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## **Current Aspects of the Legal-Normative Base for Integration of Children and Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the Republic of Bulgaria**

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### **Abstract**

There is no doubt that the efficient realization of the integrated education and behavioural development of the children with Special Educational Needs in Bulgaria highly depends on providing a supportive environment for their successful education is highly important. The following article presents a comparative analysis of the international and regional law regulations' base which was realized during the years in relation to the psycho-educational support given to children with Special Educational Needs in the Republic of Bulgaria.

**Keywords:** integration, Bulgaria, law regulations

## Introduction

In recent years, in the Republic of Bulgaria there were made a number of steps to establish the place of children/students with special educational needs (SEN) in kindergarten or school. In this regard Vl. Radulov, a Bulgarian scientist, researcher in the field of pedagogy, psychology and rehabilitation of the visually impaired people, emphasizes that one of the „most important criteria for the mechanism and the maturity of one society – is its attitude towards children with various disabilities“ (Radulov, 2007: 10).

The notion „special educational needs“ was introduced in Bulgaria in the 90s of XX century. Firstly it was translated in Bulgarian as „special pedagogical needs“, and later – as special educational needs. K. Karadzhova rises the that idea that „the change in the education area is the creation of concept called integrated and inclusive education“ (Karadzhova, 2010: 7). Despite these circumstances, there are problematic issues that wait adequate responses.

Tracking back the history of the integrated education, we found that its founder is Johann Klein, an Austro-Hungarian teacher of visually impaired people, who dedicated his life to helping blind people. His mission was to care for the blind, for their education and training. In 1804 J. Klein began teaching the blind boy Yakov Brown, who inspired him and he founded an Institute for Blind people in 1816 (Radulov, 1995: 194). Officially the beginning of the integrated education was on 17.09.1900, in Chicago when a blind student was integrated into a mainstream school. In the Republic of Bulgaria the integrated education appeared in 1984 under the leadership of Vladimir Radulov. At that time in the Secondary School for Visually Impaired Children „Prof. Dr. Ivan Shishmanov“ – town of Varna, Bulgaria, two groups of visually impaired children are experimentally supported by a resource teacher.

The validity of the concept „special educational needs“ in the Republic of Bulgaria is approved by the new law on pre-school and school education. It stipulates that „special educational needs“ of a child and student are educational needs that may arise in case of sensory impairments, physical disabilities, multiple disabilities, intellectual disabilities, language and speech disorders, specific disorders of the learning capacity, disorders of the autistic spectrum, emotional and behavioral disorders.

The essence of the integrated education is directed towards the development of a society that allows all children, regardless of their gender, age, abilities, ethnicity and disabilities, to participate in it and to give their contribution. According to L. Popova, the basic principles of the integrated education are: every child has the right to an equal access to education; every child is a unique person with his or her skills, interests and abilities; each child with SEN has the right to access to educational kindergartens and schools providing which will provide his or her training according to an individual educational program, consistent with his or her abilities (Popova, 2011: 92 – 93). It is no accident that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Education area stipulates that countries should provide equal access to primary, secondary and higher education, vocational training and lifelong learning. Education should contribute to their participation into public life and to the development of their personality. C. Dolapchiev emphasizes that „Bulgaria finally started a big change in the attitude towards people with disabilities“ (Dolapchiev, 2012: 2) because the supportive environment in Bulgarian mainstream schools, according to P. Terziyska, is „an environment in which everyone feel accepted, important, useful to themselves and to the school community“ (Terziyska, 2012: 52).

In this favourable environment a number of essential tasks concerning training and education are solved through pedagogical communication. This, according to Zh. Savova, „creates particularly favorable conditions for social affirmation of the individual, due to the valuable public standards of behavior and relationships which it offers and forms“ (Savova, 1989: 27). G. Boneva argues that the integration of students into the social environment is realized namely in the process of communication (Boneva, 2011: 13). For the successful implementation of the integration training, according to Z. Dobrev, „the cooperation between teachers, psychologists and parents is an essential catalyst for the successful integration of students“ (Dobrev, 2008: 13).

Undoubtedly the integrated education is a challenge for the Bulgarian educational system, it should ensure the relevant conditions to children/students with special educational needs in order this education to be successfully implemented – the needed conditions in mainstream kindergartens/schools, according to a plan, consistent with their individual capacities. In this relation, S. Ignelzi says that „having provided an access to education, children with developmental problems reach a standard of living which is better than that expected for them by the society“ (Ignelzi, 2001: 30).

### **Normative Documents at National Level**

The question concerning the integrated education in the Republic of Bulgaria is regulated by the adopted in 2005 law on integration of people with disabilities. In it is explained that there must be provided: an education of children with disabilities of pre-school and school age, in kindergartens and in schools; supporting environment for integrated education of children with disabilities; early auditory and speech, speech therapy and psychological rehabilitation and rehabilitation of blind and visually impaired children; textbooks, handbooks, contemporary technologies and technical means for education of children with disabilities up to 18-years old or up to their graduation of secondary education; the professional preparation of children with disabilities and of persons with disabilities up to the age 29 years.

