ANNUAL REPORT 2013





Each child has the right to be accepted and valued.



Each child **must** be accepted and valued.



Each child can be accepted and valued.



Now.

We work for that.

WHO ARE WE?

Centre for Inclusive Education /CIE/ is a Bulgarian non-governmental non-profit organization, whose main goal is to help as many children to learn and play with their peers. We believe that each child must have the opportunity to be accepted and valued. Many of our projects and programs are orientated towards children with dyslexia, dyspraxia, hyperactivity with attention deficit, autism, etc. We know that this large and dear group of children is undeservedly neglected, unrecognized and unsupported. We work for social inclusion and quality education for all children as well as for the protection of those who need it.

CIE's team is actively working with parents, teachers, principals, professionals, local and state authorities, business organizations from the country and abroad – and we are happy with the change that happens gradually. We are happy when children – all children – have the opportunity to develop their skills and talents and to live a happy childhood.

OUR MISSION

• Social inclusion and quality education for all children.

OUR GOALS

- Real inclusive education for children and youths in state and private educational institutions.
- Raising the awareness and understanding of community and teachers on what is inclusive education and how it happens.



"Just sent away another good and interesting year. It was full of surprises, emotions, successes and lessons learnt.

For our team 2013 meant also meetings with people from far away – Ghana, Syria, Turkey, the Roma neighborhood in Blagoevgrad. Whenever we wrote or told about these meetings, very often and almost everybody asked us about the conditions. Which made me remember the different types of cleanliness, or purity, according to some eastern philosophies. Remember?

The purity of hands – to not take anything unneeded.

Purity of ears – to not listen to scared, embittered, fussy or vain people, and also to fence ourselves from gossip, vilification and empty conversations.

Purity of eyes – to protect our eyes from envy, malice, loathing and hatred.

Purity of mouth – to protect ourselves from unneeded verbiage and obscenity.

Purity of thoughts – to clear our heads up from negative thoughts and bad intentions. And also, not to pity ourselves. Why would we do it? Better to foster our goodhearted ventures. Purity of the heart and soul – to guard and cherish our souls aspirations and not to ignore them. As we all know – love and expect nothing in return. Love itself is happiness.

And yes, there is such cleanliness of body and clothes. But it seems to me it is not the most important one.

For us these meetings and, sometimes, discrepancies were very important and very educational because it made us think and talk more about values – ours and others. Do we have values in school, what are they? How children take them from us? Do we live by them? Who are the "Bulgarian" values? Are there any? What makes us laugh? What makes us happy? What are you proud of? Whom or what do you love? Why?

For the New Year, which will surely be a happy year, I wish we ask more questions, smile more, have many happy encounters and many, many curious children!"

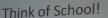
Iva Boneva

Executive Director, Centre for Inclusive Education

In 2013 Centre for Inclusive Education reached more than:

650 principals, teachers and specialists

5500 children



4000 parents

Think of your first day in School

Think of your last







INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



"ONE SCHOOL FOR ALL"



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To show how in practice Bulgarian schools can be a place for successful learning, professional development and social inclusion of all children and all school staff.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- (1) To provide for a free use to the Bulgarian schools an adapted to the Bulgarian context methodology and tools for effective academic and social inclusion of all children in the school institution.
- (2) To raise awareness of the need for all children and teachers to feel at ease, successful and socially accepted at school.
- (3) To test and adapt the British experience of the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education in the development of effective inclusive schools by supporting school expert teams of 10 schools in Sofia and Sofia region through a 2-year cycle of following the methodology of the Index for inclusion.

In 2013 the most challenging and rewarding work for the 10 schools of the project was the guided self-reflection which they underwent. This process was directed to examine strengths and weaknesses in the school environment and involved also parents and students. Every school had its planning group, which had a leading role in applying the Index. In almost all schools the planning groups expanded significantly and more teachers joined the process.

