

ANNUAL REPORT  
2019



ASSOCIATION FOR  
SHARED LEARNING

Every child deserves  
support in order to grow  
into a person responsible  
to itself, to the others and  
to the world around us



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Summarising 2019 would be difficult – conclusions, failures, achievements and plans seem to be one and the same, heavily mixed with stamina. If I should be using one word, it would be exactly this - stamina, but the word most important to me in 2019 is "grateful".

I am grateful to my friends, my colleagues and my family for the support, the warmth and the faith. Last year was difficult for the Centre and so challenging that there is no longer a Centre for Inclusive Education but an Association for Shared Learning. We have changed our name and parted with dear colleagues, but we have not changed our nature. And it is in our nature to help, share and support.

Living in uncertainty means living without knowledge, which has, so far, been key, without plans and, mostly, without control. These are difficult times in which we are learning many and sometimes unpleasant things about ourselves and about others. We take responsibility and slowly begin to get used to the almost unbearable discomfort of uncertainty. And we have become more proactive and coherent. At least this is what happened to us, to the association in which we share learning.

It is surprising how many things we have managed to achieve in one year and how many changes we have managed to accept. We received a valuable international award for our One School for All programme, held a successful camp for 130 children, published a book, bought a school and started transforming it into a green education centre...

It has been a formative study year during which we have learned much, become more resilient and smarter, and I hope that 2020 and the next decade will bring us much satisfaction and joy. To all of us.





## WHO WE ARE

The *Association for Shared Learning ELA* is an organisation supporting children's development for more than 20 years.

As *Save the Children UK – Bulgaria Programme* (1997 - 2007), we were looking for alternatives to the institutionalizing of children and urged the Government to undertake the closing of the so-called "children's homes".

As the *Centre for Inclusive Education* (2007-2019), we instilled the inclusive environment as a value and as a shared responsibility in Bulgaria's schools.

Now we are focusing our efforts toward supporting children and young people in their learning and in their search for their own way. Also, we are working with schools, parents and teachers who provide conscious social and emotional skill building support to children.

## OUR WAY OF THINKING

It is our belief that every child must be included and valued and deserves support in order to grow into a person, responsible to itself, to the others and to the world around us.

It is important today that every child should think critically, should connect to itself, to the others and to the environment. And that it should understand in its own way the unity of the living world around us, and its own place in it. In other words, the world needs conscious and responsible people and we want to help as many children as possible to become such people. It may sound as a cliché, but we believe that education does change life for the better and we are joyful to be part of the children's learning.

Because the start of the road of a child should not determine how far the child will reach.

## WHAT WE DO

Most children we meet are not deprived of capabilities but, rather, of opportunities. They need to be guided by good examples in order to build qualities such as team spirit, patience, confidence, perseverance and analytical thinking which are not part for in the syllabus. They need to build a clear picture of what they can do with their lives and how to get there.

We work with children, encouraging them to become responsible to themselves and to the world around them, to develop their strengths, to feel important, to be giving, successful and happy. We build knowledge through research, analyses and studies of children's education, attitudes and welfare in Bulgaria and abroad.

We share knowledge and experience with schools, parents and teachers, working together toward the children's welfare.

## Our team



**Iva Boneva**  
Executive Director



**Antonia Smokova-Tokić**  
Training Manager



**Bilyana Popova**  
Finance and Administration  
Manager



**Victoria Troyanova**  
Educational Methodologies  
and Development Expert,  
Psychologist



**Denitsa Davidkova**  
Building and Development of  
Communities, School Mediation



**Desislava Koleva-Stanislawsky**  
Training and Development Specialist



**Dimitar Lazarov**  
Strategies, Policies and  
Programmes Director



**Dobrin Georgiev**  
Administrative and Process  
Coordinator



**Evgeniy Dimitrov**  
Training and Development  
Specialist



**Ekaterina Ruseva**  
Training and Development  
Specialist



**Elisaveta Tarakdji**  
Training and Development  
Specialist



**Elitsa Ignatova**  
Programme Support Coordinator



**Kamelia Ilieva**  
Communications and  
Partnerships Expert



**Latinka Ducheveva**  
Communications Manager



**Liliya Arakchieva**  
Project Manager



**Lilia Krasteva-Peeva**  
Research, Analyses, and  
Methodologies Director,  
Monitoring and Evaluation



**Margarita  
Asparuhova-Kandilarova**  
Educational Methodologies and  
Development Expert



**Stella Petrova**  
Chief Accountant



**Stefan Stefanov**  
Project Manager



**Stefka Chincheva**  
Training and Development  
Specialist, Psychologist



**Tsvetan Kadiev**  
Project Manager



## Green Educational Centre ELA

Late 2019 has turned into reality our long-cherished dream – to find a place which we could transfer into a fairy-tale experience for children and for adults alike.

And so we started building *an educational centre* in the base of the Zvezdets peak of the Balkan mountain. This place, one of a kind in Bulgaria, will allow the pupils, immersed in nature, to develop their creative powers, their confidence and their analytical thinking.



Teachers and entrepreneurs will show the pupils in the *Association's Green Educational Centre* how school knowledge apply to their professional and daily lives. *The Centre* will present renewable-energy technologies, ways for peaceful cohabitation with and care for nature, and an applied artificial intellect in a supportive informal learning atmosphere. The children will take part in countless workshops such as carpentry, bee keeping, programming, gardening, cooking, orienteering, mechanics, and sports.



We will encourage the pupils to adopt a creative approach to life and a careful attitude to all life. *The Centre* will be accessible to all children and their differences will be accounted for.



Also, we will develop research in our *Educational Centre* and will make it a place for sharing of good practices between teachers. Being a training organization for the *Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski*, we will continue to teach students – the future teachers and mentors of the children, just beginning to form their ideas about the important skills teachers should develop in their pupils.



