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Education and Competences of the Special Educators in Turkey and Other Countries

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Abstract: In this research, analysis of higher education systems and qualifications gained in the field of special education and rehabilitation in the Republic of Turkey and European countries are determined. It is aimed to compare the training and qualifications of future special educators and rehabilitators in higher education systems in the Netherlands, Austria, Italy, Germany, Finland, Russia, Lithuania and Spain in order to obtain positive application methods regarding the competences of special educators and rehabilitators. Document analysis method was used in the research. All available documentation was analyzed and the data were cross-referenced. The results showed that the education of special educators and rehabilitators varies in different countries and it is contextualized or adapted to the tradition, history, and norms of each society. Generally, dominates the trend of specialization of the classroom teachers from government schools, in order to gain special education competences, but there are still higher education systems (like in Spain and Russia) which have the same approach in the education of special educators and rehabilitators. Almost all countries have developed resource centers serving like service providers of the regular schools where the students with special educational needs are educated. Development of the network of resource centers, increasing of the competences of the regular teachers, increasing the competences of the special educators and rehabilitators for work in the regular inclusive conditions, specializing after the graduate studies were suggested. As the most important suggestion, the graduated special educators and rehabilitators should be educated and trained for independent work in the field of prevention, detection, diagnostics, habilitation and rehabilitation, education, the professional orientation of persons with special educational needs.

Structured Abstract: In every country there are different ways of educating the future special educators that will work with children with Special Educational needs. The special educators, and indeed all teachers, should have different values related to specific areas of competence. In this research, we decided to analyze the organized education for the special educators and their competences in eight countries: Holland, Austria,

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Italy, Germany, Finland, Russia, Lithuania and Spain; in order to explain the positive practices regarding the education of special educators and rehabilitators as well as examining the possibility of their implementation in Turkey. For this research, a qualitative comparative study was conducted, with a two-way purpose: Analytical and evaluative with the aim to generate the standards for the elaboration of appropriate policies in higher education, certainly in the field of education of special educators and rehabilitators. In order to be able to achieve the aim of the research, four research questions were implemented: What are the systems of special education and inclusive education in the countries included in the research? What are the systems of higher education in the research countries (are the special teachers / special educators educated within the undergraduate studies or is it a specialization after the completion of the first-degree studies)? Are there resource centers to support regular schools in the countries surveyed? Are the special teachers / special educators re-educated after completing their initial education (as well as is training organized within the schools where they work)? The comparison method was used. All available documentation was analyzed and the data were cross-referenced. The research was conducted in the period from June to August 2020. It consisted of analysis of documentation. This analysis included a review of the existing literature related to study programs for special education and rehabilitation in different countries. The analysis was done in 6 phases: scanning the subject of research, searching, selecting, analyzing, synthesizing and reporting. During the analyzes we took into account the internal consistency and the assessment of the validity and reliability of the obtained data. The results showed that the education of special educators and rehabilitators varies in different European countries; for example, in The Netherlands the education of children with special educational needs is divided in four clusters according to the type and level of disability. Also, the conceptualization of inclusion is apparent in special education. In the Netherlands, the primary school teachers are educated at institutes for higher education. Initial teacher training also includes a subject for the education of students with special needs. Current government policies include the requirement for greater competencies for teachers that will work with children with Special Educational needs, the programs contain too many subjects and adding special education programs isn't easy. In Austria, there are three forms of inclusion: Inclusive group in regular kindergarten, individual inclusion in regular kindergarten, inclusive group in kindergarten (reverse inclusion) clusters. Special education module may be chosen at some of the colleges, where students are introduced to the ways of planning, designing and evaluating teaching for children with Special educational needs and the responsibility of parents in the educational process. The novelties also include a master's degree in the field of special education, integrated within the regular teacher education programs and plans. In the Italian school system, all students with Special Educational needs are included in regular schools where teachers are supported by special educators. In this country, teaching in a primary school or kindergarten, requires a four-year diploma in primary education. There are several forms of special education in Germany: Special education and support with preventive measures, which means interdisciplinary cooperation and early intervention. Children at risk of disability are offered preventive assistance to prevent or reduce disability. The second model is education in regular schools, but with the help and support of a special educator and the third model is education in special schools. The last model is a resource center that provides education in integrative, hospital and cooperative form materials. There are also several options for the education of special educators in Germany; The first option is a basic course consisting of two parts as well as for teachers, organized in 9 semesters, half of the studies are focused on the study of educational sciences, with one to two disciplines in the field of special education and the second half of the studies are focused specifically on special education. The second option consists of additional courses that are consecutive to the basic ones. Students choose two areas of disability and gain knowledge about the types of disability, teaching methods and assessments, the course usually lasts 18-24 months. In Finland, the school administration reform in the 1990s, with the decentralization of municipalities, has reduced the number of special schools, and special departments have been established in regular schools. However, there are still seven special schools. These schools are mostly for students with impaired vision, hearing impairment or some physical disabilities. One of the options to study special education in Finland is with selecting it as a major subject and thus obtain a university degree in special education. Additionally, teachers may qualify as special preschool teachers, special needs teachers or special education class teachers. Children with disabilities in Russia can be integrated in regular schools, as part of the inclusion process, in special schools or in their homes by visiting home school teachers. Teacher education and training in Russia is divided into two basic categories; teaching staff that will work in preschool institutions and primary schools acquires non-university education, and teachers for secondary schools acquire their education at universities, although at universities primary school teachers can also be educated. At universities, studies last for five years. The Lithuanian law of Special Education indicates that students with Special Educational Needs in