In compliance with the UN Convention, adopted in 2000, in the Child Protection Act the Republic of Bulgaria stipulates its priorities to protect and guarantee the fundamental rights of child in all spheres of public life and for all children according to the age, social status, physical health and mental state, as providing to all children relevant economic, social and cultural environment. The process of introduction of the integrated education started in the Republic of Bulgaria from 2002 onwards, when were adopted legislative acts regulating the necessary basic prerequisites for the integration of children with special educational needs and/or chronic diseases into the public education system.

A fundamental document reflecting the Bulgarian national policy is the National plan for integration of children with special educational needs and/or chronic diseases into the public education system (adopted by Decision № 894 of December 22, 2003 of the Council of Ministers in the Republic of Bulgaria). It was elaborated in pursuance of paragraph 34 of the Transitional and Final Provisions to the Law amending and supplementing the National Education Act and it is updated at the end of each school year. It sets out values, principles and objectives, measures and responsibilities for their implementation, deadlines and resources needed to achieve them. According to it, the integrated learning is a process in which the child, regardless of the type of disability, is included in the mainstream educational environment. This is provided through the construction and operation of supportive

environment which includes appropriate architectural and social and living conditions, individual educational programs, team for complex educational assessment, special educational and technical means and equipment, didactic materials and teaching aids. In this regard, the integration of children with disabilities is a process that requires the implementation of a range of activities aimed at changing the legislation, resources and insurance, changing the public attitudes and the approach at school, actively supported by parents and society.

The problem concerning the integrated education is solved legally by the National Education Act (version 2002) and the Regulation for its implementation. They set out the modern measures concerning children with SEN both preschoolers and from school. They provide the integrated training to allow the child and his parents to choose the school and the type of training. Then comes the Regulation No 6 of the Ministry of Education and Science of 19.08.2002 on the education of children with SEN and/or chronic diseases, and it regulates teaching students in an integrated way and it covers the entire activity related to the search, research, diagnosis and enrolling of children and students with SEN in different teaching, educational and professional institutions.

Another important statutory document for the start of the integrated training is the Regulation on the activity of the resource centers supporting the integrated training and education of children with special educational needs. It was adopted in September 2006. Then comes the updated. Strategy on ensuring of equal opportunities for people with disabilities from 2008 to 2015, which sets out the specific measures for the removing of the barriers (psychological, educational, social, cultural, professional financial and architectural) to the social involvement and equal integration of people with disabilities.

The successful implementation of the integrated education, Z. Dobrev emphasizes the importance of „the cooperation between teachers, psychologists and parents“ (Dobrev, 2008: 13). In support of this thesis is the claim of P. Kostova that „children with disabilities have special needs and they should receive the needed attention by society, the appropriate growing, education and training conditions, their social value and integrity should be enhanced“ (Kostova, 2011: 9).

On the grounds of the stipulated above, it is necessary to highlight the advantages of integrated education, namely:

- he most short and correct way to the socialization of children with disabilities;
- allows the child to feel like a normal member of the family and to believe that he/she is like everyone else;
- removes the isolation which is inherent to the special school;
- enhance the self-esteem of the child with special educational needs;
- the useful skills for independent and autonomous life are learn in natural conditions;
- increases the social sense and the commitment of healthy children to children with special educational needs;

- proves the capacities of people with disabilities for equal participation in social life, by building gradually positive attitude of all its members and different state, public and non-governmental institutions and organizations in Bulgaria“ (Radulov, 2007: 211 – 212).

The National Children's Strategy 2008 – 2018, underlines that education by integrated training is one of the directions for a reform in the Bulgarian educational system in recent years, in order to ensure – Equality for education of children with special educational needs, their equal opportunities at the labor market and their full participation in life. It stipulates that in order to increase children's access to quality education and vocational training, measures will be taken to continue the policy of integrated education for children with special educational needs: creating a new assessment model and redirection of children with SEN towards the public education system; holding of information campaigns to build positive attitudes towards inclusive training in different communities; creating a supportive environment for the training and education of children with SEN in mainstream schools and kindergartens that include: accessible architectural environment; diagnostic, consultative and rehabilitation activities; special teaching and technical aids and equipment; individual educational programs; curricula on special subjects etc.

In reference to this, P. Terziyska emphasizes that a supportive environment is one „in which everyone feels accepted, important, useful to himself/herself and to the school community“ (Terziyska, 2012: 52). So G. Boneva claims that the integration in the social environment of students is realized namely in the process of communication (Boneva, 2011: 13). Undoubtedly, in this favorable environment are solved a number of essential tasks concerning training and education through pedagogical communication that is important and indispensable condition for the effective implementation of the integrated training and education of children and students with SEN. Following the analysis of the facts in Theoretical and Practical Aspects and in relation to the studied problematic, on one side, and to the clearly defined above scientific problem on the other hand, there can be constructed the following parameters of the study.

The subject of the study are integrated children/students with special educational needs (SEN) in Bulgarian mainstream educational environment. It is assumed that if we know the public attitudes of resource teachers and those of teachers working in mainstream educational institutions, a more complete and quality integration will be made.

