**Theory and practice of inclusion of children who need help with integration**

**Univ. Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mazal**

**1. Introduction**

"No child shall be left behind" - the title of an American federal law which came into force in the USA during the presidency of G..W. Bush in 2002 1), probably characterizes the efforts not only of the participants of this meeting but probably of all "people of good will". Even though the law itself was controversial in many respects, it is evident that the programmatic goal per se can be affirmed.

In the same way, everyone can probably identify with the goal of the OECD - education policy "a high-quality education for all", which is part of the OECD "Framework for inclusive growth", although - and there I stumble in my lecture, as I stumbled in the preparations for this lecture. There are several reasons for this:

- On the one hand, the term inclusion in the debate on education is semantically connected above all with questions of disability 2), and I would like to dedicate myself, as a board member of the Institute for Labour and Social Law and as head of the Austrian Institute for Family Research at the University of Vienna as well as a member of the Expert Council on Integration, to the rather social aspects of the Austrian Federal Government, which for years have occupied a prominent place in the Austrian school system and the Austrian debate on education, especially against the background of the social debate and migration problems.

- On the other hand, because I had initially planned to use a secondary evaluation of empirical findings on school systems in the OECD area to present problems and to derive proposals for their solution, but had already encountered massive questions of a fundamental nature during the initial access to the data, which made it too superficial for me to bore you as listeners with statistical information without taking up these fundamental aspects.

- And finally, the terms "integration" and "inclusion", which characterise OECD policy and are given to me in the title of my lecture, are so complex in themselves that they require closer analysis before they can even be made the subject of considerations on the theory and practice of the school system: Ultimately, they stand for two fundamentally different approaches and socio-political concepts that require reflection.

I would therefore like to start with some reflections on the reality and possibilities of high-quality education for all, based on the editorial of the OECD report 2018 "Education at a Glance", before concluding on the conceptual difference between inclusion and integration.

**2. Achievements and problems**

If a lecture at an international conference is not to be devoted exclusively to the problems of a specific country in the sense of a case-study, it is obvious to choose an empirical frame of reference common to all participating countries as a starting point. In our case, the analyses of the OECD Report 2018 "Education at a Glance" 3) offer a wealth of data on our education systems. However, while reading the editorial, I already came across interesting theoretical and practical questions:

***Opportunities for all vs Opportunities for many***

First of all, linguistic blurriness is noticeable in this important publication from the outset. First, it says that "no one (...) denies that every child, every human being, regardless of gender, socio-economic, ethnic or cultural background, deserves equal opportunities to acquire skills and find a place in society". However, the following sentence already states that "Equality of opportunity (...) is indeed one of the fundamental values that many countries have chosen as the foundation of their society". Thus the initially claimed universal consensus on equal opportunities 4) is clearly limited 5); and the text ignores completely the differences in meaning between "equal opportunity" and "equal justice".

***Education vs training***

Above all stands the debate about the concept of education, which is often conducted in Austria in particular: when the title of the editorial postulates that "education - a promise to all" is to be understood as "a promise to all", one must at least point out the difference between education and training, which is often maintained in the German-language debate with the attitude of better knowledge, and which is rather levelled out in languages with stronger Romance language roots in the term "education". Semantically, the term "education" in the sense of a "leading out" indicates the actual goal of the event, namely the uncovering and unfolding of potentials. In any case, the European Qualification Framework addresses three facets of an educational system, namely "knowledge", "skills" and "competences", which are described at the different qualification levels in varying degrees of intensity, but always in a synopsis of learning outcomes, without the distinction between educational and training content playing a role.

***Educational attainment vs educational success***

At first glance, it is obvious that "a higher level of education (...) leads to higher competences, which in turn lead to higher life incomes. The quality of education can be a good predictor of a country's economic prosperity". The following statement is not mandatory: "Lack of educational success is extremely expensive, since the states then have to find ways of compensating in order to secure the social and economic well-being of all".