# The One School for All Programme and the Model for building inclusive school environment in a nutshell, 2014-2020:

## What does it mean for a school to be inclusive?

**AMERICA FOR  
BULGARIA  
FOUNDATION**

The *Lyuben Karavelov Secondary School* in the town of Dobrich has become inclusive by involving teachers into the decision making and school management processes. Teachers and parents from the *Hadji Gencho primary school* in Teteven had come to the idea about making "peaceful day recipes" ensuring that every child feels happy and safe at school.

According to the team of the *Bacho Kiro Secondary School* in Pavlikeni, the key is to involve the parents into the process of education. Pupils from 12 urban centres attend this school and many parents cannot afford the cost for the trip to Pavlikeni for teacher-parents meetings. This is why the school visits the parents through the so-called "off-site" teacher-parents meetings.

Three years ago, the *97th Secondary School "Bratia Miladinovi"* in Sofia started offering additional support to teachers and individual meetings with the parents. The rating of the school has been rising and the number of pupils increased by a fifth.

*The One School for All model* offers a way to work within a team in order to manage school resources and processes towards changing school environment and attitudes to diversity in classrooms, towards changing the attitudes to diversity in the classroom and toward inclusive education, as well as more active and full involvement of all school-community members.

*This model* was specially created for the Bulgarian context by the *Association for*



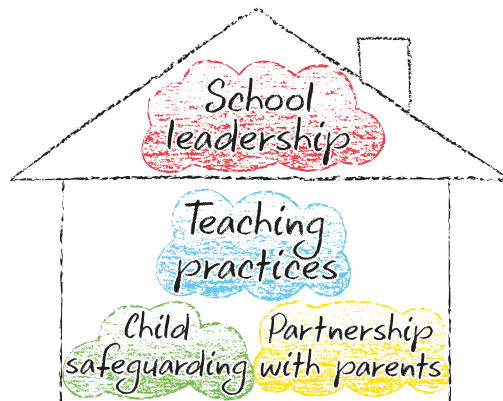
*Shared Learning ELA* (the former *Centre for Inclusive Education*) in partnership with five Bulgarian schools and with the *Washington University* in Seattle, USA.

The Model is based on schools operating as a system. To ensure sustainability, the Model does not provide ready answers to the question of "How to build an inclusive school environment?", but places the school within the frame of a learning organisation analysing its own culture, policies, and practices, and making the necessary changes resulting from this analysis. This is an organic approach at school lead by the teachers and by the management, with ELA's external support.

No two schools are fully alike. The *One School for All* model enables every school to become a safe and welcoming environment for all – pupils, teachers, and parents. *The Model* was developed by the *Association for Shared Learning ELA* with the aid of the *America for Bulgaria Foundation* and has been tested in 15 schools in Bulgaria. Starting in 2014, the *One School for All* programme has involved a total of 376 teachers reaching thousands of pupils and their families.

*From an article by the  
America for Bulgaria Foundation dedicated  
to the One School for All model*

*The Model* relies on shared leadership. Its implementation is managed by leadership teams, consisting of principals, deputy principals and core teaching staff. The work of the school teams is focused on all or part of the following key school development areas: (1) *School management*, (2) *Teaching practices*, (3) *Child safeguarding* and (4) *Partnership with parents*.



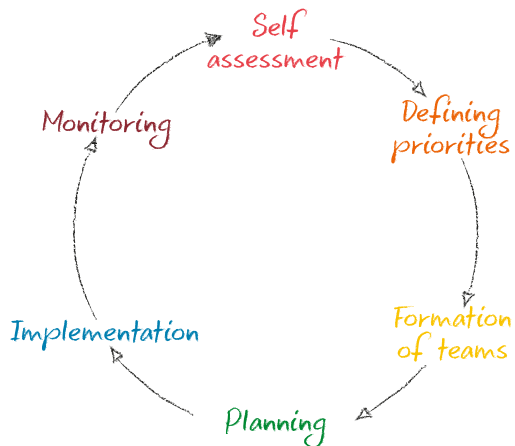
Indeed, the Model reflects life in any school with perfect precision. These four domains are exactly what real school life is.

*Impressions of the Model of focus groups and partners of the Association held in June and July 2018.*



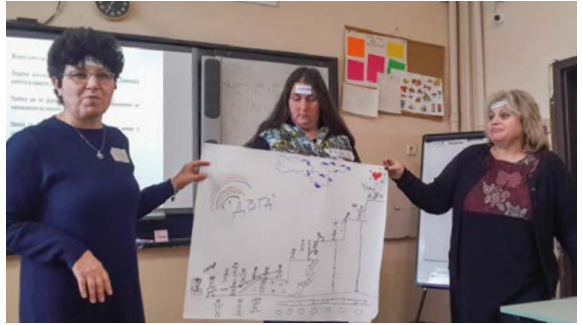
The Association's experts consult and support actively the participating school teams during key steps and in the use of the new methods of the Model:

1. Analysis of the school environment by self-assessment based on key indicators in each of the four domains;
2. Selection of priorities and adopting of specific and measurable goals;
3. Determining of responsible persons and formation of teams;
4. Creating of an action plan with responsible persons and deadlines;
5. Plan implementation and coordination of activities;
6. Progress monitoring.





*“Inclusive education is often understood as integration of pupils with special education needs. A school can be for all only through a comprehensive approach considering the needs of the entire school community,” says Lilia Arakchieva, manager of the One School for All project.*



A truly inclusive school supports the children to develop their capabilities and to overcome the difficulties, the teachers are motivated and confident that they will cope with the dynamic challenges, while the parents are capable of taking responsibility and fulfilling their role in cooperation with the school.