regular schools can be educated: in a regular classroom, partly in a regular classroom, partly in a special classroom; or in a special classroom or group. In Lithuania, the university education is obligatory for special education teachers. The specialists, who may have different specializations, are educated at a university and obtain a bachelor's or master's degree in special education. In Spain, there are three forms of education for children with special educational needs: education in regular schools, education in special classes within regular schools or education in special schools. Special educators and speech therapists in Spain are educated in four-year studies at pedagogical universities, where several modules for specialization are offered: preschool education, primary education, music education, foreign language, physical education, speech therapy, special education. As a conclusion we underlined that well-trained and educated staff who will work with this vulnerable population is more than necessary, in that direction we summarized the entire previous presentation through the competencies that special educators and rehabilitators in Turkey should possess. Graduated special educators should be trained for independent work in the field of prevention, detection, diagnostics, habilitation and rehabilitation, education, professional orientation of persons with disabilities.

Keywords: Special education, competences, special educators, rehabilitators, analysis of the documentation.

Öz: Bu araştırmada bazı Avrupa ülkelerinde ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde özel eğitim ve rehabilitasyon alanındaki yüksek öğretim sistemlerinin analizi ve kazandıkları yeterlilikleri belirlenmiştir. Özel eğitimcilerin ve rehabilitasyon görevlilerinin yetkinlikleriyle ilgili olumlu uygulama yöntemlerini elde etmek için Hollanda, Avusturya, İtalya, Almanya, Finlandiya, Rusya, Litvanya ve İspanya'daki yüksek eğitim sistemlerinde gelecekteki özel eğitimcilerin ve rehabilitasyon görevlilerinin eğitimlerinin ve yeterliliklerinin karşılaştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Mevcut tüm belgeler analiz edilmiş ve veriler çapraz referanslanmıştır. Sonuçlar, özel eğitimcilerin ve rehabilitasyon görevlilerinin eğitiminin her ülkede farklılık gösterdiğini ve her toplumun geleneğine, tarihine ve normlarına bağlamsallaştırdığını veya uyarlandığını göstermektedir. Genel olarak çoğu Avrupa ülkesinde, özel eğitim yeterliliklerini kazanmak için devlet okullarından sınıf öğretmenlerinin uzmanlaştırılması eğilimi hakimdir, ancak özel eğitimcilerin ve rehabilitasyon uzmanlarının eğitiminde aynı yaklaşıma sahip yüksek öğretim sistemleri (İspanya ve Rusya gibi ülkelerde) hala mevcuttur. Çoğunlukla tüm ülkeler, özel eğitim ihtiyacı olan öğrencilerin eğitim gördüğü normal okulların hizmet sağlayıcıları gibi hizmet veren kaynak merkezleri geliştirmiştir. Kaynak merkezleri ağının geliştirilmesi, sınıf öğretmenlerin yeterliliklerinin artırılması, özel eğitimcilerin ve rehabilitasyon görevlilerinin kaynaştırma eğitimi koşullarında çalışabilmeleri için yeterliliklerinin artırılması, lisansüstü çalışmaların ardından uzmanlaşmaları önerilmiştir. En önemli öneri olarak, mezun olan özel eğitimciler ve rehabilitasyon uzmanları, önleme, tespit, teşhis, habilitasyon ve rehabilitasyon, eğitim, özel eğitim ihtiyacı olan kişilerin mesleki yönelimi alanlarında bağımsız çalışma için eğitilmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Özel eğitim, yeterlilikler, özel eğitimciler, rehabilitasyon uzmanlar, belgelerin analizi.