Subject area of study is the integration of children/students (SEN) in the mainstream environment.

The main objective of the study is to examine and analyze the attitudes of resource teachers and teacher working in mainstream educational institutions and finding the conditions for the implementation of more effective integration of children/students with special educational needs.

To achieve the objective of the study it is necessary to implement the following research tasks:

1. To examine and analyze the pedagogical, psychological and methodological literature in connection with the research problem.
2. To determine how children/students with special educational needs are accepted by the others in the kindergarten/mainstream school and the attitude of the institutions towards them.

3. To clarify the attitude of parents (with healthy and integrated children/students) to the policy of integrated education and interactions with mainstream institutions.
4. To establish the quality of training of the integrated children/students and the prospects for their development.
5. To assess the international and national legal and regulatory framework for integration, teamwork between the resource teacher and the mainstream education teacher and their preparation for work with children/students with special educational needs.
6. To draw conclusions and recommendations with specific practical direction related to the opportunities for enrichment of the pedagogical practice with innovative ideas for the integration of children and young people with disabilities.

On the grounds of the objective and tasks of the study, the following hypotheses must be tested (Karadzova, 2010: 177):

- 1. Hypothesis (X1):** if the negative and uncertain positions in the respondents' answers prevail, this will lead to confirming of the old barriers and the emergence of new ones for the integration of children/students with SEN and it won't lead to a statistically significant result.
- 2. Hypothesis (X2):** if resources teachers and teachers working in mainstream institutions have a positive attitude (know and apply the philosophy of integrated training, the legal documents and the diagnostic procedures), this will mean a complete and quality integration of children/students with SEN and there will be all prerequisites for the realization of the transition from integrated to inclusive education.

## Material and Methods

For the realization of the objective, the testing of the hypothesis and the solving of study tasks, the following methods are being applied:

### 1. Methods for theoretical study

- research, analysis, selection and systematization of literature;
- content – analysis

### 2. Methods of the empirical study

- survey.

The empirical material is collected via anonymous survey, which has seven rating scales for assessment (table 1). The survey includes 13 questions of closed type. The survey is borrowed from K. Karadzova (Karadzova, 2010: 177 – 180) and partially adapted by the author of the survey to the needs of the study. Attitudes are measured by the method of the semantic differential C. Osgood and his collaborators (Osgood et al., 1957; 1975).

**Table 1.** Assessment scale

<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Rather good than bad</b>	<b>I can't say</b>	<b>Rather bad than good</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Very bad</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### 3. Mathematical and statistical methods for processing the received qualitative and quantitative results

The processing of the results was carried out by the program „Statistical Package for Social Sciences – IBM SPSS“, version 19.0. There were used: quantitative and qualitative analysis; evaluation of the reliability of the used self-assessment tests by the coefficient for internal consistency „Cronbach's Alpha“; correlation and regression analysis. The consistency of the items has been studied through the procedure of assessment of the internal consistency Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1988: 63 – 70). The values of alphas are interpreted in accordance with the data shown in Table 1 and those below (Dzhonev, 2004: 47).

#### Organization and Methodology of the Study

First stage – preparation stage: September 2013 – January 2014. It includes: study of specialized scientific and methodological literature and information sources in connection with the studied problem; specifying of the methodology of the study; choosing mathematical and statistical methods for processing of empirical data; preparation of the questionnaire.

Second stage – research stage: February – December 2014: conduct the survey on the territory of the regions of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Third stage – closing stage: January – December 2015: processing and analysis of results, making of conclusions and recommendations for the practice.

Contingent of the study are 409 resource teachers and teachers working in mainstream institutions, selected randomly (table 7).

#### Results and Discussion

**Table 2.** Statistical reliability

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
,876	,876	13

*Alpha = 0.876, Standardized item alpha = 0.876*

**Table 3.** Statistical reliability

Question	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. What is the influence of a child/student at integrated education over the mainstream class?	42,75	128,818	,457	,310	,871
2. What is the international regulatory framework which regulates the integrated education?	42,30	124,718	,573	,836	,865
3. What is the national regulatory framework which regulates the integrated education?	42,27	123,162	,617	,845	,863
4. What is the quality of education of the integrated children/students?	42,77	121,860	,659	,513	,861
5. How do you evaluate the teamwork among the participants in the integrated education?	43,23	122,474	,651	,526	,861
6. What is the interaction between the resource teacher and the mainstream teacher?	43,51	124,973	,544	,481	,867
7. What is the attitude of the parents of children/ students with special educational needs to the policy of integrated education?	42,94	123,326	,568	,446	,866
8. What is the attitude of the parents of children/ students without special educational needs to the policy of integrated education?	42,65	124,669	,543	,431	,867
9. What is the preparation of the mainstream teacher for work with children/students with SEN?	42,33	124,220	,518	,294	,869



10. What is the preparation of the resource teacher for work with children/students with special educational needs?	43,92	128,626	,481	,398	,870
11. What is the development perspective for the integrated children/students after terminating their 8 <sup>th</sup> year in mainstream school?	41,70	126,324	,533	,420	,868
12. What is the attitude of the state institutions towards the problems of the integrated children/students?	41,96	124,416	,543	,425	,867
13. What are the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN?	42,07	123,809	,503	,346	,870

**Table 4.** Assessment of the quality of the scale

Value of the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha	Level of quality
0,9 – 1,0	Excellent
<b>0,8 – 0,9</b>	<b>Very good</b>
0,7 – 0,8	Good for practical objectives
0,6 – 0,7	Modest
0,6 и надолу	Poor

The results of the conducted survey (table 3) and the examination of Cronbach's alpha reveal a very good internal consistency 0.876 (table 4) of the questions.

