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# **Auf dem Weg zum gemeinsamen Unterricht?**

Aktuelle Entwicklungen zur Inklusion  
in Deutschland

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# Abstract

Since the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force in Germany in 2009, regarding the school sector in particular, “inclusion” has become a core concept in the education policy debate. This volume illustrates progress made so far in implementing the UNCRPD. It considers both the progress in mainstreaming children with special educational needs and the implementation of inclusion in a broad sense and mainstreaming in terms of school legislation. After concepts have been explained and a comprehensive overview of mainstreaming in Germany has been given, the developments and legal situations are presented in detail and supplemented by impressions gained in practical contexts in the sixteen Federal State profiles. To conclude, the results are set in an international context, and open questions are formulated for the German school landscape with regard to transforming it into a truly inclusive school system.

Three essential insights can be deduced from the analyses: First, “inclusion” is frequently equated with mainstreaming children with special educational needs in Germany. This, however, corresponds more closely to “integration”. At the same time, in all Federal States, there are very good examples of schools that truly “live” inclusion with a focus on the esteem and participation of all children. Secondly, with a view to the statistics referring to places of learning of children with special educational needs, it has become apparent that here, all in all, no substantial changes have occurred since 2009. In particular, the number of children attending separate special-needs schools has not

dropped in comparison to 2009. However, significantly more children are diagnosed with special needs, although there are very considerable differences between the individual Federal States. Whereas substantially smaller numbers of children attend separate special-needs schools in Schleswig-Holstein and in the City States than in the past, the rates have remained almost unchanged or have even seen a slight rise in the western and southern Federal States. The eastern area states, which had extremely high rates of special needs and exclusion in past years, are now increasingly approaching the Federal average. And thirdly, inclusion has not been fully adopted in any school legislation so far. Here too, there are considerable differences between the individual Federal States. However, the States show marked levels of dynamics, so that the account given here can only be regarded as a snapshot.

What this volume hence clearly demonstrates is a lack of uniform concepts, national quality standards and meaningful indicators to measure progress that would be required to achieve an education system providing equal opportunities and a high degree of efficiency for all children, independently of where they live, their particular educational needs, or other preconditions. Germany is on the right track – but there is still a long way to go before inclusive schools become the norm.