Introduction

Quality education is an active reflection that modify and develop over time. It changes them depending on the environmental, economic, and social context. Because improved schooling must be domestically suitable and traditionally relevant, it takes many forms worldwide (UNESCO, 2005). Quality education is a beneficial way to fight poverty, build equality, and develop peaceful societies. It encourages individuals, giving them a voice, opens their potential, opens the way for self-actualization, and expands perspectives towards open minds in a pluralistic world (European Agency, 2010).

Special educators, and indeed all teachers, should have the following values related to specific areas of competence (European Agency, 2015):

- Respect the diversity of the student (areas of competence related to this area are Concepts for Inclusive Education and the Teacher's Perspective on Different Approaches to Student Learning);

- Support for all students (these values are related to accelerating the social, academic and emotional learning of all students and Impactful teaching methods in incoherent classes);
- Cooperation with others (area of competencies-Cooperation with families and parents and Cooperation with a wide range of experts); and
- Personal professional development (areas of competencies related to this value are: Teachers / special educators as indicative experts and Initial teaching training as a basis for continued professional development and learning).

According to the Special Education Services Regulation of the Ministry of National Education in Turkey (2018), special education is defined as ‘Training programs developed to meet the educational and social needs of individuals who differ significantly from their peers in terms of individual and developmental characteristics and educational competencies, and training carried out in appropriate environments with specially trained personnel’. The specially trained personnel mentioned in this definition refers to the personnel who have been primarily trained in special education and have graduated from the special education departments of universities. In the education of children in need of special education, the basic personnel are special education teachers, but they also refer to a team of many different specialties as well as specially trained special education teachers (Cavkaytar and Diken, 2007). When defining special education, Eripek (2007) states that first of all, it is necessary to answer the questions of who will be given special education, what will be taught in special education and where the special education will be implemented.

Special education teachers are experts who provide daily teaching and other related support to students with disabilities. However, special education teachers have quite different roles and responsibilities. The special education teacher can work with a single disability group such as autism, as well as those with mild disabilities such as learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, or mild intellectual disabilities. Due to the increasing inclusion practices in recent years, special education teachers also work as co-teachers and resource room teachers in general education classes (Friend, 2006). The most common work areas of special education teachers in Turkey are separated special schools and special education classes (Diken, 2017). The professionals working with children with special educational needs are educating to a level of Special Education Teachers. According to Higher Education Institution (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu- YÖK, 2020) the education of the special education teachers in Turkey lasts 4 years- eight semesters. The classes are mainly related to educational work with children with different types of disabilities.

Methodology

In order to obtain significant data in several areas related to higher education, a qualitative comparative study was conducted. An analysis was made of the content of the legislation, i.e. various rules and regulations from state organizations but also organizations related to education. The purpose of this study was two-way: both analytical and evaluative. The aim was to generate standards for the elaboration of appropriate policies in higher education, certainly in the field of education of special educators and rehabilitators. The subject of this research was the analysis of higher education systems in the field of special education and rehabilitation in some European countries and Turkey. A discursive approach to the analysis of legislation was used (Dombos, Krizsan, Verloo, & Zentai, 2012). As a purpose of the research comparison between the Dutch, Austrian, Italian, German, Finnish, Russian, Lithuanian and Spanish higher education systems was made, in order to note positive practices regarding the education of special educators and rehabilitators as well as examining the possibility of their implementation in Turkey. The research countries were selected according to the available informations needed to answer the research questions. The research questions applied in this research were:

1. What are the systems of special education and inclusive education in the countries included in the research?

2. What are the systems of higher education in the research countries (are the special teachers /special educators educated within the undergraduate studies or is it a specialization after the completion of the first-degree studies)?
3. Are there resource centers to support regular schools in the countries included in the research?
4. Are the special teachers / special educators re-educated after completing their initial education (as well as is training organized within the schools where they work)?

Research methods

For the purpose of this research all available documentation was analyzed and the data were cross-referenced. The comparison method is not a new method. There is no single method that is best for social science research. The comparative method looks for differences and similarities that explain the relationships between certain problems or phenomena. This method is relevant for obtaining results that are universally applicable (Winter & Prohaska, 1983). The comparative approach within the international network of researchers becomes a crucial method for all research in the social sciences that aims to explain and accompany social transformations (Ghora-Gobin, 1998). The research was conducted in the period from June to August 2020. It consisted of analysis of documentation. This analysis included a review of the existing literature related to study programs for special education and rehabilitation in different countries. The analysis was done in six phases: scanning the subject of research, searching, selecting, analyzing, synthesizing and reporting (Torrance & Sebba, 2007). During the analyzes it was taken into account the internal consistency and the assessment of the validity and reliability of the obtained data.