*“Ever since we started working on the model, my colleagues and I communicate better among one another”, says Svetla Ivanova, Principal of the Lyuben Karavelov Secondary School in Dobrich. “We have succeeded in ensuring a more peaceful environment for the children. Their confidence and their smiles have increased. The parents benefit from becoming partial to each initiative and actively involved in the life of the school, and even by initiating various activities.”* The school team worked in all districts and has shown how the model can be applied in other schools as well.

*Emilia Manolova, Principal of the 97th Secondary School Bratia Miladinovi in Sofia sees the value of the Model in that it allows the school “to create an inclusive environment satisfactory to the parents, making the children happy and the teachers successful.*



## Some results in schools applying the Model:

After 2 years of work:

51%

improved understanding within the team about the responsibility to implement inclusive education

31%

more teachers are integrating multi-sectoral and interactive teaching and testing methods

22%

more teachers organize different formats for all parents

26%

more teachers use tools for timely identification of learning difficulties and of the pupils' strengths

After 3 years of work:

25%

more pupils accept diversity in school

12%

more parents accept the diversity in their children's classrooms

In 2019, we made the *One School for All film* (a short and a full versions), which you can find both on the Association ELA website and YouTube channel. Irena Daskalova directed the film in which principals and teachers share their first-hand experience of *the Model*.

If you are ready to work toward making your school more inclusive, get in touch with us. We would be pleased to help you walk the path toward building an inclusive and supportive environment in your school.

E-mail your questions to: [office@cie-bg.eu](mailto:office@cie-bg.eu) and phone us at +359 898 500 848



# Looking Forward to My Future – School Makes Sense Programme

THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS  
VILLUM FONDEN × VELUX FONDEN

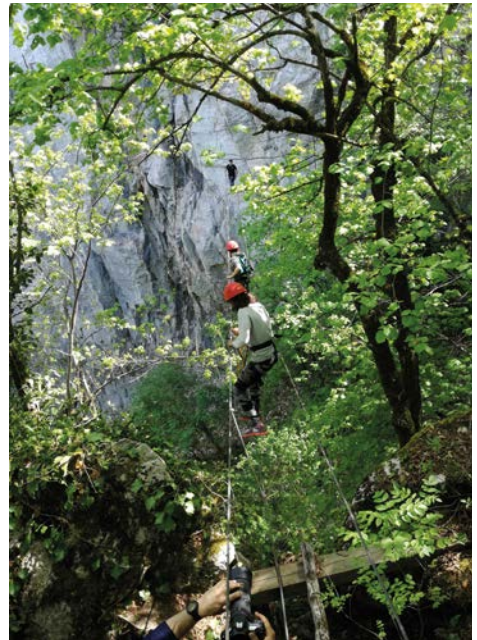
## Looking Forward to My Future – School Makes Sense Programme (2016-2019):

- Development of methodology and a tool to keep children in school by increasing their motivation for learning and by giving practical value of lessons learned in class.
- Voluntary and long-term commitment by children in the sixth grade together with professionals and businesses in the local communities. The children's visits are made with teachers who teach in subjects from the relevant scientific area. The task of the teacher is to link the practical activities with the teaching content.
- Focus on children's motivation to learn and on the need of having a larger community involved – parents, teachers, educational institutions, local professionals, who assume the shared responsibility to throw a bridge between school and children's professional lives.



## What happened in 2019:

- In 2019, our donor, *Velux Denmark*, provided support to us to include five new schools in the *Programme*, this possibility not being part of the initial schedule, but having contributed toward wider testing of the methodology developed during the previous two years with our partners, the *Georgi Benkovski Secondary School* from the town of Teteven, and the *Hristo Smirnenski Secondary School* in the town of Brezovo. Each of the schools who became included after a through selection process (the *St Paisi Hilendarski Primary School* in the Ezerhe village, the *Otec Paisi Secondary School* in the village of Medkovets, the *N. Y. Vaptsarov Primary School* in the Selanovtsi village, the *Vasil Levski Primary School* in the town of Belene, and the *Hristo Nikiforov Primary School* in the town of Lovech) has broadened its understanding of the needs of the children to learn by experiencing actual tasks and problems in the field, guided by a professional mentor in an area chosen by the school.
- We continued working with the seventh-graders participating in the *Programme* in order to develop further their motivation and their sense of success achieved by themselves. The seventh-graders developed their own school-environment changing projects which we financed.
- We launched a national tour with 28 district meetings, open to all schools.





During these meetings school community, local administration and business representatives learned more about the *Programme* methodology, about how they can introduce it their schools and what additional support they may receive from the *Association*. The meetings were held with the support of the regional education administrations and the Ministry of Education and Sciences.



- We conducted 2 training sessions to implement the *Looking Forward to My Future – School Makes Sense Programme*. More than 70 people participated, among them principals, teachers, resource teachers, counselling staff and psychologists, representing schools from all over the country.



- We held a seaside summer camp with more than 130 children from all five schools. For six days we not only played together a lot but also learned how to have fun together.

Many workshops, sports events and performances were held and, of course, lounging at the beach.

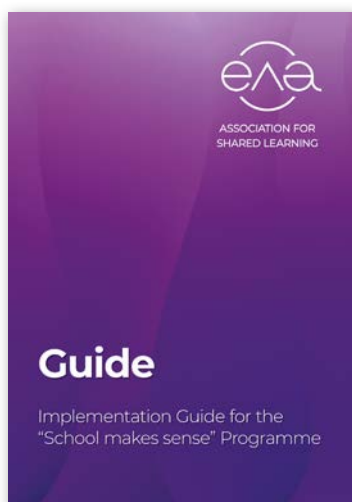
- Being a training organisation for the *Sofia University of Kliment Ohridski*, we invited

undergraduates from all teaching departments to a five-day training followed by practice with children who had taken part in the *Programme* during their summer camp. Having selected them by their motivation letters and having met them, we



chose 17 undergraduates who proved to be the most radiant and responsible young colleagues we have ever met. After the first-aid training, group work, emotion management, involving the pupils in the process of education in the form of play, and many other events the undergraduates dedicated all of their time and energy to the pupils from the five urban centres and made the summer camp an unforgettable experience for everyone.