In my view, the discrepancy between these sentences manifests many current problems of educational systems: The equation of higher educational attainment and educational success is the political basis for the complaint that only a small part of the population achieves educational advancement within one generation, and at the same time the basis for the problem of the shortage of skilled workers, unemployment among graduates of some academic studies, a career entry that has been clearly postponed in recent decades, and - this is true at least for Austria - a gender-related differentiation in training courses and thus also in employment opportunities.

It is, however, evident that the relationship between educational attainment and educational success is initially complex. In any case, it would be methodologically inadequate to equate an increase in educational attainment with an increase in educational success, especially from the point of view of society's need for compensation:

On the one hand, in societies that follow the concept of life-long learning, it can only be determined in death what level of education an individual has attained, and on the other hand the increase in the level of education is by no means necessarily a subjective or even a society-wide recipe for success: What does a society have for a high rate of academics if at the same time there is a lack of skilled workers in the non-academic sector or if low-skilled workers are unemployed?

And how do educational attainment and educational success really relate to each other? The question of what can be described as educational success alone requires differentiation, depending on whether one understands "educational success" individually - in the sense of achieving a subjectively set educational goal - or systemically - in the sense of a successful education system. And: Could educational success be measured by the improvement of the educational level, or is not the actual educational success the achievement of an adequate preliminary educational level for the potentials of the individual - combined with the desire to increase this further and further in the course of life? Isn't the actual educational success the satisfaction with what has been achieved and, if necessary, the sustained striving for an increase in educational attainment?

It should also not be overlooked - especially when one sees educational success in connection with the avoidance of societal need for compensation - that educational success in society as a whole is also related to the needs of a society: A society has little need for compensation if the sum of individually achieved educational levels corresponds to the needs of society as a whole. This does not mean that planned economic control in educational systems is desirable, but it does mean, for example, that public communication should be more differentiated: Rising university student numbers should not be seen as positive per se; rather, overall societal reflection should also be intensified on societal needs in the public sphere.

***Inequality vs Equality***

The editorial also stresses that "the effects of unequal knowledge and skills (...) extend far beyond the economic prosperity of a country. They affect all aspects of human coexistence and lead, for example, to poorer health, a climate of violence or social unrest. All this shows what long-term and often tragic consequences the lack of equal opportunities can have for individuals and society as a whole. Therefore, the OECD Framework for Inclusive Growth stresses the importance of investing in people and places that are lagging behind, while supporting inclusive labour markets".

Both the findings and conclusions contained in these sentences sound like a clear imperative, but are not plausible per se: if unequal knowledge leads to poorer health, the increase in the proportion of the population with tertiary education since the 1970s should have led to a general deterioration in health and, conversely, the state of health should rise if the proportion of academics declines and more people only have compulsory schooling: Admittedly, these are polemical sentences, but the polemical level roughly corresponds to the statement that rising inequality is directly linked to the state of health!

Although it is evident that statistically speaking people with a formally lower level of education have a shorter life expectancy and a higher overall risk of illness, this can by no means be attributed causally to the educational level, but is probably also related to the occupations exercised and other living conditions. And even if one is of the opinion that these other circumstances depend precisely on the level of education, should one not work towards improving living conditions in certain milieus rather than blaming the level of education for the living conditions? Are we not faced here with a systemic contempt for milieus without which those who demand higher education for people who do not have an academic degree could not exist?

Equally problematic is the connection between educational inequality and a climate of violence and social unrest: Violence in its various forms can be found in all social strata and among people of all educational levels. And social unrest depends on which phenomena are set as triggers for this unrest. Even if one were to see educational inequality as the trigger of income equality, the conclusion that educational inequality would lead to social unrest would not be legitimate: on the one hand because the equation would be impermissible, as numerous examples show, and on the other because the potential of social unrest depends more on acceptance and coping strategies in a society and on how inequalities are consciously used to generate social unrest. It is evident, for example, that the great social unrest of the 1968 movement and the Green Movement were not triggered by people with low levels of education, that the Yellow West movement was not the result of educational inequality, but rather that it was the result of the social unrest of the 1968 movement and the Green Movement. Even though part of the temporary reduction of this unrest potential was the closure of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, it was not a matter of the dependent people begrudging graduates of their academic degrees, but of people with the highest educational attainment degenerating into technocrats in the eyes of the population and seemingly losing understanding of other people's problems.

