

Concept of programme

"Conference on the implementation of quality inclusive education in the context of achieving SDG 4 in Bosnia and Herzegovina"

Topic: *"Connecting the actors dedicated to achieving the SDG 4 "*

Name of the conference: *"Let's Illuminate EDUCATION"* (local language: "Osvijetlimo OBRAZovanje" the word in upper letters in the word education means "cheek" OBRAZovanje and in our language also means honor, honesty, pride so the title appeals to the honor of education)

Date: *Monday, 04.10.2021. from 10:00 to 17:00*

Venue: An event that is to be conducted in a combination of [gathering participants live and via videoconference \(platform for virtual meetings\) using the ZOOM](#). The plenary session, as well as the panel discussions, take place alive in a [conference hall in Center for youth Novo Sarajevo](#) and those speakers who cannot participate in person would join via ZOOM.

The audience would also follow the conference via ZOOM. The panels will go one after the other for technical simplicity of transmission via ZOOM. The link for the ZOOM of the conference will be shared before the conference.

Conference organizers: *MyRight- Empowers people with disabilities and the Federal Ministry of Science and Education with support of with the support of the Committees for the Advocacy of Inclusive Education in accordance with Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

Abstract

Does Bosnia and Herzegovina have a strategy for quality inclusive education as a part of a strategy for the achievement of the SDG 4 for the period 2020-2030 - what has been done so far and what are the next steps? What exactly does this mean for the ministries of education, cantons, municipalities, schools, teachers, students, parents - the local community? What else needs to be done to move closer to achieving SDG 4?

MyRight and the Federal Ministry of Education bring together decision-makers, international and non-governmental organizations, and participants in inclusive education to reflect on the direct connection between (non) existing strategies and necessary regulations and their application in the field of quality inclusive education for students with disabilities.

The SDG 4 obliges countries to quality education and reads: Ensure inclusive and quality education and promote the possibility of lifelong learning. Creating conditions for quality inclusive education enables the fulfillment of goal 4, and quality inclusive education is one of the most important preconditions for poverty reduction (SDG 1). Sub-objective 4.1 clearly states that states need to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equal, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes; while sub-objective 4.5 states even more specifically that states have a duty to eliminate gender inequality and provide equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. Specifically, sub-objective 4a further details the need to build and upgrade educational institutions that are adapted to children, people with disabilities, and gender differences, and provide a safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environment for all.

Quality inclusive education is the foundation that guarantees a better and safer future for every person, including people with disabilities, both economically and socially through the creation of employment opportunities and active participation in society, and in terms of protection from violence and exploitation. Bosnia and Herzegovina is obliged to fulfill the obligations undertaken by ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as joining the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, and therefore needs to accelerate work on quality and equitable inclusive education.

Declaratively, the importance of quality inclusive education for children and youth with disabilities is emphasized through the rhetoric of various participants in the political, institutional, non-governmental, as well as in media space. However, there is still a lack of a systematic approach, as indicated by the document "Framework for the Realization of Sustainable Development Goals", which states: "A special problem in the field of education is access to education for children and people with various disabilities. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are no official data on the number and persons with disabilities and the type of difficulties, nor how many children and persons with disabilities are not included in the education process, while the policies for their inclusion are sporadic. In this regard, a particularly important driver in the field of inclusive education is the definition and implementation of policies that provide equitable access to education for children, young people and people with disabilities."



Jovan Petrović, participant in the campaign for qualitative inclusive education [#ProbuDiSe](#), 2021, Dobož

Goal of the conference

Conference participants will have the opportunity to hear from policymakers, representatives of institutions, civil society, as well as inclusive education practitioners about their work and efforts that are aimed at achieving quality inclusive education where every child, regardless of disability, is recognized as an equal individual. The conference will provide a space for active dialogue with the aim of achieving a common position on various priorities and examples from practice that lead to quality inclusive education, and thus the fulfillment of SDG 4. The conference offers the possibility of identifying steps that will promote operational cooperation and sharing the lessons learned in the field of practical implementation of inclusive education. The aim of the conference is to expand the perspective of understanding quality inclusive education, as well as identifying opportunities for synergy and innovation. Special focus will be placed on the promotion of models that lead to quality inclusive education that have proven themselves in practice. The examples and recommendations that inclusive education practitioners present at the conference will be an excellent foundation and basis for the creation of further recommendations for each identified target group, which will be one of the results of this conference. In addition, this conference will contribute to the connecting the actors to achieve quality inclusive education.

Speakers

During this conference, participants will have the opportunity to get the information about the current situation, concrete proposals from policymakers, academia, and representatives of international and civil society organizations, including the people with disabilities and teaching practitioners.