- We published the *School Makes Sense implementation Guide*.



- We held for yet another year the forestation initiative of the Bulgarian transport and logistics company Cargo Planet and their partners from the EcoCommunity Foundation. This initiative is an inter-company competition and this time the participants in the mission chose to donate funds for an educational summer camp for pupils from the School Makes Sense programme.
- Three more schools joined the Programme at the beginning of the 2019-2020 study year – *5th Secondary School P.R.Slaveikov* from the town of Pernik, *7th Secondary School Yordan Radichkov* from the town of Montana, and the *Dimcho Debelyanov Secondary School* from the town of Belene. Find more about their successes in the next report.



## Data from field work:

**68%**

of the professionals involved in the programme said that seeing a profession from "inside out", working with their hands and trying new things have been most attractive for the children

**64%**

of the teachers were convinced that the Programme can help the children very much to realise their dreams about a certain profession by giving them more diverse and more accurate information

**62%**

of the parents approved the selected professionals, their work with the children and the fact that they were from the local community

**80%**

of the teachers involved in the programme have found it interesting and very beneficial for the children

**64%**

of the children said that they can relate what they have learned at school to real life

**56%**

of the teachers were of the opinion that the Programme gives the children an "inside look" at their coveted profession

## Evaluation of the Programme by an external expert after data was collected during the third academic year:

- The Programme brings specific benefits to education by expanding and developing the children's interests and allows them first-hand opportunities to find out their capabilities for a profession. Most valuable are the opinions of the children themselves who say that the programme opens more possibilities that they have ever imagined. Although very important and necessary, training by doing during classes is painfully missing from the entire education system, as is the connection between the study material and the presentations by professionals. It is the teachers' opinion that this is what makes the programme interesting and that this connection is natural;
- The Programme helps to bring the meaning to school education by stimulating change in the study environment, in the study process and in all participants, and is conducive to deeper and more substantial changes in the school education paradigm and goals.

The final conclusion to be made about the effect and benefits of the programme is that by restoring the meaning of studying it creates gradually an attitude among the children and a desire to continue to study outside their time in school, because it is interesting and is fun. It shows them the need and pleasure of life-long studying.

Alvin Toffler notes in support: *"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."*

## Children – safe and protected



Keeping  
Children  
Safe

Safeguarding children continues to be one of our major causes, which we further by applying the *Keeping Children Safe* standards in all our projects and programmes. We are prepared and motivated to offer support to all institutions who work with and for children to shape their statutory obligations of child safeguarding through efficient and feasible policies and practices.

## The SMILE Project



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## Scale up the Model for Inclusive Learning in Europe

Spreading of the "One School for All" Model of building an inclusive school environment throughout Europe.

*The Association for Shared Learning Model* has gained international recognition. It received funding in 2019 by the *Erasmus+ Programme* of the European Commission and is now being applied in three more states – Romania, Greece and Portugal. A total of 9 school teams will be trained and will apply *the Model* following the example of their counterparts in Bulgaria. Furthermore, the *Association's* online course *Introduction to Inclusive Education*, assisted by *Erasmus+*, will be translated and adapted into English and will be freely disseminated all over Europe.

The opening meeting for this project took place in May 2019 in the town of Luz in Portugal. In May 2019 we provided training for our international partners from Portugal, Greece and Romania. The training was focused on the transferring to the participating partners of know-how and innovative practices, on the adopting of the philosophy and practices behind *the Model*, and on the use of its tools (*Model Application Tool, Self-Assessment Instrument*).







*The One School for All Model* received the *Zero Project* international award for innovative practices in inclusive education. In 2019 the *Zero Project*, an initiative of the Austrian *Essl Foundation*, awarded 86 innovative practices and policies in support of social entrepreneurship and people with disabilities around the world. The top ten organisations with distinguished innovative practices took part in the *Zero Project Accelerator*, and in several months of training in capacity building and in promotion of their activities around the world. *The Association for Shared Learning* is one of these distinguished organisations.

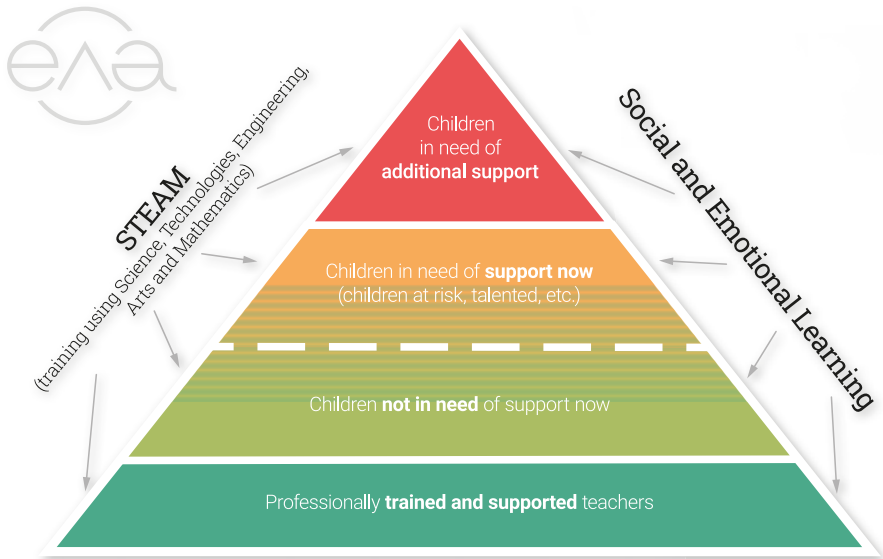
It was invited to present the *Model* during the annual *Zero Project 2020* Conference in Vienna, Austria. More than 800 people from over 90 states attend this annual conference and include business, governmental and non-governmental representatives supportive of innovative solutions in aid of people with disabilities, this year's focus being on inclusive education.

