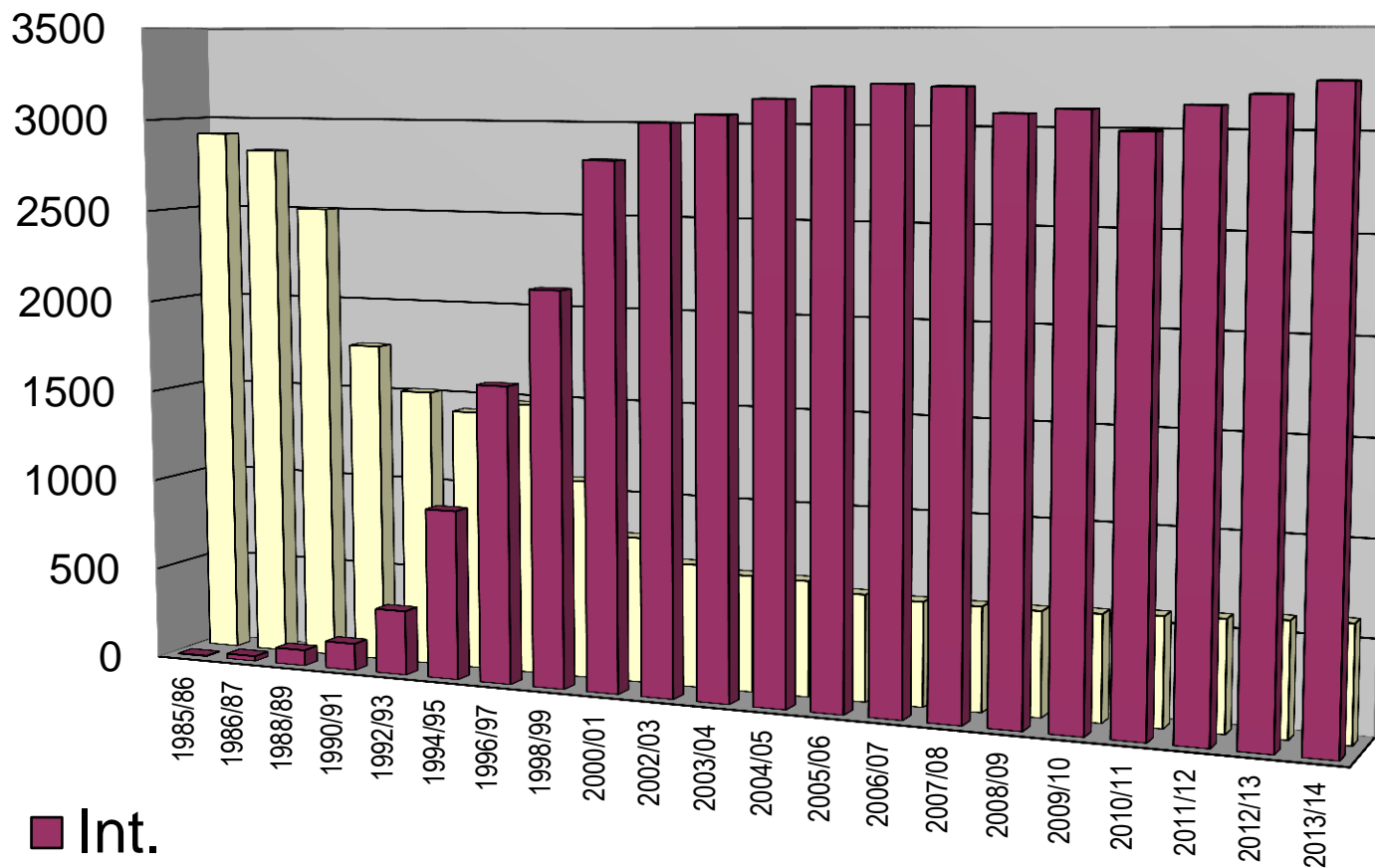
Current development in Austria



Palczek et al., 2015 (based on data of 2012/2013 Statistik Austria, 2014)