To address the identified needs and to support the schools, *CIE* developed an online platform, dedicated to the Index – **www.index-priobshtavane.eu**. This platform soon transformed into a portal where people join discussions and share ideas and specific solutions for class work, communication with parents and innovative approaches in teaching.

CIE organized a closing conference in October, 2013 to present the project results and promote the online platform as well as the freely available and adapted methodology of the Index. Our main conclusion was that Bulgarian school has the force to change from inside so that it can become welcoming for all – children, parents, teachers.





CIE also published a printed version of the Index. This Bulgarian version features some cutting-edge experience from Bulgarian schools, adapted questionnaires and additional indicators, designed especially for Bulgarian schools by the author Tony Booth himself.

Project BG051PO001-7.0.01-0069 – "Without Borders – Component 1" is funded by the Operational Program "Human Resources Development", co-financed by the European Social Fund of the European Union.



In 2013 Centre for Inclusive Education completed successfully the first phase of

"LABORATORY FOR PARENTS"

Often while focused on doing our job as teachers and therapists of children with special educational needs we forget that their parents also need understanding, direction and information.

"What kind of support you can receive and give for your child? What kind of support can you receive for yourself? What is the opinion of teachers about the inclusion of children with special needs? How to make the communication of our children's teachers and therapists more effective? What are the attitudes in the society towards the inclusive education and how we can make the environment more accessible? What are the strengths of the children and of their parents?" Those are only part of the questions that were discussed during the developed Laboratory for parents as part of the project "Together for One – Supporting the education of children with special educational needs in the Municipality of Gabrovo."



Depending on the individual needs of the parents, we had group and individual sessions with them. Centre for Inclusive education team' gave parents practical advice for activities at home, for improving the partnership with the children's teachers and specialists, for improving the communication between the parents and the children and with the other family and community members.

In the period July 17th 2012 – April 17th 2013 *Centre for Inclusive Education* completed the activities for establishing and implementing the Laboratory for parents as part of project BG051RO001-4.1.04-0104 "Together for One – Supporting the education of children with special educational needs in the Municipality of Gabrovo", financed by the European Social Fund via Operational Program "Development of Human Resources."







Best Practice Report on Inclusion is Being Developed as part of "FIESTA" Project

Inclusive education and its related issues of transition and integrated working has proved to be a field of rapid development and of high significance in all countries willing to offer good quality education and more social opportunities for all children. However, changes should be well-designed, planned and supported so as to be of use to all – professionals, parents and most importantly to children.

New perspectives never come by themselves. To wish and make a change one should look inside – within themselves and then around – at others. Then comes the integration of what you have, what you want to achieve and what you can learn and take from the people with more experience.

That is what we and our partners did as part of our project "FIESTA": we generated new perspectives by sharing experience.

To achieve this in 2013 we conducted a profound field research with 599 professionals who work with children with special educational needs from 8 EU countries who took part in an online "Children must grow in a calm, joyful environment, independent on whether they have problems or not, to be joyful every day and every day to find something new", "to learn in a fun way". (Kindergarten teacher, Bulgaria)

"Thanks to the joint work of the teachers and the specialists the child with SEN to be accepted in the peer group and they not to notice they are with some special needs". (Kindergarten teacher, Bulgaria)

survey and more than 150 professionals who took part in focus groups; another 55 parents and children kindly participated in individual or parent and child interviews.

The research findings are now being processed for the development of a best practice report on inclusion, transition and integrated working which will serve as a source of information and working approaches for decision-makers, practitioners and parents.

The best practice report will be available in English in February 2014 on "FIESTA" website – www.fiesta-project.eu. Later, the report will be translated in Bulgarian as well.

Centre for Inclusive Education is the Bulgarian partner in the project "FIESTA – Facilitating Inclusive Education and Supporting the Transition Agenda" financed by the European Commission under the Life Long Learning Program - 517748-LLP-1-2011-1-IE-COMEN-IUS-CNW.