## **The Professional Community for Inclusive Education**

On 10 February 2017 the *Centre for Inclusive Education* (now the *Association for Shared Learning* ELA) initiated the establishment of a *Professional Community for Inclusive Education*. The *Community* is an informal gathering of people with common interests and shared values in the field of inclusive education. It numbers more than 80 members, among them school principals, teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, university teachers, resource teachers, school mediators, etc. The *Community* members meet 3 times a year at two-day plenary sessions where they share experience and discuss cases observed in their practice. One of the tasks that the Professional Community of Inclusive

The work of *the Community* is focused on changing attitudes, improving legislation and supporting school practice in order to achieve better understanding and assert the principles.

Education has set is to discuss and voice its public opinions on topical issues dealing with inclusive education.



## The School

In 2019 the *Community* held its three traditional working meetings in different locations (respectively in February, June and October), with ended with final statements on the issues introduction of socially emotional learning (SEL) as a systematic approach toward development of socially-emotional skills among the pupils during their training at school, and toward changing of the learning space in line with modern trends and design. The public discussion of the Ordinance for the Physical Environment at School, ongoing in 2019, has brought new ideas about transforming school spaces which are no longer functional into welcoming and safe spaces which are conducive to the learning process.

At the beginning of 2019, the *Professional Community for Inclusive Learning* elected its new chairman for a term of one year. *Ivailo Kiskinov*, principal of the *Hristo Botev Primary School* in the town of Dolni Pasarel passed the baton over to *Rumiana Bogdanova*, principal of the *Vasil Levski Primary School* in the town of Belene.



## The National Programme of AVON and ELA to overcome violence



At the beginning of the year, *AVON Bulgaria* and *Association for Shared Learning ELA* joined efforts in a partnership *programme*

# AVON

intended to carry out preventive activities against violence among young people and high school students. During their education, tenth-graders receive information and discuss violence in all its forms and manifestations. They can think about the stereotypes which underlie our relationships. The students are motivated to use their own resources toward positive change, by organising their own dedicated campaigns at school.

The research results showed that most tenth-graders place the school on equal level with the street as a place of violence. Also, there is a clear trend toward accusing the

The programme was based on a nation-wide study in February 2019 focusing on violence in relationships, in the family environment and in school.

victim for having caused their acts of violence. The victims have little or no knowledge of support offices and services they can resort to in the event of violence, and are witnesses of a remarkably high percentage of mental violence.

On the other hand, most would share and respond to seeing or becoming victims to violence. They see the forms of violence in human relations as a negative phenomenon. Their trust in school professionals – counselling staff, psychologists class teachers, as people to resort to for support is remarkable. The significant level of trust toward their peers with regard to this subject is also proof that working to develop peer-to-peer support skills is a worthwhile cause. The participants in the study see the meaning and understand the need to talk about and work against this subject at school.

*The programme* was piloted with nine and tenth graders from the 137th and the 97th secondary schools in Sofia at the end of the school year.



On 25 and 26 June 2019, more than 20 students from two *Association* partner schools in Sofia gave their time to a subject of exceptional importance to young people – recognizing and responding to unacceptable behaviour and violence arising in school and directed to girls and women, among others.

During the workshop, these young people learned skills related to the subject by planning with their peers the organising and holding of topical events which will they offer to their class mates during the new school year. The discussions were dynamic and the young people were exceptionally active in sharing their opinions and in asking questions.



**NATIONAL PROGRAM  
AGAINST VIOLENCE**

**eVA AVON**



Schools from Sofia, Sofia District and Pernik, targeting positive relationships among the pupils, were given the opportunity to apply until November 22 for inclusion into the second phase of the programme.



Representatives of *Association for Shared Learning ELA* and *AVON Bulgaria* reviewed the applications.

A competition resulted in the selection of 10 schools from Sofia, Sofia District and Pernik for inclusion into the second phase of the National Programme against Violence of the *Association for Shared Learning ELA* and of *AVON Bulgaria*: the *5th Secondary School of Pencho Rachov Slaveikov* from Pernik, the *Secondary School of Doctor Petar Beron* from Kostinbrod and the *National High School in Finance and Business*, the *French Language High School Alphonse de Lamartine*, the *51st Secondary School of Elisaveta Bagriana*, the *Henry Ford Professional High School in Transport and Energy*, the *A. S. Popov Professional High School in Audio, Video and Telecommunications*, the *28th Secondary School of Aleko Konstantinov*, the *31st Ivan Vazov Secondary School with Foreign Languages and Management*, and the *19th Secondary School of Elin Pelin*, all from Sofia.



Between November 2019 and February 2020, the *ELA Association* team conducted studies with the tenth graders from each of the selected 10 schools. The meeting presented the curriculum in which the students are invited to set up a team of active peers with whom to organise their own school campaign on the subject.



## 2019 Inclusive Education Conference

This International Forum was held for the seventh time with specialists, experts and practitioners from all areas of inclusive education gathered in one place to exchange ideas and to share applicable experiences of counterparts.

This year's *Conference* focused on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as a systematic approach to develop socially emotional skills among the students. Focusing entirely on the STEM component (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), we forget the SEL component without which the knowledge we gain remains unusable. This event was seeking for the point of intersection between academic and social skills, which is a constant process of studying the needs of children in each stage of their development.

Beside presenting the international experience of this subject, the *Conference* allowed for discussions, parallel workshops, experience-sharing and exchange of contacts between the participants. We organised it as a two-day event outside Sofia for the first time, and this enabled us to apply socially-economic learning in-situ and to experiment with raising our own skills and adaptivity toward the environment.



Find more photos from the *Conference* [here](#)





# Конференция „Приобщаващи образователни практики“ 2019

The *Conference on Inclusive Educational Practices* was held again in 2019, this time in Plovdiv.

