Improving Assistance in Inclusive Educational Settings - Status Quo

	Austria	Portugal	Bulgaria	Slovakia	England
	In Styria 60% of the service is financed by the state community and 40% by the respective Municipality. Every federal state in Austria has a different financial system.	The human resources are financed by the Ministry of Education and by the Municipality of Lousã	Funded by the Social Programme of the Municipality of Varna	Sport. Or the service is a private initiative of parents, and they pay personally the assistants.	Each school has its own budget and learning supporters' salaries are paid from it. For pupils who have an Education and Health Care Plan sometimes additional funds are allocated for learning support, but the threshold is high: schools have to find the first £6,000 per pupil per year from their own budget.
of the service	Social service providers (such as Chance B) or the municipality employs assistants	Ministry of Education ARCIL Municipality of Lousã	Agency for Social Development " Vision"	Schools or private initiatives of parents of children with disabilities	There is no national service for providing learning supporters. Schools are responsible for their own recruitment.
	Assistants cooperate with teachers, headmasters, parents, therapists and sometimes with educational support. The quality of the cooperation with them varies from case to case. In some schools they become part of the teaching staff in other schools they are only tolerated.	coordinator, the assistants collaborate with other members of the staff as requested by the teachers and specialists in the school. There is a positive and effective	strong cooperation with teachers and parents	Assistants cooperate with teachers, special pedagogues, psychologist, speech therapist, terrain social worker, other supported school personnel, community centres, centres of early intervention, medical doctors, community of children wit disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, educational consultants, director and management of school, other pupils from the class and surrounded classes, volunteers at school and other supported staff at school, NGOs and supported service providers for children with disabilities and their families.	This varies enormously from area to area and from school to school. In a nutshell, some schools value their learning supporters more, while in others they are perceived to be quite low in the organizational hierarchy.
	children with all forms of disabilities (behavioural syndromes, physical or sensory impairment,) in special needs schools and in mainstream schools age: the compulsory schooling age (6-max. 16 years)	with all children in school (not specifically with children with SEN). Assistants from ARCIL are placed specifically in specialized units, within	children with special educational needs going to mainstream schools and kindergartens in the Municipality of Varna; age: 3 years until high school graduation (max. 20 years)	children with special educational needs (with any kind of health impairments, with disabilities, long-term sick, with development disorders, with behavioural disorders, from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and children with talent.	pupils identified as needing additional learning support
	No official qualification requirements One exception: If the child has to catheterize or probe, the assistant needs a special qualification (graduate nurse). Informal qualification requirements depend on the social service provider. At Chance B the qualification of the assistant has to guarantee that he/she can work well with the respective child.	Official requirements: compulsory school level, according to the age of the individual (4th, 9th or 12th grade) Selection criteria: 1) curricular analysis 2) years of experience 3) experience in the field of special needs and inclusion 4) specific training in the field of special needs and inclusion	1) second and/or tertiary education degree in Psychology, Pedagogics or Social Work 2) motivation to work with children with special educational needs 3) empathy and skills to work in the social sector	6) integrity (with no entry in the criminal record)Qualifications of "pedagogical assistant":A) Higher education of BSc. degree at study program in certain fields (e.g.	to cover for planned absences or teacher planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time.
	assistance in the Styrian law. One is to be found in the "Pflichtschulerhaltungsgesetz" (§35a) and the other in the "Styrian Disability Law"(§7). They are both regulating	operational, technical specialized professionals within the public sector. (CML and AEL are part of this.) Within ARCIL, the legislation from the third sector /nor for profit organizations/charities is applied (General Labour Law) and collective contractual referential for different professions.	The service is not legally regulated and not form part of the state-funded social services. The programme describing its provision is partially based on the Methodology for the delivery of the community-based service "Social Assistant". This Methodology has been put together in according with the Law of Social Assistance. There is still no Law on Social Services in Bulgaria.	education in the defined basic	Act 2014, with accompanying statutory guidance (see Code of Practice, above).

Aims and tasks - official		tasks are very broad and general, both in the public sector and in the private sector.	1) supporting disabled children to participate in the educational activities 2) supporting children with disabilities to get involved in local community activities 3) establishing a close relationship with parents, teachers, other social service specialists and interested stakeholders in order to provide a comprehensive support to the disabled children		specific pupils access the curriculum and reach their learning goals.
	everything the child needs: 1) supporting requirements of daily life (e.g. picking them up from the bus, helping, taking off clothes,) 2) supporting primary care (e.g. going to the toilet, meal,), 3) supporting educational needs, 4) supporting therapeutic measures, 5) establishing a relationship with parents and the teacher, 6) meetings with the class teacher	1) helping students with arriving to/leaving school (ex: picking up from the bus station) 2) surveillance of the students 3) transportation of materials and equipment 4) maintenance of materials and equipment 5) supporting students in the mainstream classroom or in the specialized unit 7) supporting students in the recess 8) supporting students in the hygiene 9) supporting students with administration of medication 10) monitoring of specific activities 11) monitoring in moments of relaxation 12) implementation of specific therapeutic/ educational activities in the routine	responsibilities in practice.	and do fulfil the above listed responsibilities in practice.	It is widespread practice for teachers to wash their hands off these pupils' learning and delegate all responsibility to the learning supporter. Even in schools which include pupils with significant learning difficulties, there are differences of opinion as to whose responsibility it is to differentiate the curriculum and prepare resources.
	parents. Which particular information these are depends on what the parents want to share with the assistants. The assistants have no right to see the school's data of the child.	Access to operational information for the daily activities with children with special needs (not to the Individual folder of the students). School assistants provided by ARCIL: Access to the information provided by the teachers and the specialists in the Mainstream School. If it is justifiable that the assistants access confidential information, there are guidelines defining which information they should access and informing about the importance of ensuring the confidentiality of specific information.	describing the child's condition: medical documents, an assessment of its needs etc.	the work content - direct and indirect activities with a student . School	access to information about the children they support.
Hierarchy	the head of the service. Informally, however, they mainly have to report to the pedagogues (teacher, headmaster).	Municipality of Lousã - Coordinator of the Education Sector (reporting to the President of the Municipality) Ministry of Education - Responsible for the School Assistants (reporting to the Director of School Grouping) ARCIL - coordinator of the Centre of Resources of Inclusive Education (reporting to the Director of Rehabilitation) The school assistants that work directly with children with PESN in specialized units report, informally, to the SEN or Mainstream Teachers responsible for the students.	to the Social Service Specialist in charge of the service and to the President of Agency for Social Development "Vision".	board of school and member of methodological association of school. The role of assistants is not a precise defined ant this lack of legal statement represents, among other things, the feeling of teacher that	Also in most schools the SENCO or Inclusion Manager is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and often have the head teacher as their line manager.
Status	very different - it reaches from "tolerated" to "deeply esteemed". It depends on school, teaching staff and the headmaster.	The assistants are recognized as assets for the Inclusion of children with special needs. The work they perform, however, not always is valued as it should because the complexity and demands of their tasks are not evident at first sights, for those without experience and/or knowledge in the field.	form the team meetings and they are not really regarded as full members of educational personnel.	legal statement represents, among	