### Regression Analysis

**Table 5.** Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.1	,353 <sup>a</sup>	,125	,091	,440

We get low values for the the correlation coefficient  $R=0.353$  and for the determination coefficient  $R^2$  (square of  $R$ ), with value of 0.125 (table 5).

### Anova<sup>b</sup>

The results reveal that they are statistically significant because  $\text{Sig.} = 0.000 < 0.05$ , while the level of significance is 0.05. Thus, the zero hypothesis ( $X_1$ ) is rejected and the data from the questionnaire are as a whole statistically significant (table 6).

**Table 6.** Data

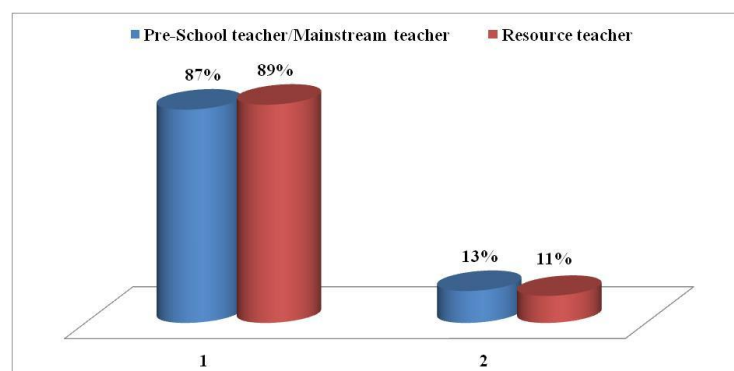
	Model	Sum of Squares	F	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1.	Regression	10,833	5	,722	,731	000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	75,871	92	,194		
	Total	86,703	07			

The respondents that have participated are at different age, and they are divided in two studied groups (Survey participant): teachers in kindergartens and mainstream school teachers (Survey participant 1); resource teachers (Survey participant 2) (table 7).

**Table 7.** Gender division

Respondents	Female	Male
Pre-school teacher/teacher in mainstream school ( <b>respondent 1</b> )	246	8
Resource teacher ( <b>respondent 2</b> )	111	14

Their profile shows that the majority of them are women. The results are represented graphically on figure 1, namely: respondent 1 – 246 women (87.0%), men – 38 (13.0%); respondent 2 – 111 women, constituting 89.0%; men – 14, with a relative share: 11.0%.



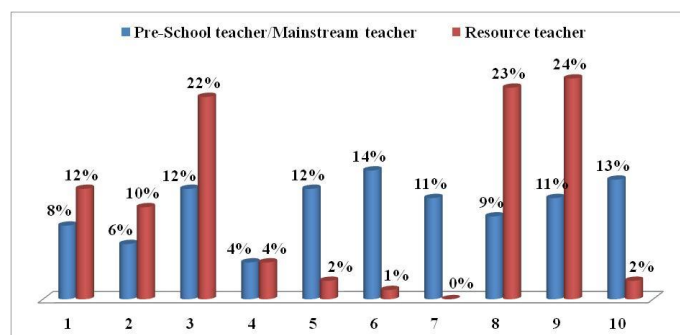
**Figure 1.** Gender division

In view of the representativeness of the sample, a survey was conducted in different cities and municipalities in Bulgaria as follows: Plevnen (1); Dobrich (2); Lovech (3); Gorna Oryahovitsa (4); Troyan (5); Tryavna (6); Dolni Dubnik (7); Veliko Turnovo (8); Gabrovo (9); Teteven (10). Data are presented in table 8.

**Table 8.** Distribution of respondents by regions and municipalities in Bulgaria

Respondents	Region									
	Plevnen <i>1</i>	Dobrich <i>2</i>	Lovech <i>3</i>	Gorna Oryahovitsa <i>4</i>	Troyan <i>5</i>	Tryavna <i>6</i>	Dolni Dubnik <i>7</i>	Veliko Turnovo <i>8</i>	Gabrovo <i>9</i>	Teteven <i>10</i>
<b>Respondent 1</b>	23	17	34	10	33	41	31	27	30	38
<b>Respondent 2</b>	15	13	28	5	2	1	0	29	30	2

The counting results show the following distribution of the number of respondents according to the municipalities (figure 2). The largest percentage of the respondents is from: Gabrovo (9 – 35.0%); Lovech (3 – 34.0%); Veliko Turnovo (8 – 32.0%); Plevnen (20.0%) and Dobrich (16.0%).