Development in Styria 1985 - 2014



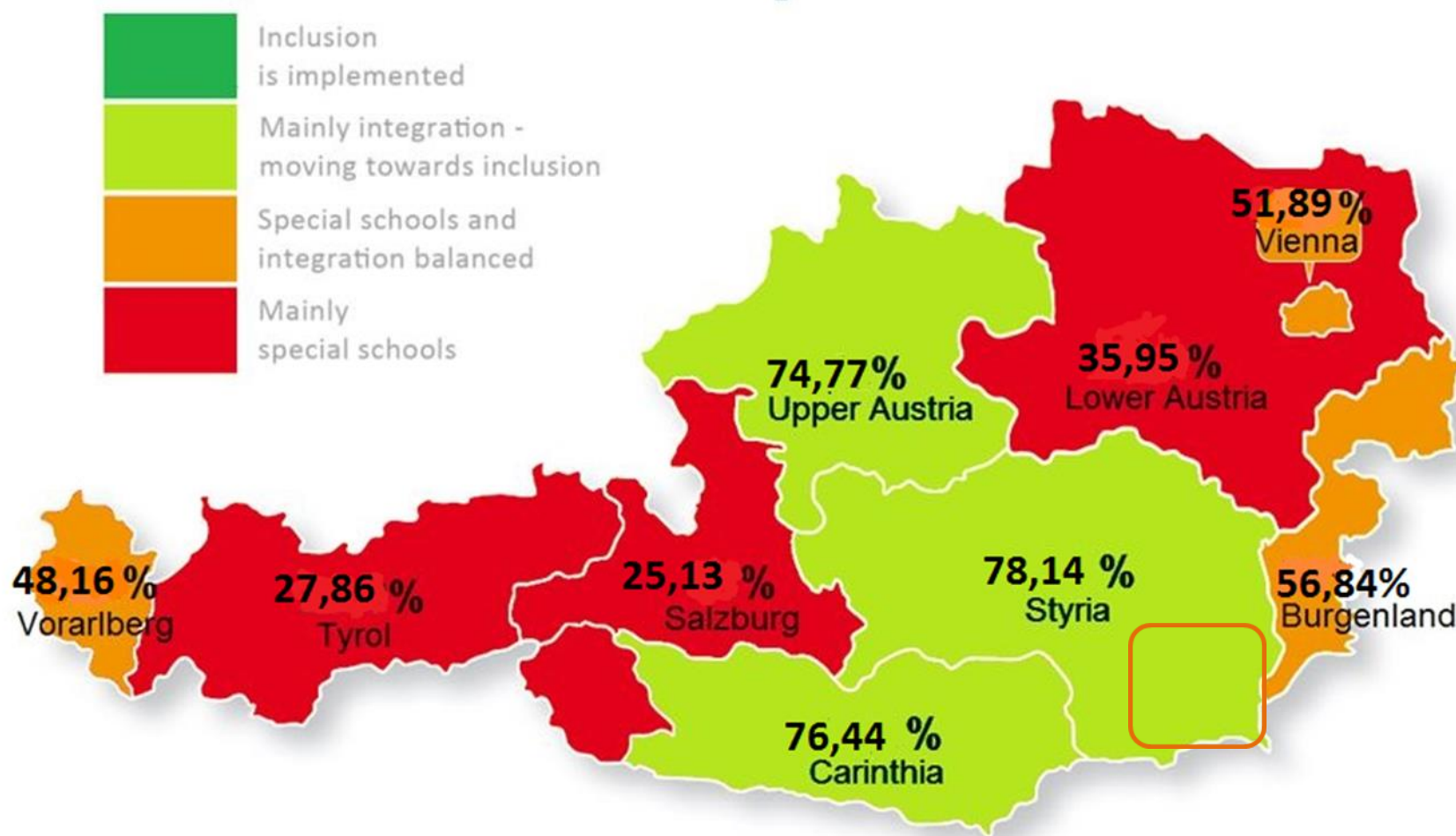
(Haucinger, 2014)

Project: Inclusive Education in Eastern Styria

Objectives:

- to analyze the framework necessary for the implementation of an inclusive school system
- to analyze the inclusive process in mainstream schools in the eastern part of Styria
- to identify challenges and possibilities for the implementation of an inclusive school system
- to generate ideas for the further development of an inclusive school system

> REGION of interest



(adjusted from a figure published by Lebenshilfe Österreich, 2010; based on data of 2014/2015 Statistik Austria, 2015)

Research Questions

1. How do selected educational institutions implement an inclusive school system (in terms of teacher training, classroom practices, team-teaching, the framework, and networking)?
2. Which challenges and possibilities do the stakeholders identify for the process of inclusion?
3. How can the process of inclusion develop further?