More than 120 teachers, specialists and principals from the entire country joined the *Event* at which their counterparts presented 41 educational practices from kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and high schools.

Successful practices were presented in three topical areas: games and activities intended to develop emotional competences and social skills in the students, differentiated teaching practices, and successful team work.



Национална конференция  
„Приобщаващи образователни практики  
в училище и детската градина“ 2019

AMERICA FOR  
BULGARIA  
FOUNDATION

ЦЕНТЪР ЗА  
ПРИОБЩАВАЩО  
ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ

## Days of Inclusion 2019 National Campaign

In 2019 we held *Days of Inclusion* for the fourth year in a row, this time under the slogan of "Let's be better!"

Children and their relationships were in our focus this year. Our national representative well-being study among seventh-graders in 2018 showed rather disconcertingly that 44.7% of the children do not believe that their class-mates are good people.

We challenged them with this year's campaign to be better toward one another. The main message of the initiative is to search for the good because it all around, as long as we can see it.

We were joined in this by the *Aide BG* vloggers with whom we decided to challenge the children to seek good things happening at school and to tell why their class mates are good people.

The *Aide BG* channel dedicated a video to the 10 of the most exciting stories, and five of the video senders had an exclusive meeting with the vloggers in early June.



## The Students in Action National Competition



*The Students in Action Competition* is part of the School Makes Sense Programme and was conceived to provoke the children to initiate school-environment changing projects with resources from their communities.

No financial support was provided to the participants, the intention being that they should seek and obtain such support for their projects on their own, using all of their imagination and enthusiasm. The most successful projects received monetary awards which the children were allowed to decide how to use on their own.

This *Competition* started a little before Christmas in 2018, and we have seen the results before the spring-time holidays. We must confess, that our team was highly surprised and truly impressed by the successful projects. We heard unbelievable stories about the project implementation processes and their results - 25 of the 33 applying schools had completed their projects on time. All of them were happy with their work, having found many new friends and support from outside their schools, and were planning new initiatives. Although there were only 5 awards, everyone was a winner because the results of their work were visible.

The enormous interest and success has lead us to repeat the competition whose results are expected to arrive in early 2020.



Primary School Dr. Petar Beron, Mornchilgrad – "In the Warm Embrace of Books"



VII Secondary School Yordan Radichkov, Montana – "Building of a Biology Room"



## "Two Years of Inclusive Education in the University" Round Table

A round table was held on May 10, 2019 in the town of Plovdiv on the subject of "More than 2 Years of Inclusive Education in the University – Challenges and Achievements".

The discussion involved teachers from all universities in Bulgaria, representatives of the *Ministry of Education and Sciences*, of the *The Professional Community for Inclusive Education*, teachers and school principals, and NGO representatives.

The forum showed that professional training is most important for the future teachers so that they can feel supported and capable of adequate teaching without being restricted by the children's educational needs, ethnicity, economic status etc.

The Inclusive Teacher Profile taken from the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education was discussed as well.

The experts of *Association for Shared Learning ELA* (former Centre for Inclusive Education) presented the results of an on-line study of the opinions of teachers and school principals about their knowledge and skills and about what then need in order to work with otherness.

A presentation was made of resources for use by universities in the training of undergraduates, with the Association's on-line course *Introduction to Inclusive Education*.



## Priobshti.se

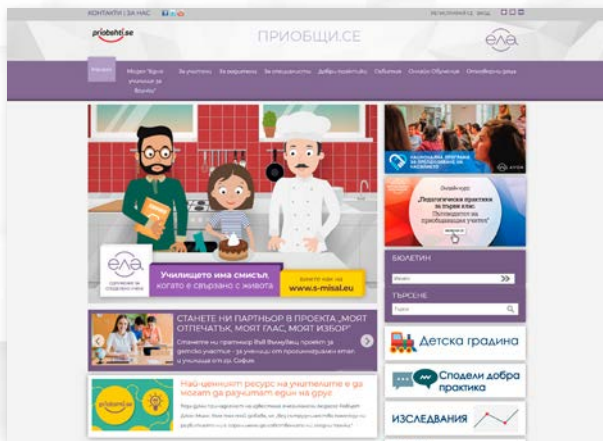
During its fifth year of its existence *Priobshti.se* continued to be an important platform meeting the demand of Bulgarian teachers and specialists for specific materials, techniques and strategies of working with children; offering a space to share and exchange ideas on education and upbringing, and on development of school teams.

The site was visited by 214,500 visitors last year, which is 40,000 more as compared to 2018.

Ever since the beginning of its existence (end November 2014) to the end of 2019, *Priobshti.se* has reached out to total 746,739 people with 1,207,755 sessions and 3,010,157 visited pages.

815 articles and materials have been published on this platform by the end of 2019 with more than 1,600 users signing up for the updated newsletter of the *Virtual Centre for Inclusive Education*, which includes news from [www.ela-bg.eu](http://www.ela-bg.eu), the website of the *Association for Shared Learning ELA*.

In 2020, *Priobshti.se* will start a new exciting journey with new partnerships and with many new ideas from teachers for teachers. We are happy that for five years now we, who endeavour every day to make learning interesting, engaging, inclusive, innovative, and to include everyone - teachers, students and parents alike, into the positive change, have been united by a shared and positive space. We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute.



## On-line training courses

In 2019, we created as many as three new on-line training courses:

"Teaching Practices for the First Grade.  
A Guide Book for the Inclusive Teacher."

This course is intended to help teachers in their mission to teach their pupils to read, write and do maths, to motivate them to learn, to help them grow confident in their abilities, and to feel part of an accepting and supportive community. Very often this requires travelling a long way along which one is easily lost or delayed.