**Figure 2.** Proportion of the respondents, by municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria

The lowest is the percentage of respondents from municipalities that are not so populated like: Tryavna and Teteven (15.0% each of them); Troyan (14.0%); Dolni Dubnik (11.0%); Gorna Oryahovitsa (8.0%).

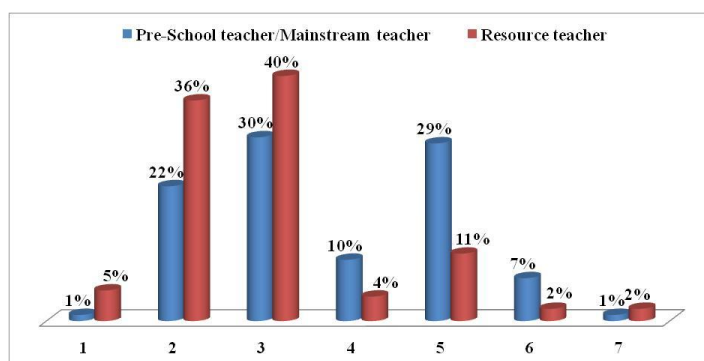
Table 9 presents the assessment of the respondents from the two studies groups concerning the influence of a child/student with Special educational needs over the other students, in mainstream school. Very good is the presence of children/students at integrated education in the mainstream school for 1.0% of the respondents 1 and 5.0% of the respondents 2.

61 of the mainstream school teachers, being 22.0% and 45 resource teachers, with a relative proportion of 36.0%, indicate that it is good to have the presence of a child/student at integrated education in the mainstream class.

**Table 9.** Assessment of the influence of a child/student with SEN

QUESTION 1. What is the influence of a child/student at integrated education over the mainstream class?							
Respondents	Very good <i>1</i>	Good <i>2</i>	Rather good than bad <i>3</i>	I can't say <i>4</i>	Rather bad than good <i>5</i>	Bad <i>6</i>	Very bad <i>7</i>
<b>Respondent 1</b>	4	61	86	29	82	19	3
<b>Respondent 2</b>	6	45	50	5	13	3	3

The largest number of teachers 136 (86 respondent 1 (30.0%) and 50 from the group of respondents 2 (40.0%) consider the presence of the integrated child/student as rather good than bad (position 3) for the mainstream class (figure 3).

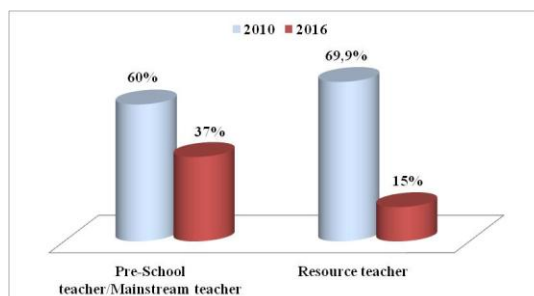

**Figure 3.** Influence of child/student with SEN

34 of all respondents, being 14%, choose for the option *I can't say* (in the scale – position 4), i.e. the same don't have opinion about the problem. Assessment Rather bad than good, is given by 82 people, being 29.0% from the respondents 1 and 13 (11.0%) from respondents 2. About 12.0% of all respondents are with negative attitude and assess as bad or very bad the presence of a child/student with SEN in a mainstream school.

Comparative analysis of results of an experimental study of Prof. PhD K. Karadzhova in 2010 (figure 4) reveal that 60.0% of respondents1 and 69.9% from respondents 2 have negative assessments (Karadzhova, 2010: 187). To 2016 there is a considerable increasing of the positive attitude towards children with SEN, which will lead to positive results in the future concerning the integrated education.

The results prove Hypothesis 2 that if resource teachers and teachers working in a mainstream institutions have positive attitude, this will lead to the full and quality integration of

children/students with SEN, and that there are all needed prerequisites for the realization of the transition from integrated to inclusive training (figure 4).



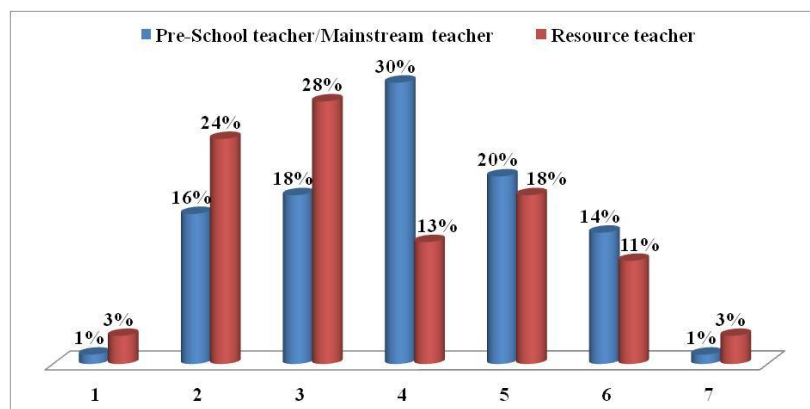
**Figure 4.** Comparative analysis of the answers of question №1

The assessment of the international legislative and regulatory framework as very good is made by 4 people, being 3.0% of the two examined groups. 17.0% (48) of *respondents 1* and 24.0% (30) of *respondents 2* note answer 2 – good mark. Close to this figures are the results for the third level – rather good than bad (3). This answer is chosen by 53 of respondents 1 (19.0%) and 35 of the respondents 2 (28.0%) (table 10).