"SCHOOL IS MY RIGHT TOO"

In 2013 we proceed further with the "School is my right too" project. The main goal of the project is enhancing the collaboration between all the specialists involved in the inclusion process for children with special educational needs (resource centers' specialists, mainstream educators and parents); the child is in the center of the educational process while the focus is on the child participation and the individual child needs.

Participants in the project are Regional Inspectorate of Education – Vratsa, Resource Center Vratsa, 2 schools and 2 kindergartens.





In the beginning of February 2013 prof. Lani Florian from the University of Edinburgh visited Vratsa and held a public lecture about the innovative approaches in inclusive pedagogy and good practices in inclusive education.

In April 2013 children (2nd to 4th grade) from 2 different schools "Otets Paisii" and "Ivancho Mladenov" from Vratsa were trained by CIE child participation experts how to conduct a peer research in their schools. The main goal of this activity was to make children feel confident and free to express their ideas and opinions and to participate actively not only in school, but also in social life. The topic of the research was: "Together at school" and the accent was on overcoming the differences between us. The results were officially presented. "Together at the kindergarten" was the motto of the drawing and modeling workshop for the youngest participators from both kindergartens – "Zvanche" and "Balgarche".

Approximately 150 children from both schools took part in the research. 35% of them were boys and 65% were girls. More than half of them were 10 years old. There were many who were 9 years old, but there were some 11 years old children. 93% of all said they liked to be at school together with all the other children. Only 7% did not feel good being together with other children.

All in all, the main findings of the research show that children want to be together at school, to be friends with everyone, to be good with everyone, to help those, who need help and to discuss problems instead of having a fight with someone. Disabled children and children with SEN are not seen as "different" children. The only different children are the bullies and those, whose behaviour and attitude causes problems among classmates at school.

During the past year variety of trainings and workshops took place as part of the project. They have been especially organized for the mainstream educators, resource teachers and specialists working with children. The meetings aimed to increase the capacity of the specialists and enhance the communication and the collaboration between them. Some of the topics of the workshops were: "Teamwork", "SEN", "Basics of working with children with SEN in a mainstream classroom" etc.



Some of the posters showing the results of the peer research:

"School is my right too" project is funded by the Open Society Fund for the period September 2012 – August 2014. Project partners are Regional Inspectorate of Education – Vratsa, Vratsa Resource Center, kindergarten "Bulgarche", kindergarten, "Zvanche", Primary school "Ivancho Mladenov, High school "Otets Paisii" – all in the municipality of Vratsa.

TALKS OF LEADING INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In 2013 *Centre for Inclusive Education* continued the initiative to organize talks of world renowned experts on inclusive education who share leading tendencies and developments in the field of inclusive education and 21st century education with Bulgarian specialists, teachers and experts.

On February 6th in Vratsa prof. Lani Florian introduced the new pedagogical approaches for inclusive education and how to improve school environment to teachers, resource teachers, speech therapists and specialists from Vratsa and its region.

Prof. Lani Florian is international expert and researcher in the fields of inclusive education and education of children with special educational needs, lecturer at the University of Edinburgh and author of many publications on education of children with special educational needs, classification of disabilities, teacher training, inclusive education, etc.



On December 3rd and 4th Dr. John Ravenscroft from the University of Edinburgh held a series of three talks in Sofia and Plovdiv. The talks at the Sofia and Plovdiv universities were addressed at students, teachers, parents and specialists and at the British Council at the educational stakeholders and authorities in Bulgaria. The themes of the talks were "Equipping Your Students With 21st Century Competences", "History, Success and Failure of Special Needs Education. Inclusive Education in Scotland" and "Cerebral Visual Impairments – Brain and Vision". Dr. John Ravenscroft is Deputy Dean of Moray House School of Education of the University of Edinburgh, editor in chief of the British Journal of Visual Impairments and leading researcher in the field of disabilities and barriers in participation.