The comparison between the different education systems we made according to the following parameters:

1. The Netherlands

One of the main features of the Dutch system of education is the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of education. This refers to the freedom to open schools, to coordinate teaching in schools and to specify the principles on which it is based. Schools can be based on resilient, conceptual or educational beliefs. There are public and private schools.

In 1998, a law on Expert Centers has been introduced. These are actually special school condos or high schools (or rehabilitation and vocational training centers). These consortia are divided into four clusters (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, EASNIE 2015):

- First Cluster: education for students with visual impairments (from previous schools for the blind and visually impaired);
- Second Cluster: education for students with hearing impairment or communication disabilities (from former schools for deaf and hard of hearing students and students with severe speech disabilities);
- Third Cluster: education for students with physical, intellectual or multiple disabilities, and chronically ill students;
- Forth Cluster: education for students with behavioral disorders, for students with severe antisocial behavior and chronically ill (psychiatric) students and students with pedological institutes.

Financing has been changed in 2003. Politics is known as backpack politics: students carry financing with them to a school of their choice. This way of policy has started to change in 2014 according to the law "Education for All". The conceptualization of inclusion is apparent in special education. The focus is placed on betterment of resources in tackling multiplicity in regular schools

and promoting cooperation between schools regionally. The number of students which are attending the regular schools with peripathological monitoring by a consortium continues to grow.

Education of special teachers

In the Netherlands, obtaining a full-time teacher diploma takes four years. Primary school teachers are educated at institutes for higher education. They are qualified to teach all subjects of the curriculum and also one specialized subject. Initial teacher training also includes a subject for the education of students with special needs. Current government policies include the requirement for greater competencies for teachers that will work with children with Special Educational needs, the programs contain too many subjects and adding special education programs isn't easy. Students can enroll in primary schools with a high school diploma (HAVO / VWO) or a professional diploma (MBO). In order to motivate research-oriented students to join the ranks of teachers in order to increase their academic potential, initiatives have been launched to combine teacher education with educational sciences. Language and speech therapy are considered to be paramedical professions in health and education. Speech therapy studies, same like Turkey, are lasting four years (240 credits). There are seven Dutch Universities offering undergraduate studies. There are 5000 speech therapists in the Netherlands who are mostly female (Logopedie en Foniatrie, 2015). From 2006 onwards, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in all primary and secondary schools provides additional funds for professionalization and support of the teaching staff.

2. Austria

When it comes directly to children with disabilities, early intervention is carried out in accordance with various provincial acts, there is no universal federal approach. In most regions all children at risk or already manifested developmental abnormalities are covered by early intervention treatment. Preschool education is directly under the control of each region (province) separately, where it is determined separately whether the child will receive appropriate special support within the regular preschool institutions or will be included in remedial preschool institutions. The lack of a specific definition of disability on the one hand and the indefiniteness of the required competencies of the staff lead to different implementations of inclusive practice, above all, there are three forms of inclusion: inclusive group in regular kindergarten, individual inclusion in regular kindergarten, inclusive group in kindergarten (reverse inclusion) clusters (EASNIE, 2015). Since 1993, children with special educational needs can be educated in regular schools, and with the 1996 amendment, inclusive practice has been extended to both lower secondary education (10-14 years) and the first years of general secondary education. Within the regular schools, teaching can be organized in inclusive classes, where students with and without Special Educational needs are educated by a team of teachers, classrooms with support teachers, regular classes, where 1 or 2 students with Special Educational needs receive additional support from a special educator several hours per week, and cooperative classes in primary schools, lower secondary and pre-vocational schools, generally separated from the classes in special schools, but with a plan for joint cooperation of individual students occasionally or constantly.

In Austria, there are special education centers that have the task of coordinating regular schools and providing all the special needs of students with disabilities, starting with the detection and diagnosis of disability. Special schools have the task of supporting students with physical or psychological disabilities to receive appropriate primary, lower secondary and pre-vocational education. There are 10 different special schools with a focus on different types of disability, where you work according to the regular plan and program or special plan and program. Education in special schools lasts 9 years with the possibility of extending clusters up to 12 years (EASNIE, 2015). The parents are having the right to choose where their child will be educated, in accordance with the opinion received from the District School Board. Mobile special education services

provide support for children and young people with various developmental disabilities, through the education and counseling of teachers working with children with visual and hearing impairments, behavioral problems, speech impediments, and hospitalized children.