**Table 10.** Assessment of the international legislative and regulatory framework.

QUESTION 2. What is the international regulatory framework regulating?							
Respondents	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Respondent 1</b>	1	48	53	86	55	40	1
<b>Respondent 2</b>	3	30	35	16	23	14	4

Those who have no opinion are the majority – 102 people (86 from respondents 1 and 16 from respondents 2), totally 43.0% mark the answer 4 (*I can't say*). Totally, 78 from both groups respondents, with an approximate proportion of 38.0%, give a negative assessment – *rather bad than good*. Definitive is the choice of 40 (14.0%) of the mainstream school teachers respondents and 14 (11.0%) from the resource teachers. All of them consider *bad* international regulatory framework and 5 of them, being around 3.0% – mark: very bad (figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Comparison between the levels of assessment of both groups respondents concerning the international regulatory framework

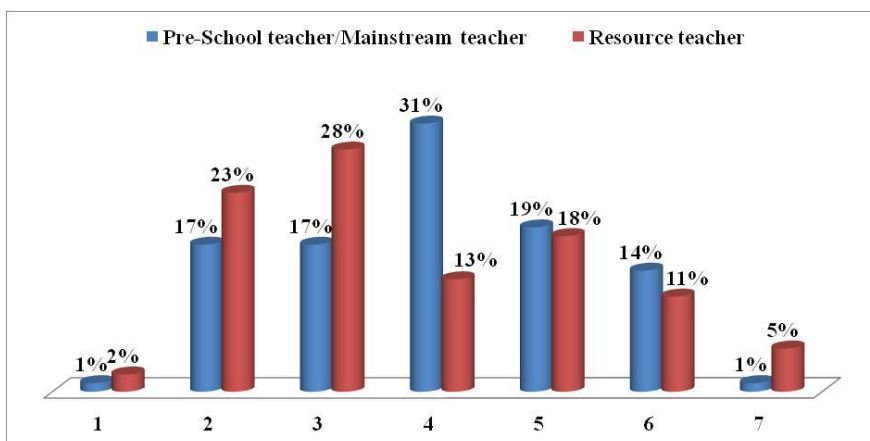
Part of the negative assessments of the respondents shows a lack of updated information concerning the international legal and regulatory framework for integration on the one hand and on the other – low motivation, lack of interest to know and apply it in the implementation of the integrated education. This case proves Hypothesis 1, which assumes that if the negative and uncertain positions in the respondents' answers prevail, this will lead to consolidation of the old and the emergence of new barriers to the integration of children/students with SEN.

5 people of the respondents from both groups, being 1.0% from respondents 1 and 2.0% from respondents 2, assess the international legal and regulatory framework for integration as very good and mark *option 1* (table 11). Good assessment indicates 17.0% from respondents 1 and 23.0% from respondents 2. Close to these figures are also the results which we observe for the assessment with the third level *rather good than bad* (3). 49, being 17.0% from respondents 1 and 35 from respondents 2, with approximate percentage of 28.0% prefer this option (table 10). High level of percentage 43.0%, both respondent groups mark the assessment – *I can't say* (4).

**Table 11.** Assessment of the national legal and regulatory framework

QUESTION 3. What is the national regulatory framework, which regulates the integrated education?							
Respondents	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Respondents 1</b>	2	47	49	88	54	41	3
<b>Respondents 2</b>	3	29	35	16	22	14	6

Their answer goes more towards the negative assessment than towards the positive one. The majority has opted for the alternative: *rather bad than good* (5) 54 from respondents 1, being approximately 19.0%, and 22 from respondents 2 (18.0%). A part of them also don't have opinion. Total percentage of: 25.0% (respondent 1 – 41 (14.0%); respondent 2 – 14 (11.0%)) give the assessment *bad* for the national regulatory framework and the other 6.0% opt for *very bad* (figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Comparison between the levels of assessment of both groups respondents concerning the national regulatory framework

The results are similar to assessments of Question 2 that highlight the lack of information on both the international and national legal framework for integration. And hypothesis 1 is confirmed. However, it should be noted that in the comparative analysis of results of the experimental study of K. Karadzhova 2010 (Karadzhova, 2010: 191), the present data show increasing percentage of the positive assessments, suggesting future reducing of barriers and controversial situations in the integration process.