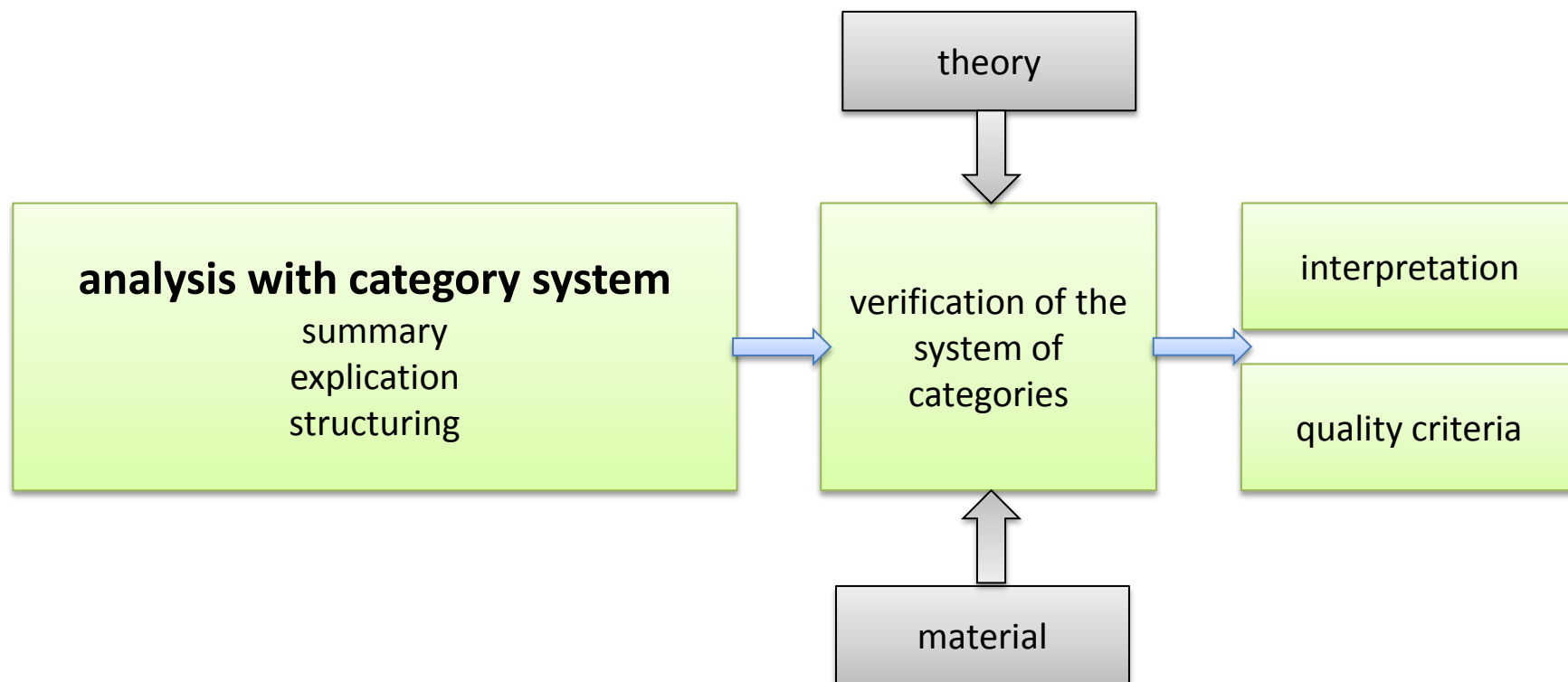
Focus: Research Questions

1. How do selected educational institutions implement an inclusive school system (in terms of **teacher training, classroom practices, team-teaching,** the framework, and networking)?
2. Which **challenges and possibilities** do the stakeholders identify for the process of inclusion?
3. How can the process of inclusion develop further?