As far as income inequality is concerned, a look is taken at the income statistics of the Austrian Court of Audit, where income differences between men and women of the same educational level are often greater than income differences between members of different educational levels. And if the difference in the average income of a male compulsory school leaver of about € 32,000 to the average income of a male academic of about € 65,000 were to trigger social unrest, society would, in my opinion, have to devote energy to ensuring that such inequalities are accepted rather than levelled out: In a few countries, the Gini coefficient indicates a greater degree of income equality than in Austria!

***Equal opportunities - just opportunities***

In the editorial of "Education at a glance" it is further pointed out that the publication shows that "although the level of education has risen significantly in the last ten years, the lack of equity that occurs early in life tends to accumulate in later years. Among the various triggers first in the education system and then on the labour market are socio-economic status, gender, migration background and geographical location.

Of these, socio-economic status has the greatest impact on participation in education and learning, and on economic and social outcomes. Children whose mothers have no tertiary education are less likely to participate in early childhood education, care and upbringing. Although it is widely recognised that children's cognitive development begins long before they reach school age, countries still spend less on this area of education than on any other. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to continue to benefit from further education later, as inequalities tend to accumulate over the course of life. Those whose parents have no tertiary education are more likely to complete vocational than general upper secondary education. This in turn affects their participation in tertiary education, as the proportion of beginners whose parents do not have tertiary education is small".

These sentences attempt to describe a phenomenon that is regularly discussed politically in Austria with the sentence “education is inherited”. Typically, economic status is held responsible for the inheritance of education and is often associated with the evocative formula that poverty is inherited. These relationships are indeed striking, but other factors that are of central importance for educational and income careers are at the same time ignored: Research carried out several years ago at the Austrian Institute for Family Research has shown that cultural-religious aspects also play a decisive role in individual educational careers: If, for example, children from Jewish and Chinese families have an enormous affinity for education, irrespective of the risk of poverty, this suggests that, on the one hand, the formal educational level of the parents does not protect them from poverty and, on the other hand, the social status of the parents does not represent an insurmountable hurdle for the educational careers of the children.

The OECD report already confirms this in the following sentence of the quote: "Nevertheless, two thirds of adults whose parents have a lower level of education attain a higher level of education than their parents, an indication that people from the most disadvantaged strata of the population are increasingly acquiring skills".

And frankly, why formal educational advancement of two thirds within a generation is not celebrated as a success is unclear. If it is conceivable that there will be a continuous generation-to-generation educational advancement (because practically all would have achieved the highest educational attainment in a short period of time), there will always be a part of society that does not surpass or even fail to attain the educational attainment of its parents. In my family, too, it has not been possible for all children to reach or exceed their parents' educational levels.

At this point I would like to deliberately leave open the question of what is meant by justice. On the one hand, this is about the relationship between equality and justice, about the old discussion about whether equality of access conditions is meant or in the result, but above all about the question which situation is seen as "just". The fact that consensus on this is hardly possible in pluralistic societies has already prompted Kant to differentiate between justice as a subjective-ethical postulate and justice as a normative category. For me it follows from this that in a pluralistic society it is a dictate of honesty to disclose demands for justice in their subjectivity and to make them the object of open discourses, but not to pretend that an order is only just if it satisfies certain subjective ideas without at the same time recognizing that other ideas of justice could also be legitimate. Especially with regard to the acceptance of equality and differentiation, there is a lot of catching up to be done in Austrian society from this point of view!

***Gender and education***

The OECD report also points out that gender gaps persist "despite a variety of efforts to reduce or eliminate them. The dynamics behind this, however, unfold differently at school and in the labour market. Boys are more likely to repeat a class, leave school early without a degree, and not graduate at tertiary level. However, despite better performance at school, women continue to achieve poorer employment and income outcomes.

This is partly due to the different choices made by men and women in choosing their specialisations. Although there are many efforts to promote gender diversity in a wide variety of careers, women are still less likely to choose and graduate from well-paid tertiary subject groups. For example, there is a high demand for engineering skills, but only 6 per cent of women earn a degree in engineering compared to 25 per cent of men. These decisions are still influenced, often unconsciously, by cultural norms and preconceived childhood ideas about the role of women".