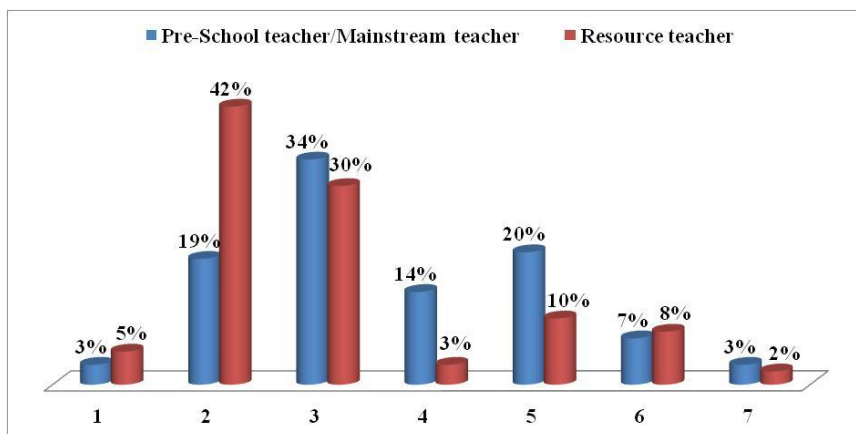
The quality of education of the integrated children/students is assessed as *very good* (*position 1*) from 9 people of the respondents 1, being 3.0% and 6 people of the respondents 2, with an approximate percentage of 5.0% (table 12). An extremely high percentage of respondents 1 (54 – 19.0%) and respondents 2 (53 – 42.0%) give a good mark (*position 2*). The same ration we see for the answer: *rather good than bad* (3). This assessment is preferred by 96 (34.0%) of respondents 1 and 37 (30.0%) of respondents 2. A little part of the respondents: 40 from the group of respondents 1 (14.0%) and 3 people from the group of respondents 2 (3.0%) indicate *I can't say* (4) concerning the quality of education. There isn't an increase of the negative assessments: *rather bad than good* (5); *bad* (6), *very bad* (7). 57 people (20.0%) of respondents 1 and 13 people (10.0%) of respondents 2 prefer answer 5.

**Table 12.** Assessment of the quality of education of the integrated children/students

QUESTION 4. What is the quality of education of the integrated children/students?							
Respondents	Very good <i>1</i>	Good <i>2</i>	Rather good than bad <i>3</i>	I can't say <i>4</i>	Rather bad than good <i>5</i>	Bad <i>6</i>	Very bad <i>7</i>
<b>Respondents 1</b>	9	54	96	40	57	20	8
<b>Respondents 2</b>	6	53	37	4	13	10	2

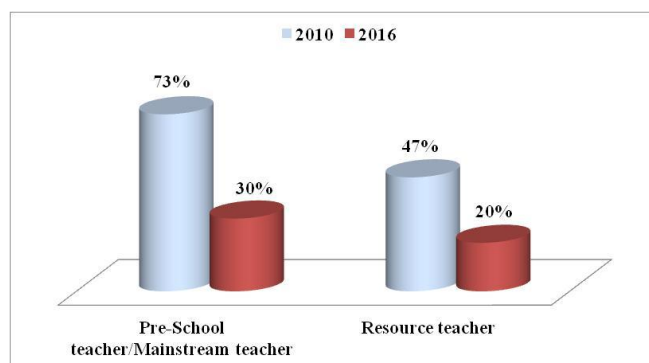
The answers *bad* (6) and *very bad* (7) are decreasing. 30 respondents of both surveyed groups, being 15.0%, indicate the answer *bad* and 10 respondents, being approximately 6.0%, mark *very bad* (table 11). Figure 7 shows the frequency distributions of answers of both

groups of respondents. The total percentage ratio of the negative answers is: respondents 1 – 30.0%; respondents 2 – 20.0% (figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Comparison of the levels of assessment of both groups of respondents – concerning the quality of education of the integrated children/students

If we compare these results with those obtained from the experimental study of K. Karadzhova in 2010 (Karadzhova, 2010: 193 – 194): respondents 1 (73.0%) and respondents 2 (47.0%), there is a sharp increase in the positive assessment for the quality of education of the integrated children/students (figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Comparative analysis of the answers of question №4

The results definitely prove Hypothesis 2 – if the resource teachers and the teachers working in mainstream institutions have positive attitudes, it will lead to full and quality integration of children/students with SEN and there're all preconditions for the realization of the transition towards the inclusive education.

21 people of respondents 1, being 7.0% and 14 people of respondents 2, being approximately 11.0% give an assessment very good to the team work between all participants into the integrated education. The prevailing part of respondents 1 (102, being 36.0%) and of respondents 2 (50, approximately 40.0%), have given the assessment good for the team work.

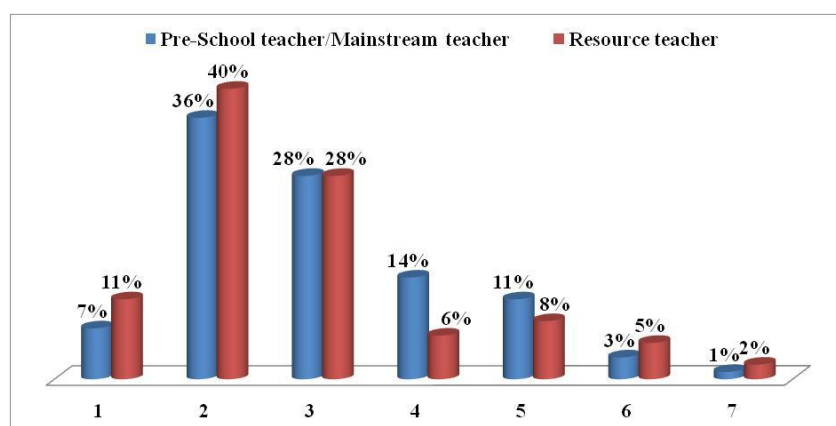


28% of each group of respondents mark answer (3) – *rather good than bad*. Hesitations have expressed 14.0% (40 – respondents 1) and 6.0% (7 – respondents 2) with answer (4) – *I can't say* (table 13).