Education of special teachers

In most Austrian areas, NGOs provide training, in the form of a supplementary course, for early intervention teachers. The training is based on a universal curriculum of about 1,440 hours and in most cases is privately funded, and in some areas, co-financing is provided. Some types of disabilities (e.g. sensory disorders) require additional training, in addition to the basic early intervention program. Education of pedagogues who will work with children with special educational needs in preschool institutions is realized through four semester courses (24 hours per week) within the colleges for preschool education. In some areas the course is organized every two years, and students obtain a diploma for special education teachers in preschool institutions. Since October 2007, teacher education for regular and occupation schools has been realized in the colleges for teacher training for work in primary, lower secondary, pre-vocational education, special and vocational education and work training. To work with students with special educational needs, in addition to 180 credits or six semesters, students or teachers should gain additional qualifications, with the main emphasis on inclusive education. In addition to the courses in humanities, didactics, methodologies, etc. modular courses with a focus on different types and degrees of disabilities are also attended. The University of Applied Sciences for Health Professionals can attend four-year undergraduate studies in occupational therapy, speech therapy and physiotherapy (Study in Austria, 2016).

More recently, a special education module may be chosen at some of the colleges, where students are introduced to the ways of planning, designing and evaluating teaching for children with Special educational needs and the responsibility of parents in the educational process. The novelties also include a master's degree in the field of special education, integrated within the regular teacher education programs and plans. In addition to the special education module, there is a module for inclusive education, where students who are educated for work in primary school can choose the subjects in 3 semesters, while those who are educated for work in lower secondary schools can focus on inclusive education in 1 semester (University College of Teacher Education Lower Austria, 2014). In addition to the regular educational process, colleges organize a number of regional trainings, trainings and seminars covering various issues related to working with students with special educational needs. The employed teachers are required to attend at least 15 hours per year, additional training, covered by the government, and conducted by colleges for teachers.

3. Italy

In 1992, a new law in Italy has required the demolition of obstacles (architectural or sensory) and incorporation of appropriate aids and equipment to endorse students with disabilities in education. Schools has also established agreements with specialized centers for pedagogical advisory and adaptation or production of particular classroom tools (EASNIE, 2015). In Italy, the specific learning disorders such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysortography and dyscalculia are considered as special needs. Schools are also having the responsibility for early detection. Before the integration process begin in Italy, there has been special departments for "handicapped" students and special schools for "sub-normal" students (students with physical or intellectual disabilities). The integration has begun in 1971. Classes with one or two children with Special educational needs usually consist of maximum 20 students. The inclusion process has been supported by a project that defines the strategies and methods that are collectively adopted by regular teachers and help teachers along with the school staff. In the Italian school system, legally, all students with Special Educational needs are included in regular schools where teachers are supported by special educators. Each year, the Ministry of Education, University and Research

allocates special support teachers to every school depending on the number of students and the typology of the disability. These teachers are part of the educating team: they collaborate with the subject teachers in all actions related to the class as a whole such as preparation and evaluation.

Teacher support training

Not all teachers are supportive teachers, but all supportive teachers are teachers. To teach in a primary school or kindergarten, a four-year diploma in primary education is required. To specialize in support teachers, students need to select specific courses in their curriculum. To teach in the so-called secondary education, they need a university degree as well as a one-year specialization in schools. Additionally, if they want to work as support teachers, they must obtain a precise expertise, granted by universities, earning at least 60 credits as a must. The training also includes 300 hours (12 credits) of practical work in the school where they will work. Every university organizes and determines the practical activity in accordance with the overall criteria given by the Ministry. In Italy, the study of speech therapy is a three-year study (180 credits). There are also online undergraduate studies in speech therapy (Universita di Bologna, 2016). In 2013, the principle of mandatory on-the-job training has been implemented. Not only the teachers for support are responsible for the students with Special educational needs, but the entire staff, together with the teachers and school principals at all school levels, are attending a specific course on working with children with Special educational needs. The course contains content related to the identification of these children, didactic methods and specific plans for working with students, assessment and guidance procedures. The ministry has also set up a network of schools called Territorial Support Centers. These centers are schools dedicated to the work of children with Special educational needs, with teachers / researchers specializing in inclusive teaching technologies. These teachers collect and spread best practices, support their colleagues in special needs management, and provide technological devices for the schools.