PLOVDIV UNIVERSITY



BRITISH COUNCIL



SOFIA UNIVERSITY



GLOBAL EDUCATION



"NORTH- SOUTH CONNECTION: PARTNERSHIP FOR A MORE JUST WORLD BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN SCHOOLS"



Our children today are different. From an early age they travel and communicate between cultures. They are global consumers. They are really interested and engaged in what happens outside of the borders of our country. The IT and the visual technologies give them the opportunity to learn in a different way, to be proactive and information seekers. Are we ready to respond to the search and to the need for a different type of education for our children? Are we preparing them for their responsibilities as global citizens?

These were our leading questions when started working on the project "North South connection – partnership for a more just world between European and African schools". The project is a continuation of our pioneer work to promote topics and methods of Global education in schools and to contribute for the acknowledgement of the need to prepare Bulgarian students also as global young citizens. For us this project is also a wonderful opportunity, in the context of the Global education, to present the point of view of the people from African continent.

In the school year 2013–2014 the students and the teachers from four Bulgarian and four Ghanaian schools create school partnership in which discuss global challenges and interconnectedness that globalization created between communities in different parts of the world.

In this first year we have prepared a guidebook for school partnership in Global education "The world in the classroom". The guidebook is of use for all the teachers who want to establish school partnership, while introducing also topics of Global education – http://globalschoolsconnect.com/resources/.

In April we have chosen the Bulgarian schools – 2 High school, 18 High school and 22 High school, all from Sofia and High school for foreign languages from Stara Zagora. We have conducted also the first teacher training.





A study visit was conducted in October when the Bulgarian and the Ghanaian teachers were able to meet in Accra, Ghana.

The teachers were able to immediately identify the common challenges of the teaching, the same noble goals and the same fulfillment from the success of the students.

During ten days, they went through a series of discussions, training and were able to become familiar with the educational system of the partner. Most of all, they were able to communicate across cultures. Bulgarian teachers taught to Ghanaian students.



A new exciting year of intercultural communication, challenges and satisfactions is in front of our global students and their teachers.

Project "North-South Connection: Partnership for a more just world between European and African schools" – http://globalschoolsconnect.com/ is funded by EuropeAid program of the European Commission and is realized in the period January 2013 – December 2014. Project partners are 4 European countries in the face of Artemisszio – Hungary, *Centre for Inclusive Education* – Bulgaria, O3V – Denmark, Volontariat – Slovenia and NGOs in Ghana, Kenya and Sierra Leone.

PARTICIPATION OF THE CENTRE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT THE GLOBAL EDUCATION

The participation of our team in festival, four conferences and an international meeting made the year for our mission for raising awareness about Global education. Here are some highlights.

We have organized an atelier for children and a public lecture at the Uzana Poliana Fest in the beauty of the Mid Balkan on July 13 and 14, 2013. The Fest unites people and organizations with innovative and ecological thinking that care about the Earth. The Fest takes place for third consecutive year with the help of Global Environmental Fund. In two days we have conducted the atelier dedicated to Global education "With hands and heart around the world" which collects games from all around the world. Through art the children "travelled" from Ghana to Nepal and from China to Mexico.



Our public lecture during the Fest "Can education be really education, without being global?" was directed to the adults and presented our views why Global education is equally important for our children as is the traditional education.

Later throughout the year we co-organized again the national conference on Global education, within a project funded by the EC for the Bulgarian platform for international development of which CIE is a member. The conference is held for a second consecutive year and has the ambition to become traditional. The event collects good practices in the field of Global education and it is a forum to which Bulgarian schools share their experience.



Here are the replies of some of the participants in the Conference on Global education at our question: **«How our kids of today are different compare to the students 15 years ago?»:**

- They know more!
- They do not have limits, they communicate globally.
- With their attitude toward the world, toward the studying...
- They grow up faster in their understanding about many of the problems of the contemporary society.
- They are intuitive, do not accept authorities, they need love and understanding.
- ... And at the question «What knowledge and skills do they need today?»:
- To put themselves in other's shoes.
- Knowledge about life and people, soft skills, practical observations and nonformal knowledge outside of the classroom.
- Holistic, with perspective toward future, tolerance, empathy.
- More practical knowledge, not so much theory, soft skills.