Although these explanations have clear empirical evidence on their side, it is questionable what the described conditions have to do with the education system: A look at Scandinavia, for example, shows that the question of pay in the nursing professions does not depend on women taking up this profession, but rather on social assessments and the setting of priorities as to whether salaries are paid in the nursing profession that do not reduce women's chances of earning an income, even if the labour market is segmented according to gender.

And as far as the MINT occupations are concerned, a study for the Vienna University of Technology, for example, suggests that it is not women's cognitive competence but a misogynistic climate in education that poses a hurdle; and a study carried out by the Austrian Institute for Family Research shows that the decreasing proportion of women among university lecturers as qualification progresses in the university milieu is due to the fact that today's classic scientific biography is practically incompatible with the family biography: It is precisely in this phase of life, in which enormous publication pressure and precarious working conditions are common in the scientific field, that the view is forced towards the closing biological "window of reproductive opportunity".

***Migration***

Finally, "Education at a glance" also addresses the fact that migration movements fundamentally change our communities and educational systems. To demand social cohesion, it takes the ability to integrate migrants and ensure that they develop the skills necessary for the labour market and the community. However, in countries with available data, first and second generation migrants are less likely to begin and complete a bachelor's degree or a long tertiary education leading to a first degree. Adults born abroad are also less likely to participate in formal and/or non-formal education and training throughout their lives than those born in the country.

**3. The situation in Austria**

***Migration as a phenomenon***

If we start with the topic of migration, it must be stated as the basic fact for the considerations that Austria has a high percentage of inhabitants with migration background. The younger the cohort, the larger the number: as early as 2013, 62% of newborns in Vienna had a migration background in the sense that at least one parent was born abroad 6).

The situation has changed considerably since the major migration movement in 2015: In terms of population, Austria ranked first in a European comparison in 2017 with 237 asylum recognitions per 100,000 inhabitants. This was followed by Germany (187), Luxembourg (184), Sweden (152), Greece (92) and Belgium (88). Countries such as France (36), Great Britain (21), Italy (10) and Spain (1), as well as Eastern European countries, were well below the European average of 54. 7)

The combined view of the two highlights shows that the so-called refugee issue is only one aspect of the migration issue in Austrian schools. This is much more marked by the fact that major social partners have regarded migration as a temporary phenomenon since the 1960s: When recruiting foreign workers, both the trade union and the employer relied on the rotation model, which deliberately prevented arrival in Austrian society and, in particular, immediate language acquisition. The main reasons for this were socio-political and, in particular, labour market policy: trade unions feared sustained supply pressure in the low-wage sector; employers feared a consolidation of the workforce even beyond periods of economic prosperity. When it became apparent after only a few years that the rotation model was practically not working because the people remained in Austria, there was no willingness to draw realistic conclusions and politically clarify the question of how Austrian society should deal with them: To the right of the centre, the aim was to keep the number of migrants small, and to the left of the centre, multiculturalism was the main approach, propagating otherness as a value in itself.

Not surprisingly, since the 1980s the working class milieu has increasingly positioned itself politically as right of the centre, because it feels the pressure on the labour market and at the same time experiences the feeling of cultural foreignness unmastered.

***Migration and School***

It would be presumptuous to give a short lecture in which an overall picture of migration and schools would be sketched out, even if only in rudimentary form; here, it can only be a matter of addressing a central problem that is essential for teaching. If one understands the school events in their core as a communicative process, the ability to communicate is a decisive basic prerequisite for any success of school processes. And this decade-long problematic development in the field of migration has led to enormous challenges for the Austrian system as a whole and for schools at any rate:

In the school year 2016/17 only 12% of ordinary pupils, but 72% of extraordinary pupils, did not have Austrian citizenship. It should be noted, however, that the question of citizenship is irrelevant for the analysis of everyday school life because it is a purely administrative characteristic and has no significance for school events.