Plenary session Part 1

Welcome speeches by the conference organizers:

Binasa Goralija, MyRight Regional Coordinator for Europe

Nadija Bandić, Assistant Minister, Federal Ministry of Education and Science

Guest keynote speaker Ms. Nafisa Baboo, Director of Inclusive Education, Light for the World
"Inclusive Education - Importance and Role in Achieving the SDGs"

Nafisa Baboo is the Director of the Department of Inclusive Education at Light for the World, a long-standing partner organization of MyRight, which is also dedicated to support and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities around the world. Nafisa understands the reality of developing countries very well because she has worked in many of them developing and improving the education of people with disabilities. Nafisa has used her life experience as a person with a disability, together with her professional qualifications as a Master of Inclusive Education, to research and advise on inclusive education policies and practices, advocate for the children with disabilities and educate teachers, education officials, and communities on aspects of inclusive education. Nafisa is an avid user and promoter of technology in the education of persons with disabilities and views inclusive education for children with disabilities as crucial to enhancing quality education for all and fostering a more inclusive society with no child left behind. Nafisa serves on the board of the Global Campaign for Education and the Technical Advisory Committee of the Inclusive Education Initiative. She is the former chair of the Inclusive Education task group of the International Disability and Development Consortium. She is the author of many prominent publications on inclusive education.

Duration: 30 minutes

Plenary session part 2

Present and future of inclusive education in BiH

2. Amna Alispahić, Member of the Board for advocacy for Article 24 of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities

3. Ankica Gudeljević, Minister, Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH

4. Bojana Urumova, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo

5. Nadija Bandić, Assistant Minister, Federal Ministry of Education and Science

6. Enea Hotić, Head of the Department for Primary Education, Ministry of Education of the Republic of Srpska

7. Vanja Colic, Senior expert associate for inclusion of students with special educational needs, Ministry of Education of the Republic of Srpska

8. Tatjana Dragić, Education Officer, OSCE

9. Sanja Kabil, Head of Education Programme, UNICEF

Duration: 110 minutes

Break: 60 minutes

Introduction to the panels

Topic: Indicators for monitoring the implementation of inclusive education

Duration: 15 minutes

Presenter: **Amira Borovac**, Education inspector, Ministry of Education Bosansko-podrinjski canton, member of Working group that created the Indicators

Panel 1

Topic: Perspective of inclusive education through strengthening the competencies of the teaching staff

Panelists: prof. dr. Lejla Kafedžić, doc.dr. Gordana Dukić, Nedim Krajišnik, Executive Director Step by Step

Moderator – prof. dr. Ivana Zečević

Summary of the goal of the panel

Teachers at all levels of education are the key actors in the organization and implementation of quality education for every child. Although they work in challenging circumstances, well-educated, supported, and motivated teachers influence the approach, participation and achievement of every child. In this regard, teachers should be supported in their efforts to make their practice more inclusive. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to develop the key competencies of teachers during the initial education as well as while in professional service.

During the panel, through the reflections of various actors will be identified the key aspects that need to be approached systematically during the process of education of teachers, for the purpose of quality inclusive education. By the end of the panel we will find out what are the key competencies of educators and teachers in an inclusive class/group, having in mind the framework of competencies for lifelong learning, necessary teacher competencies, but also the profile of an inclusive teacher, and how much the study programs enable expected competencies in an inclusive environment.

The identified subtopics are:

- Development of competencies of teachers for educational work in an inclusive environment
- Creating the study programs for the education of future teachers
- Professional development of teachers for educational work in an inclusive environment

Duration: 60 minutes

Break: 10 minutes

Panel 2

Topic: Systems of support at different levels of education

Panelists: Sevdija Kujović -Association Život s Down sindromom FBiH, Alma Kudra DUGA – Društvo ujedinenih građanskih akcija -DUGA, doc. dr. Sandra Bjelan-Guska, Alma Mujanović, activist for the right on sign language

Moderator - Igor Ledić, Down syndrome Mostar

Summary of the goal of the panel

Establishing the systems of support to ensure inclusive education is crucial for the quality of the process. Systems of support include various subjects, levels and ways of its implementation. In the implementation of quality inclusive education, systems of support are needed to the educational institutions, educators and teachers, but a special focus is on the direct systems of support to the children and youth with disabilities. This means recognizing and understanding the child's capacities, interests, needs, and individual progress, and support to the progress through temporary, occasional, or permanent assistance from peers, teachers, and/or other adults. There are many ways to support children and youth with disabilities, and some forms of direct support include the formation of an expert team for the provision of support in the implementation of inclusive education at the level of the educational institution; developing the peer support programs; creating a plan of reasonable adjustments needed for a specific child, but also the implementation of transition plans from preschool education to the higher education institutions.