At (http://edu21project.eu/page/1254/pecypcu/) you may read two publications of ours on the topic (in Bulgarian only).

TRAININGS



In 2013 we conducted dozens of trainings on request and trained over 1500 mainstream teachers, resource teachers, psychologists, parents, and specialists working with children across the whole country. Trainings were mainly in the following areas:

- Learning difficulties and inclusive education
- Children's rights and child participation
- Child protection
- Global Education

Among the most common requests was training for teachers working with children with special educational needs in the mainstream classroom: dyslexia, hyperactivity and attention deficit, intellectual impairment. Teachers acquired knowledge and skills to deal with the difficulties of the children in their socialization in school. There were discussed the coordination processes in the case of a child with SEN and the collaboration with the other team members. The trainings included also discussions on real cases and sharing of good practice.

The British methodology for improving learning and participation in school – "Index for Inclusion" that was first introduced in the country by our team caused great interest. Hundreds of teachers were convinced that the Index is not just another initiative but a way to improve schools according to the values of inclusive education in all aspects of school life: the teachers staff room, classroom and schoolyard.



Recognized as a winner of expertise on children's participation, *Centre for Inclusive Education* for another subsequent year, motivates teachers and professionals to work for the realization of children's participation at the highest level – how to encourage young people to be involved in the process and take responsibility both in school and in extracurricular organizations.

Among the most popular topics for training in 2013 were also the topics: "Working with Parents", "Teamwork", "Sensory Integration", "Child participation", "How to work with disadvantaged children without access to preschool preparation".

All of us in the role of parents or professionals who are in regular contact with children know that we have a constant need for additional knowledge and skills to understand the children, to be able to support them in their development and feel good together.

THE SUNNY HOUSE



The Sunny House is a place fulfilled with its own time and space where children's world and its expression have a high value and worthy audience in the face of the psychologist and speech therapist at the CIE. There, with the help of specific therapeutic bundles are played dramatic scripts in which children's vital issues are the main characters. The room door is also open for the caring parents who often need the space of the *Sunny House* as well, to recall how important are the issues raised by their children or by those within them.

For another consecutive year the *Sunny House* is our therapeutic space for psychological and speech therapy consultations to children and their parents who are facing different difficulties. Within this year for help to the psychologist have turned 11 children and their parents, and to the speech therapist – 10 children for diagnosis and speech therapy.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN ZHIVKO AND HIS FRIENDS HELP CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES THAT SPENT THE FIRST YEARS OF THEIR LIVES IN INSTITUTIONS



We, in the *Centre for Inclusive Education*, like and believe in the idea that the good among the people is a shared responsibility, which is fulfilled through more outstretched hands. Such hands are the hooves of giraffe Zhivko, his author and artist Yana Kazakova, the specialists of the CIE who provide psychological and speech support, everybody who distribute the book gratuitously, every one of you who decide that the idea to help this way is worthy, and the most important little hands – those of the children who not only require our adequate and timely care but are also our equal partners in our mission to be good.

For fourth consecutive year the revenue generated by the fundraising campaign provides psychological and speech support to children with learning difficulties who have spent the first years of their lives in institutions. 60% of the revenue collected from the sale of "Giraffe that did not fit in the book" (author and illustrator Yana Kazakova) is intended for therapeutic work with children in our *Sunny House*, and 40% are set apart for subsequent editions of the book and initiatives that help children with special educational needs.

In 2013 our favorite giraffe continued to receive support and to make new friends, as well as help more children to cope better at school and in life.

Since May a major Bulgarian bookstore chain – CIELA started to sell the book in its bookstores pro bono. This way the book reached much more kids and generated more support.

In August Mr. Grigor Grigorov funded the second edition of the book in memory of Bojana Yakoubek, teacher, librarian and publisher, and with enormous love to his grandchildren, adopted by his daughter's family.