According to the Integration Report 2018, "26% of children in childcare facilities in 2011/12 came from non-German-speaking families. In the following five years, this proportion rose by six percentage points to 32% in the kindergarten year 2016/17. At 42%, the proportion of children with non-German mother tongue in mixed-age institutions was significantly higher than in after-school care (35%), cribs (34%) and kindergartens (28%)." 8)

The following values were found for the schools: 25% of all pupils in the whole of Austria, but 51% of all pupils in Vienna, did not have German as their colloquial language; 58% of pupils in primary schools in Vienna, 83% of pupils in secondary modern schools, 72% of pupils in the new secondary schools, but also 45% of pupils in vocational schools, 57% of pupils in vocational secondary schools, 36% of pupils in higher vocational secondary schools and 39% of pupils in general secondary schools did not have German as their colloquial language.

In relation to Austria as a whole, 45% of these pupils had teachers who had no training in German as a foreign language, 42% of the pupils had teachers who had basic knowledge of German as a foreign language and only 13% of the pupils had teachers who had German as a foreign language as their main specialty 9). Applied to the situation in Vienna, it is hardly conceivable that high-quality instruction can succeed.

***Competence transfer within the family***

However, this is obviously not only related to the education system, but also to the situation in early childhood:

Here the OECD states that cognitive development of children begins long before they reach school age and notes that "countries still spend less on this area of education than on any other. This has clear long-term consequences: children whose mothers have no tertiary education are less likely to participate in early childhood education, care and upbringing. Those whose parents have no tertiary education are more likely to attend and are less likely to complete upper secondary vocational education than those whose parents have tertiary education. This in turn affects their participation in tertiary education, as the proportion of beginners whose parents do not have tertiary education is small". However, the following sentence makes the above-mentioned observation that “two thirds of adults whose parents have a lower level of education (reach) a higher level of education than their parents, indicating that people from the most disadvantaged strata of the population are increasingly acquiring competences”. 10)

The question as to why the statistics show educational disadvantages on the one hand and clear educational advancement on the other cannot, of course, be answered on the basis of these figures; in my view, however, it is highly plausible that this is related to the educational affinity in the parental home and can in turn be shown in the potential of communication.

The Integration Report 2018 states: "In 2016/17, the language level monitoring of 3 to 6-year-old children revealed that 65% had an age-appropriate language level at the beginning of the kindergarten year. 17% of the children with German as their first language and 70% with another first language needed support in German. The need for language support was particularly high among Turkish, Persian and Arabic-speaking children. At the end of the kindergarten year, 52% of the sponsored children did not need any further language support."

The need for language support was particularly high among Turkish (80%), Persian, Arabic (78% each) and Chechen-speaking children (75%). Albanian (71%) and Romanian-speaking children (69%) also had an above-average need for support. For children with Hungarian as their first language, the proportion of children in need of support was 63%, for those with Russian 62% and for those with Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian as their first language 59%. Children with a Polish (55%) or Slovak mother tongue (56%) had a lower need for support". 11)

Obviously, there are linguistic and cultural milieus in which, more than in others, the foundations are laid in the first years of life for children to be able to make more profitable use of pre-school and school education than others.

This is also confirmed by a detailed survey of the number of children's books in the household 12), which, however, has a strong indicative character for the parents' attention and shows strong differences in the individual language groups. In general, "the proportions of families who have no or few children's books or many of them differ in the language groups. While in the German language group 20% of households have only 0-10 children's books, and English and Polish households have similar values, this is 38% in Arabic families, 49% in Turkish families and even 55% in Serbian families. Not only German children's books, but also children's books in the first language were counted, because learning and mastering the first language is also of decisive importance for language acquisition in the second language.

In my opinion, however, it is not only the state that is called upon to provide support here, but parents are also decisively called upon to promote the cognitive and, in particular, linguistic skills of their children in the first few years in accordance with the welfare of their children. Ultimately, this confirms the thesis that, in addition to income indicators, greater attention should be paid than hitherto to cultural and religious milieus and the fact that certain milieus have a lower affinity for education. Here, decisive changes in mindset are to be demanded and in public communication not the state, but families are to be addressed. Ultimately, the best state offer only makes sense if it is accepted by the parents. It can be doubted that this is the case when parents do not even organise age-appropriate children's books for their children of pre-school age; and it can be assumed that these parents will not promote the educational careers of their children to the same extent in later years as those who organise at least some children's books.