Method and Sample

- **25 Qualitative semi-structured interviews**
 - 4 Centers for Inclusive Education
 - 7 schools (head, teacher, SEN-teacher):
 - 2 elementary schools
 - 2 new secondary schools
 - 2 polytechnic schools
 - 1 academic secondary school (lower level)

Qualitative content analysis



Results - Teachers' education and training

Further education and training for general education teachers in the field of inclusive education is needed

■ Challenges:

- Teachers attitudes
- Time resources: *“There is certainly a need for staff development, the acceptance of it is doubtful” (7PrinSec, 45)*

■ Possibilities:

- Promotion of collaboration, reflection and discussion
- Implementation of a new teacher education curriculum (*PädagogInnenbildung Neu*) since October 2015



Results: Classroom Practices (Classroom Composition)

Heterogeneous classes are a productive environment for all students

■ Challenges in composing heterogeneous classrooms:

- Amount of students
- The need to define inclusive classes

“When I have all of the children with SEN in the same classroom, I can offer support in a tailored manner. It is not the case, that the students of one grade, for example, have all at the same time German classes and I can take the weaker students out of the room for extra help. That just doesn’t fit with my class schedule. The children then, get less attention hour-wise” (9SpecE, 122-122).

- Time for discussions and reflections about the classroom composition
- Avoidance of classroom recomposition in most schools (due to parents?)



Results: Classroom Practices (Classroom Composition)

Heterogeneous classes are a conducive environment for all students

■ Possibilities:

- Implementing an orientation phase in the first weeks of school before the final classroom composition

„In that way, the children and teachers can get to know each other. The teachers have the opportunity to see which students get along with each other and which do not“ (1PrinPrim, 81-84).



Results: Classroom Practices (Teaching-methods)

Inclusive education requires differentiated teaching methods and instruction

- The participating schools used:
 - Cooperative learning
 - Self-determined learning
 - Partner classes



Results: classroom practices (Teaching-methods)

Inclusive education requires differentiated teaching methods and instruction

■ Challenges and Possibilities:

- Paradigm shift from teacher-centered approach to student-centered approach

“The children support each other. That is great, because I don’t even need a teacher to help”(17GenE , 39-41)

- Teachers have to be more innovative and flexible
- Students develop social skills (by teaching and being taught)

Results: classroom practices (Team-Teaching)

Team-Teaching is important due to inclusive schooling and coping with heterogeneity within the student population

■ Challenges:

- Time

“Schools do not provide an allotted time for teachers engaged with cooperative teaching to actually meet and discuss their goals and lessons” (17 GenE, 29-29).

- Work load for special education teachers
- Switching between schools for special education teachers
- Dearth of existing material

Results: classroom practices (Team-Teaching)

Team-Teaching is important due to inclusive schooling and coping with heterogeneity within the student population

■ Possibilities:

- More resources
- Reduced teacher-student ratio
- Teachers learn from each other
- Shared responsibility for the students and classroom actions (delivery of instruction, assessment, teaching methods, parents-teacher conference)

Results: Support Systems

In order to cope with everyday tasks in schools, cooperation with other stakeholders is needed

■ Challenges:

- Establishing the cooperation
- Employment of additional staff (teaching assistants)

“These individuals, though, are not employed by the actual school, but the school provider. The school providers try to keep the cost as low as possible and do not have any quality requirements for the disability care givers” (4PrinPrim, 23)

Results: Support Systems

In order to cope with everyday tasks in schools, cooperation with other stakeholders is needed

■ Possibilities:

- Teachers' attitudes change to existing support system
„After positive experiences were made, due to additional support, general teachers were more likely to teach in inclusive classes“ (19I, 57-48)
- Development of professional competences and respective capabilities of teachers

Conclusion

- Teachers' training in the field of inclusive education is necessary
- The implementation of the new teachers education (PädagogInnenbildungNeu) enables the further development of inclusive education in Austria
- A diverse classroom composition is a productive environment for all students
- Teaching-methods of differentiation and individual learning enable inclusive education
- Team-teaching allows tailored support for all children
- Support systems need to be established in order to cope with new challenges coming with inclusive education

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Thank you for your kind attention!

28 & 29 janvier 2016

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