> The team of Expo4Kids invited us to participate pro bono in the annual kid's expo that took place from 19 to 22 September in Mall Bulgaria. The visitors had the chance to buy the book and support the campaign.

On 19 September Yana Kazakova, the author and illustrator of the book read it in front of the kids and they had the chance to hear the story from its author.



We would like to thank all our volunteers and interns, and especially to Sevda Nesheva and Ani Gigova who helped us gain more support for the campaign.





THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE LEARNING AT

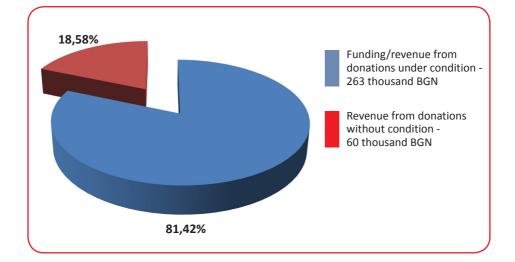
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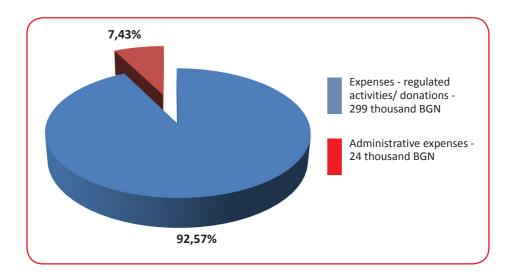
During the past 2013 Centre for Inclusive Education continued to spread the idea of fun learning. Our teaching materials and dolls reached more parents, teachers, professionals and their children. They made the learning effective and enjoyable, and the game even more fun.



INCOME



EXPENSES



THANKS TO:

We are happy to have friends and supporters and count very much on continuing to have them/you. It is impossible to list all who helped us, blessed us, taught us and shared parts of their worlds with us.

But we will try.

We are very thankful to all the children we worked with (or who worked with us), to Prof. John Ravenscroft and Prof. Pamela Deponio from the University of Edinburgh, to Prof. Tony Booth from Cambridge University, to Artemi Sakellariadis from the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, to Dragana Sretenov and Prof. Lani Florian from the Open Society Foundation in London, To Vratsa Municipality, Regional Inspectorate of Education – Vratsa, Resource Center – Vratsa and all teachers and resource teachers from Vratsa who work with the children and support them, to Kate, Terry, to Teemu, to John Davis, Stephen Farrier and all the team from the FIESTA project, to all the professionals and parents who kindly supported the FIESTA research, to Gabrovo Municipality and the welcoming Gabrovo community of dedicated parents and professionals, to the team that we worked with at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, and at the Ministry of Education and Science, to all our friends and colleagues from the North – South Connection project, to all parents who trusted us to call, write or come visit, to the teachers and principals from the partner-schools, to Reni, to Stefan, to Sam Harris, to Yana Kazakova, to Vasil Peev, to Nacho and his great team, to Tsvetelina Stoyanova, to Joro Bivolarski, to Joro Genchev, to Krasi, to Vesela, to Ralitsa, to Miro, to Kapka, Mitko, Nina, Jivodar, Ventsi and Maria, to Yana, Ani and Diana, to Jivka, to Sevda, Ani, Mira and Tonino.

Also, in 2013 we received an invaluable support from the America for Bulgaria foundation. Most importantly, meeting people with their ideas, experience and knowledge helped us to clear up our thoughts and dreams. But also the financial freedom that allowed us, based on consultations with U.S. experts, to focus on couple of well-recognized school-wide methodologies that are to become the backbone of the teacher trainings. Prof. Douglas Cheney (University of Washington) and his team will mentor us through the Self-Assessment and Program Review Administration methodology they have, an assessment approach for leadership teams implementing school wide positive behavior support.

In 2014 teachers will be trained how to maintain effective communication with specialists and parents. It is about building supportive communities and fostering high achievement for all staff and students and we look forward to it!



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