The demands on parents must, however, be combined with demands on the employers of these parents and the public authorities: Family-friendly working conditions and sufficient support through state offers are necessary in order to create the appropriate awareness and conditions for realisation.

**4. Inclusion and integration**

***Normativity***

Allow me at this point to say a word about the role of the state in these problem areas. If one reviews the publications on school policy - the same applies to many other policy areas, such as family policy - it is unmistakable that the sole addressee of demands for change and shaping is "the state".

Logic should dictate that the state should not be seen as something abstract, as it were, that faces the inhabitants and is understood by them, as it were, as an object of their own desires in solving problems. To the extent that the European concept of the state, which continues to underlie the theory of international law, regards the power of the state exercised by its representatives over a territory as constitutive of the concept of the state, the state is an "event" of the citizens who bear responsibility for the organization of the people who live in a territory.

Thus it is ultimately a question of social organization for which topics the general public should take responsibility with legal compulsion and for which topics other groups or individuals should take responsibility in autonomy. The very multipolarity of responsibilities thus created is lost, however, in an understanding that relies fundamentally on state intervention to overcome problems in a society and makes the public infrastructure and public financing made available the measure of sufficient action.

To avoid any misunderstanding: As far as problems in a society become visible, it can undoubtedly be the task of the state to intervene, but intervention could also consist of demanding personal responsibility where and to the extent possible.

The basic building block of the network of relationships that forms a state in the interplay of personal responsibility and community responsibility, of legal compulsion and voluntariness, is, however, the fundamental acceptance of state power, which is reflected in the observance of the legal rules that the state creates in the exercise of its organizational power. Especially in a European constitutional state in which the exercise of state power is restricted by fundamental rights, the enforcement of which can be enforced before a supranational authority on the basis of the European Convention on Human Rights, this should not be a problem but a matter of course.

The fact that this is by no means taken for granted in the Austrian school system has been demonstrated in recent years by the debates on the enforcement of compulsory school attendance and the enforcement of school-internal behavioural agreements - and can also be demonstrated by other examples, which are by no means to be found only in the context of migration, but generally show a dwindling understanding of normativity.

The basic questions of our society today are "being"-oriented and wish-driven: What is it? What do you feel like? What do you want? - the basic question of normativity - how should you live? - is considered questionable by many.

So that there is no misunderstanding here, too: In many cases, the orders of “should be” are blindly obeyed when we think of agenda-setting by interest groups, influencers, bloggers, dictates of fashion or political correctness, etc. On the other hand, there seems to be a widespread lack of understanding and scepticism towards general, traditional behavioural norms that serve politeness, acceptance and mutual respect, as well as towards normative orders of the legislator, which at any rate is peculiar in a democracy. Not only in schools, but also in the workplace and in many relationships, expectations and guarantees of punctuality, politeness, honesty, the relationship between closeness and distance, etc. are no longer homogeneous. The fact that even loyalty to family relationships and compliance with the law, right up to important actors in political life, are not taken for granted completes the picture of a society in which autonomy has a central place, behind which meaningful behavioural norms for society as a whole have to take a back seat.

***Conceptual differences***

This brings us to the concluding point of the lecture, namely the discussion of the difference between the concepts of integration and inclusion. One of the authors of the Internet website "inklusion-schule.info" 13) explains the different concepts behind these terms:

"While integration assumes that a society consists of a relatively homogeneous majority group and a smaller external group that must be integrated into the existing system, inclusion represents a departure from this two-group theory and regards all people as equal individuals who are part of the whole from the outset and independent of personal characteristics or preconditions.

The concept of integration thus consciously perceives differences and requires the individual to adapt to the majority system in order to be a full member of society. Inclusion, on the other hand, does not order different individual characteristics and preconditions on a scale of values, but regards the diversity and heterogeneity of society as fundamental and self-evident. It is not the individual who has to adapt to the system, but the social framework conditions have to be flexible enough to enable each individual to participate.