Teaching with Understanding.  
How to Support Secondary School Students'

Целта на този курс е да подкрепи учителите, които работят с ученици в т.нар. „трудна“ възраст – годините между 11 и 14. Началото на пети клас бележи важен момент от развитието на детето и е свързан с много промени, които са особено осезаеми в периода на прогимназиалния етап. Младият човек постепенно започва да навлиза в света на възрастните, без непременно да има емоционалната подготовка за това.

В училище среща нови предизвикателства, за които му е необходимо да си изработи нови механизми за справяне, да намери нови инструменти, да свикне с непознатото темпо, да отговори на новите очаквания.







## "Partnership with Parents"

This course is intended to support teachers in the building of more wholesome partnerships with parents. Our goal is to enhance the attitude toward frequent parent behaviours challenging to any teacher. In this course, we will offer some psychological explanations, new approaches, different reasoning and principles which could make easier the daily involvement with parents.

## "Introduction to Inclusive Education"

Our *Introduction to Inclusive Education* on-line course continues to be of interest to teachers and specialists alike. A total of 2,659 persons have signed up by late 2019.



These three new courses, as all others, can be accessed at the  
*new training platform of the Association:*  
***e-learn.ela-bg.eu***

**A new educational platform in help of teachers.**

**5 online courses.**

**Registration is open.**

**e-learn.ela-bg.eu**

**eLa**  
ASSOCIATION FOR  
SHARED LEARNING

## Training courses

We in the *Association for Shared Learning ELA* believe, that to be supportive, the teaching teams themselves are in need of support and this is the reason for our training and mentor programmes intended to make general education and resource teachers, tutors and school principals feel highly qualified and well performing in their work.

Our *Training Courses* cover subjects such as school management, partnership with parents, safeguarding of children, teaching practices, global education, etc. Thirteen of these training programmes lead to qualification credits. We carry out training both in Sofia, in the office of *Association ELA*, and on site, upon request, in each school or teaching space in Bulgaria. We offer group discounts for school teams.



Learn more about  
our training courses at  
[www.ela-bg.eu](http://www.ela-bg.eu) ➔ [Training](#)

The training we offer include topics such as:

- "Child Participation Matters" – training seminar for teachers, educators and pedagogical counsellors
- The role of school management in the building of an inclusive school environment. Fundamentals of efficient school management.
- Basic training seminar on development of school policies and procedures of child safeguarding
- Early risk evaluation of learning difficulties at the stage of primary education – part 1 Entry card of observation of first graders and ideas for activities and strategies for providing support in the classroom.
- Global civil education in civil, health, inter-cultural and environmental education
- Early risk evaluation of learning difficulties at the stage of primary education – Part 2. Card of identification of difficulties in reading, writing and maths, and of ideas for activities and strategies for providing support in the classroom.
- Partnership with parents as an element of the Model for building inclusive school environment.
- Teamwork supporting personal development in kindergartens and schools,
- Self-assessment process and planning of school priorities using a School Environment Analysis Instrument
- Timely identification of learning difficulties at the start of lower secondary education. Presentation of the Teacher's Notebook for the 5th grade.
- Care for teacher's mental health
- Parent group titled 'Teenager – Instructions on Safe Interactions'
- Relations at school – support group
- Inclusion in education; working in multicultural environment
- Four management frameworks – in aid of school management

## Consultations

The expert knowledge of the ELA Association is available in the case of need for support in Your child's learning or for improvement of Your school's education processes.



In-school consultation of the teaching team on various topics by request, such as:

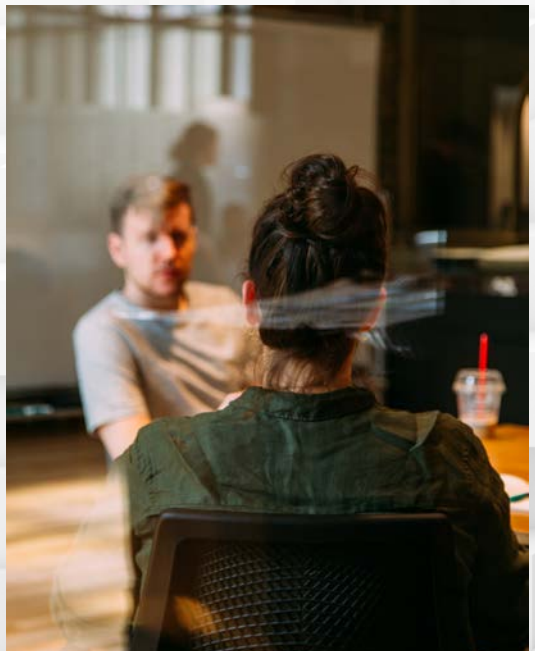
- Improvement of team work (or discussion of a case within the team);
- Improvement of class work (prevention of problematic behaviour, group-work arrangements, socio-emotional teaching, discussion of case(s), etc.)
- Improving of partnership with parents.

## School mediation

In 2019, a growing number of schools have been turning to external *mediators* in order to solve school conflicts.

*School mediation* is effective in any type of conflicts: between students, fellow workers, parents and teachers, and students and teachers.

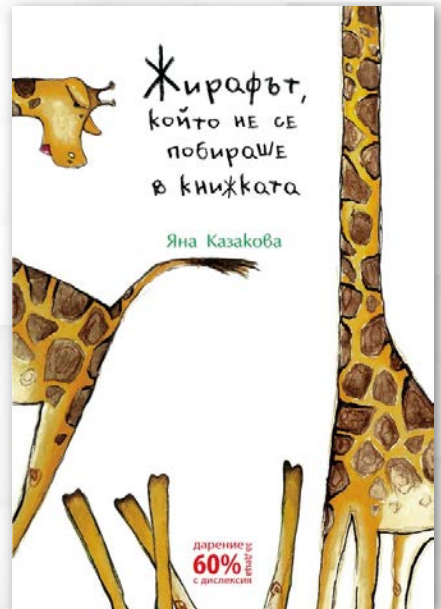
According to information from mediators, the success rate of reaching a solution that satisfies both parties, is over 80%.



