



History of the Special Education System in Portugal

The beginning

- ▶ In 1822, creation of the first learning establishment for the blind and deaf.
- ▶ In 1913, the first course of special education for teachers
- ▶ In 1916, foundation of an institute that helps students with mental deficiencies and language problems.

1929-1970

- ▶ In 1929/1930 it was created a group of work that would organize special classes, which was expanded and given more resources later this school year.
- ▶ From the 50's to the 70's are created new intervencion centers and associations in the disabilities area for example:
 - Portuguese Association of Cerebral Paralysis;
 - Services of Education for the Disabled
 - Portuguese Association for the Protection of Autistic Children.
- ▶ In 1964 was created a course of Specialization of Teachers of Misfit Children

The first attempts of integration

- ▶ In the 70's, because of the global movements defending equality, some attempts to promote inclusion of Special Education in the Regular education emerged.
- ▶ In 1973 the Ministry of Education becomes fully responsible for Special Education.
- ▶ Between the 70's and 80's were written several laws that defended the fundamental rights for the disabled citizens.

Further developments

- ▶ After 1975, the intervention in regular school becomes more notorious, firstly with itinerant teachers and then with the creation of the Special Education Teams, with the attempt to integrate disabled students in “normal” classes.
- ▶ In 1977, it's approved a law decree, that applies to the preparatory secondary education, which allows special conditions of registration and evaluation to special needs students.
- ▶ In 1991 was further regulated the integration of these children in the regular education. But this update to the law presents some ambiguities and omissions.

International Pressure

- ▶ Portugal signs the Declaration of Salamanca (UNESCO, 1994).
- ▶ This declaration has the objective to promote and Inclusive Education
- ▶ The country has some problems to implement the principles of the document, because of some contradictory standards and practices.
- ▶ In the last years there have been some conceptual and socio-legal changes that introduced instabilities and uncertainty in the educational system, which can be promote an inclusive school or generate even more segregation and exclusion.

“Young Voices: Meeting Diversity in Education”

- ▶ 2007 was the year when a parliamentary audition about the development of the special necessities of education the “Young Voices: Meeting Diversity in Education”.
- ▶ There 29 countries expressed their opinion about inclusive education, the rights and necessary critics to who has special educational needs have a place in society

Currently...

- ▶ However, in an educational level, the answers have developed in an uncoordinated way. A lot of critics point that this difficulty to elaborate coherent and linear laws comes from the goals, logic and philosophical differences between the two Ministry in charge of this matter (Education and Social Security).

In conclusion

- ▶ There is a long way before we can say that there the special needs students are fully integrated, but looking in a positive way, we've come a long way until now, so we can probably say that we're in the right track