During the panel, participants will discuss the importance of support in inclusive education necessary for the achievement of quality education. It will be emphasized the necessity of a systematic approach in establishing support, but also the financing of the entire process on the way to the realization of quality education that should lead to the optimal development and the competencies of a person. The identified subtopics are:

- Reasonable accommodation
- Transition plans
- Peer support

Duration: 60 minutes

Break: 10 minutes

Panel 3

Topic: Employment as an outcome of quality inclusive education

Panelists: prof. dr. Lejla Osmic, University Sarajevo, prof. dr. Biljana Sladoje-Bošnjak, University Eastern Sarajevo, Maida Agić, Project Officer MyRight, Fikret Zuko, Director of Association of the blind in Sarajevo Canton, Ajla Huseinović, Member of Youth with Disabilities Board, Canton

Moderator - Hana Sokolović, psychologist, journalist, and civil society activist

Education and employment are important to every person, including persons with disabilities, because they provide opportunities for learning and development, financial independence, fulfilling the social roles, the ability to choose and make decisions about their lives and exercise their rights. This is directly related to a person's financial status and stability, which in turn affects overall quality of life, including access to quality nutrition, physical activities and social engagement, and affects identity, self-esteem, mental health and sense of worth. Exclusion from the educational process or insufficient quality of education, therefore, has far-reaching consequences, because a person is competitive in the labor market proportionally to the competencies that one possesses. Exercising

the right to education and the possibility of additional, new training or vocational training are the basic conditions for exercising the right to employment and subsequent economic independence.

During the panel, participants will emphasize the importance of quality inclusive education that enables and leads to the independence of children and youth with disabilities through the provision of employment. Panelists will reflect within the context of existing curricula and their focus on the competitiveness of people with disabilities in the labor market. Important segment of discussion will be the expected competencies and their achievement through the formal education, which include broader segments, not just narrow professional competencies.

The identified subtopics are:

- Getting the competencies needed for the employment in the open labor market
- Directing students with disabilities towards the higher levels of education

Duration: 45 minutes

Presentation of conclusions/recommendations - closing of the conference

Duration: 10 minutes

About the conference organizers

MyRight

MyRight- Empowers people with disabilities is the umbrella organization of the Swedish disability organizations for international cooperation, which has a long tradition of human rights perspectives towards disability. Besides Bosnia and Herzegovina MyRight implements an international support program in Bolivia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Ghana and Namibia.

The goal of MyRight's international support is to strengthen partner organizations in the countries in which it operates to contribute to increasing the inclusion of people with disabilities in society, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. MyRight's vision is a world in which all persons with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities for a dignified life without poverty in inclusive societies.

MyRight in Bosnia and Herzegovina is implementing a capacity-building program for people with disabilities and their organizations with the aim to enable independent and effective advocacy for the rights of people with disabilities. The work of MyRight is based on the approach to disability from the perspective of human rights, which is the basis for the development of all potentials of persons with disabilities and society as a whole of which persons with disabilities are an equal part.

Federal Ministry of Education and Science

The Federal Ministry of Education and Science Federal Ministry of Education and Science performs administrative, professional and other tasks stipulated by law referring to coordination of planning and activities in the areas of: preschool, elementary school, secondary school and higher education ; pedagogical standards, standards in the area of premises, equipment and teaching aids in preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education; validation and equivalence of foreign school certificates and diplomas; professional education and training of the teaching staff; textbooks for elementary and secondary education; implementation of the Bologna Process; scientific and research activity on improvement of educational work; school and university students standard; development

of scientific and research activities; coordination of scientific research and research and development activities; development of scientific and research organizations; fostering fundamental applied research; development of investment technologies and staff in scientific research activity; coordinating the exercise of the rights of youth in education and science and other tasks stipulated by law”.¹

About the Committees

Committees for advocating for inclusive education in accordance with Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter the Convention) were established as a result of a strategic decision of coalitions of organizations of persons with disabilities in Dobož, Bijeljina, Hercegovina-Neretva Canton, Sarajevo Canton and Tuzla Canton, so that there are five committees in the mentioned coalitions of organizations of persons with disabilities.

The aim of establishing the Committee was to create a common platform of organizations of persons with disabilities at the local level for joint advocacy for quality education in accordance with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Committees advocate for the improvement of inclusive education for children and young people with disabilities in accordance with the General Comment to Article 24 of the Convention, which states that “inclusive education includes systemic reform processes containing changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies barrier, with a vision that serves to provide all students of relevant age, an experience of equal and participatory learning and an environment that best suits their needs and desires”.

Given the Committee's familiarity with the content of Article 24, they have the potential to become an important mean of encouraging and strengthening synergies among education actors with both the authorities and other stakeholders in inclusive education. As such, they can be a significant driver of quality change in our society.

¹ http://fbihvlada.gov.ba/english/ministarstva/obrazovanje_nauka.php