4. Germany

Children and young people with disabilities can be educated in regular schools, within the inclusive process or in special schools. In the regular schools, besides the rest of the staff, there are special educators who are obliged to provide uninterrupted education by providing mobile assistance, appropriate aids, counseling and cooperation with other teachers regarding the development of an individual educational plan, adjusting the content, the manner of teaching and assessment. Special educational support is provided and during classes, the curriculum is flexible enough to allow teachers to focus on the individual developmental and special needs of children. In order to increase inclusion, an award has been created for the most inclusive school since 2009.

There are a number of different special schools in Germany and double transfer of students is always possible. From schools for children with learning disabilities, students can transfer to regular primary or secondary schools if it is believed that they can attend classes without difficulty and can achieve success. Schools for children with speech and behavioral problems are transitional schools and their goal is to improve children's speech or behavior and return them to regular schools. In recent years there has been great cooperation between regular and special schools, extracurricular activities and inclusive classes are held, which is a benefit for both groups of students. There are several forms of special education in Germany today: special education and support with preventive measures, which means interdisciplinary cooperation and early intervention. Children at risk of disability are offered preventive assistance to prevent or reduce disability. The second model is education in regular schools, but with the help and support of a special educator and the third model is education in special schools. The last model is a resource center that provides education in integrative, hospital and cooperative form materials (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, EASNIE 2015).

Education of special educators

In Germany many changes in teacher education are notable, some universities offer inclusive study programs or offer inclusive education courses in basic teacher training or integrated undergraduate and master studies. Basic studies for teachers are lasting 3.5 years for working in primary school, 3.5-4.5 for teachers who will work in lower secondary school with additional 4 years of practical training and 4.5 years for higher secondary schools, with 2.5 practical training. The training is divided in two parts, higher education course, that is realized at universities and practical pedagogical training, which is realized in school materials (EASNIE, 2015). The education of special educators takes place in a similar way, there are several options. The first option is a basic course consisting of two parts as well as for teachers, organized in 9 semesters. Half of the studies are focused on the study of educational sciences, with one to two disciplines in the field of special education and the second half of the studies are focused specifically on special education. The second option consists of additional courses that are consecutive to the basic ones. Students choose two areas of disability from the following: education of the blind, education of the deaf, education of the intellectually disabled, education of the physically disabled, education of persons with speech disorders, persons with hearing impairments, impaired vision, learning difficulties and behavioral problems. Students gain knowledge about the types of disability, teaching methods and assessments and the course usually lasts 18-24 months. Special educators receive higher salaries, as do teachers working in higher secondary schools. In recent years, several universities have encountered programs for special education and rehabilitation of undergraduate and postgraduate studies, where students can choose courses for different types of disabilities: blind and visually impaired, general disability guidelines, sign language interpretation, Sign language - audiopedagogy, work with people with hearing impairment, intellectually disabled, education for physical needs, general rehabilitation pedagogy, sociology of rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation, rehabilitation technology, education for behavioral disorders, etc. Since 2009, doctoral studies in special education and rehabilitation have been organized (Justus-Liebig Universität Giessen, 2015; Universität Rostock, 2016). As in other countries, in addition to university education programs, local authorities in each canton organize additional courses, trainings and seminars for teachers, which address topics and issues related to inclusive education and various types of disabilities.

5. Finland

The development of special education in Finnish primary schools can be divided into four periods: the first period covers the establishment of special education from the 1840s until the entry into force of the Compulsory Education Law in 1921. Initially, special education focused on instructing students with sensory impairments. The first schools were for people with hearing impairments, visual impairments and motor disabilities. When education has become compulsory these children have been expelled from school. Their education has been provided by philanthropists or humanitarian organizations. The second period is from the implementation of the above law until the end of World War II. According to this law, all children have been required to attend school except those with intellectual disabilities. The third period has begun when the World War II ended, and lasted until the unification of education and the opening of comprehensive schools in 1972. In the post-war period, the development of care for people with disabilities has begun. In addition to medical care and rehabilitation, professional rehabilitation has been introduced. The quantification of special education and the development of narrower specializations developed between the 1940s and 1960s. However, the medical model prevailed. The groups of students with Special Educational needs have been segregated in order to form homogeneous groups that are easier to instruct. The principle of normalization and the philosophy of integration has begun to be introduced in the early 1970s. The new Law on Comprehensive Schools has been enacted in 1983. According to this law, children with Special Educational needs

have no longer been excluded from regular education. The new law also imposes the need for individualization of education as well as the provision of special education and adaptation of syllabi. Since 1997, all children have been included in education. The fourth period begins in the 1990s. The aim has been to reform the existing culture, organization of education and joint management by supporting regional and municipal integration of service systems.