Transferred to school, this means that it is not the student who has to integrate into an existing, rigid system; on the contrary, it is the task of the school to ensure that all students can participate in the lessons with their respective abilities and talents.”

In these thoughts different conceptual approaches to social problems and thus in the understanding of society become clear - both those that concern the rights and duties of groups and those that concern the rights and duties of individuals. In the concept assigned to the label of integration, the majority group is given unconditional priority, while in the concept of inclusion, the individual is given priority, with group interests being secondary. The problem here is not that there are different concepts, but that the appearance is created that a) these approaches oppose each other and b) priority is to be given to the concept oriented towards individuality. In my opinion, there is a problem here of the transfer of knowledge into the political sphere of action that amounts to polarization: Either the integration model or the inclusion model should be followed, or even: instead of the integration model, the inclusion model - which is probably regarded as more progressive - should be followed.

***Image of man***

For me, the key to resolving this dilemma is the image of man behind these models: if one sees man as a collective being, it is evident that preference should be given to the adaptation of the individual to the group; if, on the other hand, one understands man from his individual dimension, it is consistent to give priority to individuality. From my point of view, however, both approaches are inadequate to the extent that man can only be explained inadequately from both perspectives. It is more convincing for me to take up the human image of Aristotle, which interprets man as a "both/and..and" being: in the imagination it becomes clear that individuals (ζώον) can only live humanly if they live in a - legally constituted - community (πόλις), but that conversely the community only remains a human community - and does not slip into inhumanity - if it also respects individuality.

This makes it a decisive task of the organisational power to draw the line as to how far individual responsibility reaches and where or which group is responsible for solving questions of social relevance.

Applied to the school system, this means that it must be examined to what extent it is appropriate for the state to use its legislative power to delegate problem solutions to "the school" or other social subsystems or to the individual's own responsibility.

**5. Conclusions**

In the light of these considerations, numerous conclusions can be drawn that are relevant to solving the problems of interest here. Finally, I would like to mention some of these points:

● On the one hand, it becomes clear that school, with regard to its educational task, stands in the structural conflict of objectives of the human condition. The question of whether school should develop individuality or shape it in a certain direction is as old as the etymology of the word "pedagogy" shows: When it comes to leading a child, the question of goal is always raised. Here it is too little to refer to target paragraphs of the school law, because these in their indeterminacy do not spare the user of the law to put the targets in relation to each other and thus to relativize them: In the end, it is a matter - again with Aristotle - of finding the balance.

On the other hand, it becomes clear that it is not a question of accepting children in their own way, including them in groups and thereby seeing the demands of the groups as secondary, nor of merging the character of children in a majority group, but rather of achieving a balanced relation between individual development and communal ability: school and all educational institutions attached to it must react forcefully or mitigatingly in order to achieve a balanced result.

● The approach thus also demonstrates the need for differentiation and forces one to recognise that there is no "Patentlösung" for dealing with pupils who need help to become certain of their individuality and at the same time achieve communal ability. A solution according to the pattern "one size fits all" is not possible because people and human groups are different. Children therefore need adequate interventions in all educational processes, depending on their status from other socialisation processes and the setting in which the interaction takes place at school.

● It can also be seen that the educational systems are embedded in the other systems and networks of relationships attached to them, which together form society. Here, the role of families must be pointed out in particular. Here I start from the open family concept used today in family science and understand by it all intergenerational relationships in which people assume responsibility not on the basis of contractual obligations, but for their own personal sake: Anyone who assumes personal responsibility for children must in principle review their own interaction with the "school" system and "pull together" with school. Education to community skills cannot succeed if school is seen a priori as a necessary evil or hostile system, so that children in the family environment must be offered a counter programme. In an open and democratic society it should in principle be possible to accept the "school" system in principle or at least to find an institution within the wide range of forms of the "school" system in Austria for which there is sufficient potential for identification.

● In any case, it is important that the family affirms and at least does not counteract those basic prerequisites that an educational system - indeed a society in its collective relations - needs: The ability to integrate, to show consideration, to accept and learn customs and techniques of communication, tolerance and frustration tolerance as well as the ability to deal with conflicts.