formal	Official the assistants have to help the child to an educating and schooling. There are no official quality standards throughout Austria.	see "Aims and Tasks of Supporters" The assistants are responsible for supporting all children in the school not only the students with special needs.	•		1) Personal and professional conduct 2) Knowledge and understanding: sufficient knowledge and skills to help teachers support pupils in achieving their maximum potential 3) Teaching and learning: support the teacher in ensuring the best possible outcomes for all pupils. 4) Working with others: work with other professionals, parents, carers and outside agencies as well as with pupils themselves
informal	Responsibilities: The assistants are doing everything the child needs. The social service provider has to ensure the quality of its service.	see "Aims and Tasks of Supporters"	The school/kindergarten principals sometimes engage the Assistants in activities which are out of their scope of work and which nor the Social Service Specialist nor the President of Agency "Vision" have agreed on.	disabilities during lesson in their work in class. And this help takes many forms, depending on the needs of each pupil and also a particular subject. The school assistant is assigned to concreate teacher and not to particular pupil.	1) Help with schoolwork under the supervision of the teacher 2) Prepare learning materials 3) Help children understand instructions 4) Carry out a child's care plan 5) Encourage children to communicate 6) Give information and help to teachers 7) Support children during social activities and outings 8) Help children during therapy sessions 9) Look after children's physical needs 10) Keep records
development	are no opportunities for career development. If the assistant is a pedagogue he/she has the possibility to become a teacher. Also, the assistant can build a career in other fields of the organisation. Chance B offers the whole assistance team advanced education on special topics two days per year. Further	School assistants with a contract as permanent workers have career progression; presently, career progression is "frozen" du to the financial situation of the country and employer organizations. Assistants themselves identifies	could gain further experience within the structure of the Agency Vision. The assistants are not engaged with any particular trainings and don't have an opportunity to gain further knowledge in their particular field of work.		There is no longer any government funding for support staff training. Learning Supporters' professional development is up to their school and their (seriously depleted) budget.
	Full Support by the Head of the Service. If it is necessary, the head of the service can also organize formal supervision. And the assistants network with other colleagues to discuss their problems. Once a month a regular's table takes place.	- the specialists visiting the school and	well as by other staff of the Agency if needed. Support groups with a Psychologist are organised twice per year. There is a need of organising information meetings, trainings, seminars etc. in order to provide a	_	There is no national structure, this, too, is at the discretion of the school.
progressive	The job security is very low because of the 1:1 support. School assistance is mostly a temporary job.	Progression of careers within the public and private organizations is "frozen" due to the financial crisis of the country and to financial difficulties of the employer organizations. In terms of job security, the General Labour Legislation regulates the conditions in which contractual situations should be with/without a term or service provider, as well as the appropriate conditions to renew/end a contract within or before the defined term.	relatively high, however, the job position of a Social Assistant is not really attractive to young people due to the low salaries and the not particularly attractive working conditions.	higher quality in school assistance to pupils with disabilities, they often	There is very little job security. If you are an assistant you are a learning supporter employed to work with a particular pupil and that pupil leaves the school, you stand to lose your job. (1:1 model)

Profile of workforce	female, Austrian nationality, age	female or male, Portuguese nationality,	female, Bulgarian nationality, age	female, no pedagogical practice	female, British nationality, no
	between 35-45, no impairment, do	age between 25 and 65 years, no	between 25 and 55 years	before, no pedagogical qualification	impairment
	this job for 2-3 years	impairment, some are new to the job			
		but the majority has experience.			
		More recently people with Higher			
		Education training in different fields			
		(e.g. Education, Social Care) are			
		working in this position.			
		There are no restrictions related to			
		having people with disability, from			
		different nationalities or religion on the			
		job. The context where we operate			
		does not have many foreign people.			
Contractual situation	Fixed-term contracts (beginning of	contract as permanent workers	part-time and full-time labour	mostly part-time or full-time,	Assistants tend to be employed
	the school year until the end of the	contract as a service provider	contracts	mostly not permanent, only some	for a set number of hours to support
	school year)	contract without a defined term	(4 or 8 hours work per day)	concreate period (mostly for 1 year)	the learning of specific pupils. This
	12-37 hours work per week	contract with a defined term			means there is no provision for them
		labour market integration special			to have liaison meetings, plan or
		contract			attend reviews of the pupils they
					support – many do this voluntarily.