In 2006, an expert group has been formed to prepare a proposal for a long-term strategy for the progress of special education. The proposal has been for current practice to focus on earlier support and prevention. The student has the right to receive instruction and guidance in accordance with the curriculum. Every school day, every student has the right to receive support and counseling. Support is a joint effort of all teachers, the student and their parents and where student support staff is needed. School administration reform in the 1990s, with the decentralization of municipalities, has reduced the number of special schools, and special departments have been established in regular schools. However, there are still 7 special schools. These schools are mostly for students with impaired vision, hearing impairment or some physical disabilities. Government special schools are service centers that provide professional services to municipal and other schools as well as temporary education and rehabilitation for students attending regular schools in order to support them.

Teacher / special education training

Kindergarten teachers and educators have a degree from university or polytechnic collage. They can be further assisted by child care professionals. Primary school teachers are general teachers (grade) in the first six grades, while those in the upper three grades are subject teachers. The grade teachers have a master's degree in the field of education, while the subject teachers have a master's degree in the field of the subject they teach. Special preschool teachers provide special education for children in kindergartens, special education teachers provide part-time special education classes, and students receiving special support in special classes are taught by special education teachers. Vocational teachers for special needs work in both regular vocational institutions and special vocational institutions. One of the options is to study special education as a major subject and thus obtain a university degree in special education. Additionally, teachers may qualify as special preschool teachers, special needs teachers or special education class teachers. In Finland, studies in speech therapy are 3 + 2 (300 credits) after which students obtain a master's degree. The studies are at the Institute of Behavioral Sciences at the University of Helsinki (Speech Sciences in University of Helsinki, 2016). Additionally, education services also employ assistants, persons for educational leading and social workers, psychologists, doctors, student counselors, and various therapists. Higher education institutions and centers for continuing education as well as the National Board of Education provide teachers with continuous training every year.

6. Russia

Families of children with disabilities can choose how their child will be educated. Children with disabilities can be integrated in regular schools, as part of the inclusion process, in special schools or in their homes by visiting home school teachers. The lack of appropriate conditions for education of children with special educational needs in many of the primary schools causes a large number of children with disabilities to be educated in special schools. The territory of Russia is large, there are many rural areas where children with disabilities are completely isolated from social events and the educational process, and there are a large number of children with disabilities who are institutionalized, and the lack of teaching staff unable their education (Global observatory for inclusion, 2015).

Education of special educators

Teacher education and training in Russia is divided into two basic categories. The teaching staff that will work in preschool institutions and primary schools acquires non-university education, they are educated in colleges and special practical institutions (techniques) for a period of 2.5 to 4.5 years, while the teachers for secondary schools acquire their education at universities, although at universities primary school teachers can also be educated. At universities, studies last for five years. The education of special educators takes place at the university level, there are several institutes for special education and rehabilitation. At some of the institutes the education for preschool special educators and oligophrenologists lasts for four years, and for special educators who will work in primary schools and speech therapists for 4.5 years. At other universities, the studies are divided into directions: corrective pedagogy (deaf pedagogy, typhlopedagogy, oligophrenopedagogy, preschool special education, speech therapy, oligophrenology, special educator who will work in schools (typhology and deaf education), inclusive education for children with disabilities, psychological and educational support for children with special educational needs, early intervention for children with disabilities, system of speech therapy assistance in educational and health institutions, theory and practice of early intervention and rehabilitation of people with autism spectrum disorder (Институт специального образования и комплексной реабилитации, 2016).

7. Lithuania

In Lithuania, the field of special education is the product of a long period when the segregation of the "different" has been a state policy. After gaining independence, there has been a need to develop special education in accordance with the principles of various declarations and conventions. The first guidelines in the legislation for integrated education of children with Special Educational needs are in the Law on Special Education for Children with Special Educational Needs in regular educational institutions (1993). This document has been based on the context of the current situation of special education in the country and the accumulated experience of other countries in the process of managing special education. This law indicates that students with Special Educational Needs in regular schools can be educated:

- In a regular classroom, where they follow the standard curriculum, but apply special methods or follow a modified curriculum / alternative curriculum / Individual Education Plan;
- Partly in a regular classroom, partly in a special classroom; or
- In a special classroom or group.

This law also gives parents a formal right to choose an educational institution.