● The model also makes it clear that community capacity and secure individuality are mutually dependent, because only personalities have the "standing" that is necessary to integrate into groups and to be able to use the collaborative advantages of the group. Conversely, community capacity can only succeed if the community is aware of its own goals and communicates them reliably, so that individuals can engage with the community with assured expectations.

The answer to the question posed by the topic, to what extent school as an important but only partial and temporary place of socialisation can help children, must assume that school is not an abstract instance, but a system formed by people who have to carry out the tasks that society entrusts to "school". Under the premise that "school" is the social subsystem formed by all those involved in the pedagogical process, the answer depends on several preconditions:

● School needs clear and reliable social tasks and must not be unsettled in its own social role by the constant change of different political concepts. The tasks of the family, the social system and the labour market are of crucial importance here.

● School must not be misused by any of the attached social subsystems as a projection screen for one's own desires or even as a compensation instrument for one's own failure: If schools are to take over tasks, sufficient resources must be made available; the tasks of the attached social subsystems must also be defined, demanded and, if necessary, compensated - depending on concrete needs.

Please allow me at this point to make a concluding remark from a purely legal perspective: in a democratic constitutional state, the clear role assignments, objectives and weightings necessary on the basis of the considerations presented are carried out in consideration processes through legal regulations and on the basis of public-law acts bound by law (e.g. ordinances, notices) and private-law acts (e.g. contracts). This is intended to create and implement the rules of the game that are indispensable for every human community: The Roman phrase "ubi societas ibi ius" already signals that a community is only a human community - and not an instinct-driven pack - as long as it accepts normativity as a steering instrument. Conversely, this means that a group loses its humanity when the normative concept loses its formative power.

This, however, is the inevitable consequence of a society in which the reliable consensus about the tasks of schools and the tasks of other attached social subsystems is so low

- that the maximum of feelings are laws of such high compromise character, whose formulations vary between flowery, spongy and meaningless, and which therefore open the door to arbitrariness in interpretation;

- that regulations, decrees, notices and treaties degenerate into an unmanageable thicket of regulations, and create insecurity in internal and external perception by being torn between different concepts;

- that the individualism of subjective parental desires and the pluralism of theoretical pedagogical concepts lead to a multitude of organizational forms and experiments which are not necessarily to be seen as signs of social diversity, but can also be seen as signs of a lack of social consensus and of social inability to make decisions.

If one relates these statements to the situation in Austria, one could lose courage; on the contrary, however, I see this as an enormous opportunity: On the basis of the considerations presented here, a school that is safe in its social task will help children to be able to communicate as safe personalities, if it is possible not to lose oneself in technocratic debates about organisational details, about theoretical concepts that are ever interesting but never suitable as patent remedies, and about practical problems, but to attempt to define the greatest possible consensus about the concept of man and society, school in its social tasks and the responsibility for the individual, and not to lose sight of the attached subsystems in their tasks and responsibilities. It is precisely the participants in this conference and the associations for which they stand that could provide an enormous impetus to European societies. If it is possible to turn the debate on the promotion of pupils who need school help into a reflection on the roles of school and family in particular, on the education of individuals capable of community, I am not worried about the future of children who need school help!

**Notes**

 1 Act to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind, Public Law 107-110, 107th Congress.

2 Art 1 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

3 Education at a Glance 2018 OECD INDICATORS (2018)

4 Arg.: "No one will deny"

5 Arg: "many countries"

6 Microcensus mid 2012 to 2013, calculations ZSI

7 Eurostat, cited after BMEIA (Hrsg), Integration Report 2018, 38.

8 BMEIA (Ed.), Integration Report 2018,

9 Chamber of Labour (Ed.), Migration and Multilingualism, Policy Letter #1 - The Diversity of Countries of Origin (2017)

10 Education at a glance 2018, 12.

11 BMEIA, Integration Report 2018, figures.data.indicators, p. 44ff.

12 Chamber of Labour (Ed.), Migration and Multilingualism Policy Letter #2, The Diversity of Family Languages, (2017), p.8f.

13 <http://inklusion-schule.info/inklusion/integration-und-inklusion.html>