## Zhivko the Giraffe

The fund-raising campaign "Zhivko the Giraffe and friends help children with learning difficulties who have spent the first years of their life in institutions"

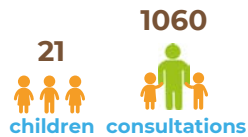
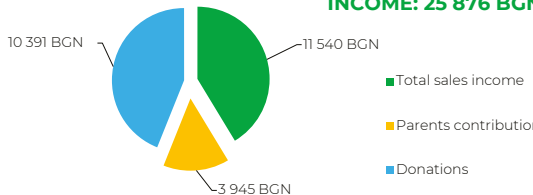
In 2019, the campaign continued for a ninth year in a row to raise funds and to provide speech therapy and psychological aid to children with learning difficulties who have spent the first years of their life in institutions.



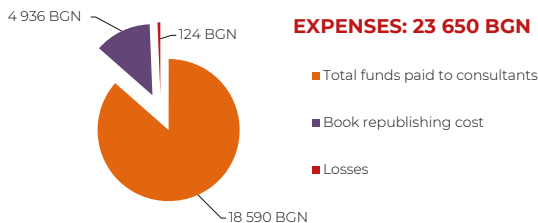
### Zhivko turns 9 years old!

from the start of the campaign to the end of 2019:

#### INCOME: 25 876 BGN



#### EXPENSES: 23 650 BGN



2 226 BGN  
unexpended funds





**Slanchitsa**

  
slanchica.com

Our *on-line bookstore* continued to develop in 2019. In it you will find toys and aids developing the skills and imagination of the children. Our dolls and special materials are a good and wholesome game for easier and more efficient training, but they also help conduct a difficult conversation with parents during which you will need assistance. You can find many free resources at *Slanchitsa*. A percentage of the value of any purchase you make will be donated to the *Fund in Support of Children with Special Education Needs* of the *Association for Shared Learning ELA*. This fund finances publications, events, seminars and individual consultancy with specialists to help children be successful and live happily.



## Halls for rent

In 2019, we reorganized our office into a shared learning and working space.

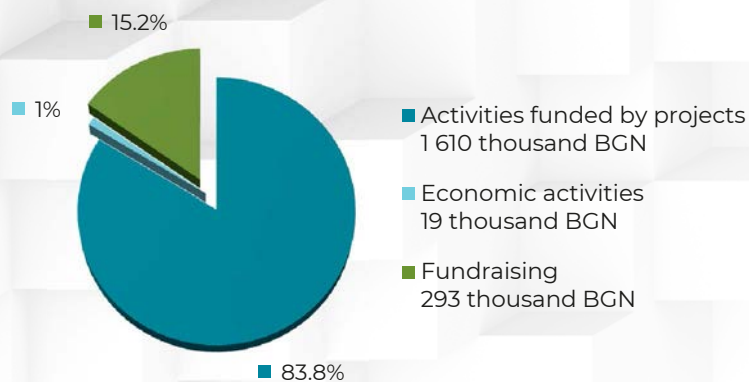


The halls we offer are in the very centre of Sofia, with convenient and fast transport from every point of the city.

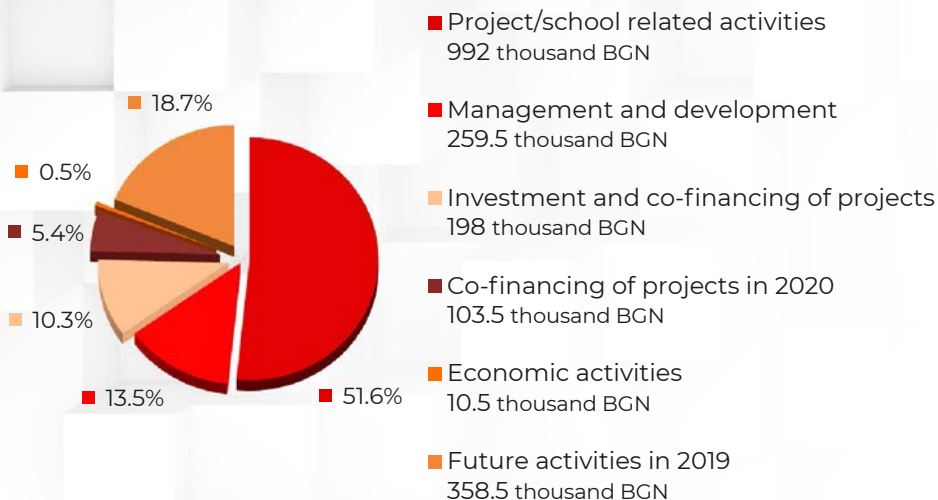


# Finance

## Revenue



## Expenditures



# THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US

And, in the end, let us share some precious moments fed back from the 2019 Inclusive Education Conference:

- *Keep on inspiring and motivating us, the students, showing us that there are different, entertaining interaction methods and practices which rivet the students' interest.*
- *Don't stop! The parents school set up by You will be the best!*
- *Association ELA, be like a fir tree – eternal, resilient and beautiful.*
- *Yes, be healthy! Have patience when working with us because we often miss the deadlines and need to be reminded.*
- *Despite the difficulties you come against along the "education road", keep on giving hope that the best is yet to come and that it is up to us alone!*
- *Keep on motivating and inspiring! We are glad to be a part of your family!*



+359 898 500 848

+359 2 870 20 63

[office@cie-bg.eu](mailto:office@cie-bg.eu)

[www.ela-bg.eu](http://www.ela-bg.eu)

[www.s-misal.eu](http://www.s-misal.eu)

[priobshti.se](http://priobshti.se)

[slanchica.com](http://slanchica.com)