Education of special teachers

The first special educators- defectologists started studying in 1960. In 1992 the faculty has been renamed to Faculty of Special Education but soon changed its name because this name has been too narrow for all the activities of the faculty. Today it is the Faculty of Social Work and Disability Studies (Siaulių Universitetas, 2016). Regarding the education of special education teachers, universities and colleges enroll students with completed secondary education. Other higher education institutions as well as higher schools are also available. However, in Lithuania, the university education is obligatory for special education teachers. The specialists, who may have different specializations, are educated at a university and obtain a bachelor's or master's degree in special education. Since 1995, all students who have been educated to a level of class or subject teachers must earn 2-4 credits in the field of special education. This is analogous to 1 special education subject. There are undergraduate, master and doctoral studies in special education, speech therapy, kinesitherapy at different universities. In relation to on-the-job training, all teachers have the opportunity to participate in courses that are offered by teacher education

centers in the region, teacher improvement centers or higher education institutions in order to increase their competencies or to gain specialization in higher education. Each year, substantial funding from the Ministry is used for Special Educational needs-related programs for employed special educators and classroom teachers. In the future, each graduate will have to acquire the necessary knowings and skills to work with different students, including students with special educational needs.

8. Spain

Similar to Turkey, in Spain, there are three forms of education for children with special educational needs: education in regular schools, education in special classes within regular schools or education in special schools.

Education of Special Educators

Teacher training and education in Spain has undergone radical changes in recent years, in order to adapt studies to European standards and criteria for higher education. According to the level of education, teachers are separated into three categories: primary school teachers, secondary school teachers and higher education teachers. Special educators and speech therapists are educated in 4-year studies at pedagogical universities, where several modules for specialization are offered: preschool education, primary education, music education, foreign language, physical education, speech therapy, special education. All courses have basic subjects in which special education is processed, like working with children with special educational needs, but the specialization is realized by selecting the special module. When employing during the first year, everyone works under the mentorship of experienced colleagues. In addition to regular teacher education, every year the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports organizes trainings and seminars for employed teachers, special educators and speech therapists. Speech therapists can work in schools, hospitals and private institutions (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2015; EASNIE, 2015).

Conclusions and suggestions

According to the World Disability Report, around one billion people worldwide live with different types and degrees of disability, and education is one of the most effective ways to break the cycle of discrimination and poverty among children with disabilities and their families. Well-trained and educated staff who would work with this vulnerable population is more than necessary, in that direction we summarized the entire previous presentation through the competencies that special educators and rehabilitators in Turkey should possess. Graduated special educators should be trained for independent work in the field of prevention, detection, diagnostics, habilitation and rehabilitation, education, professional orientation of persons with disabilities.

Competencies and work tasks of special educators employed in educational institutions: Assessment of the abilities and limitations of children with different types and degrees of disability, assessment of their needs with a series of standard and non-standard tests and assessment scales; Teaching basic academic subjects and practical everyday skills for self-help and personal care; Preparation of teaching materials, methods and means for training and rehabilitation; Advising, instructing and supporting parents of children with disabilities and their teachers; Stimulating and developing the interests, abilities, manual skills and coordination of people with disabilities; Cooperation with other team members in joint planning and implementation of activities; Preparation and storage of files with the necessary documentation for all users; Planning, development and implementation of an individual educational plan for each student with special educational needs in cooperation with teachers and parents; Designing appropriate teaching strategies and methods; Monitoring, evaluating and documenting the progress of each student with Special Educational needs; Modification and adaptation of educational programs and curricula according to the needs and abilities of students with Special Educational needs.

Competencies and work tasks of special educators employed in clinical (health) institutions: Determining the developmental level of children in making developmental diagnosis; Preparation, implementation and monitoring of therapeutic interventions; Evaluating the effectiveness of the interventions and modifying the intervention program if necessary; Planning, organizing and implementing special programs for remedial or advanced training; Designing appropriate rehabilitation strategies and methods; Identification of family worries, resources and priorities; Development of a plan with recommendations for families and monitoring of their implementation; Participation in interdisciplinary planning; Counseling with family members; Consultation, cooperation and referral of families to other professionals and services in the community; Service coordinator; Recommendation and use of adaptive equipment and assistive technology and gives recommendations for certain environmental modifications and implementation of the agreed changes.

Competencies and tasks of speech therapists: Screening, identification, assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and developmental monitoring of disorders (affecting: Speech, articulation, fluency, voice, language, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, oral, pharyngeal, esophageal and other functions, cognitive aspects of communication, social aspects of communication, consultation, counseling and referral to other services, training and support for family members and other communication partners, effective techniques and strategies of augmentative and alternative communication); Detection and treatment, implementation of modern approach and methods of rehabilitation, support and improvement of the quality of life of persons with chronic forms of speech and language disorders; Identification of the specific needs of people with communication disorders; Raising awareness of the need for speech therapy treatment and cooperation in preschool institutions, primary and secondary schools;

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