**Table 13.** Assessment of the team work

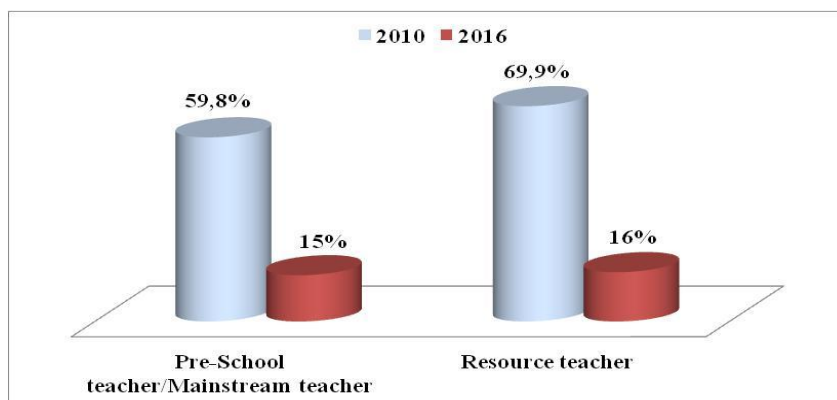
QUESTION 5. How do you evaluate the teamwork among the participants in the integrated education?							
Respondents	Very good 1	Good 2	Rather good than bad 3	I can't say 4	Rather bad than good 5	Bad 6	Very bad 7
Respondents 1	21	102	79	40	30	9	3
Respondents 2	14	50	35	7	10	7	2

The lowest number of answers is for the negative assessments on the scale – the options 5, 6 and 7. Totally 40 teachers (30 respondents 1, being 11.0% and 10 respondents 2, with approximate percentage of 8.0%) think that the team work is *rather bad than good* (5). The assessment *bad* is given by 9 of respondents 1, being 3.0% and 7 of respondents 2 (5.0%). *Very bad* is the assessment of the team work, given by only 16 teachers (3.0%) – (9 of respondents 1 – and 7 of respondents 2) (figure 9).



**Figure 9.** Comparison between the levels of assessment of both groups of respondents concerning the team work

The results of experimental research of K. Karadzhova (Karadzhova 2010: 194 – 195) showed that the respondents 1 (59.8%) and the respondents 2 (69.9%) give a negative assessment. There is reported a sharply increasing of the positive assessment of teamwork between all participants in the integrated education (figure 10).



**Figure 10.** Comparative analysis of the results for question №5

The dominance of the positive assessments as: *very good or good*, definitely show that all participant into the integrated education have fully realized over time the role of the good teamwork between them. It includes not only teachers but also parents, the director of the relevant kindergarten/mainstream school, the teaching staff, the society, various specialized institutions and organizations, specialists such as a psychologist, speech therapist, special educator.

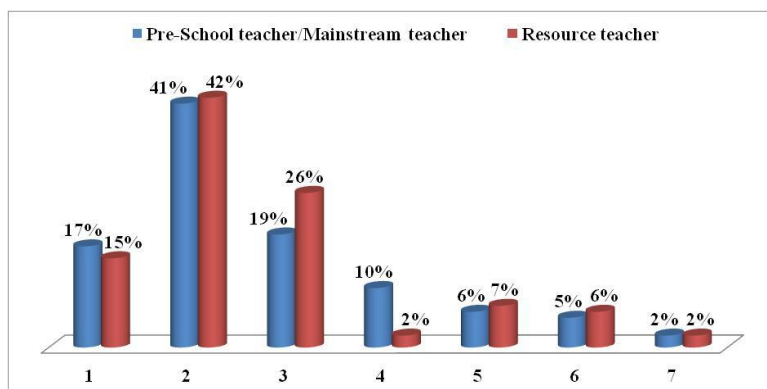
The results confirm Hypothesis 2 because positive attitudes will lead to full and qualitative integration of children/students with special educational needs and there are prerequisites for realizing the transition from integrated to inclusive education.

A large part of the respondents from both surveyed groups tend to give a positive assessment of the interaction between them (table 14).

**Table 14.** Assessment of the interaction

QUESTION 6. What is the interaction between the resource teacher and the mainstream teacher?							
Respondents	Very good <i>1</i>	Good <i>2</i>	Rather good than bad <i>3</i>	I can't say <i>4</i>	Rather bad than good <i>5</i>	Bad <i>6</i>	Very bad <i>7</i>
<b>Respondents 1</b>	48	118	55	27	18	13	5
<b>Respondents 2</b>	19	52	33	3	9	7	2

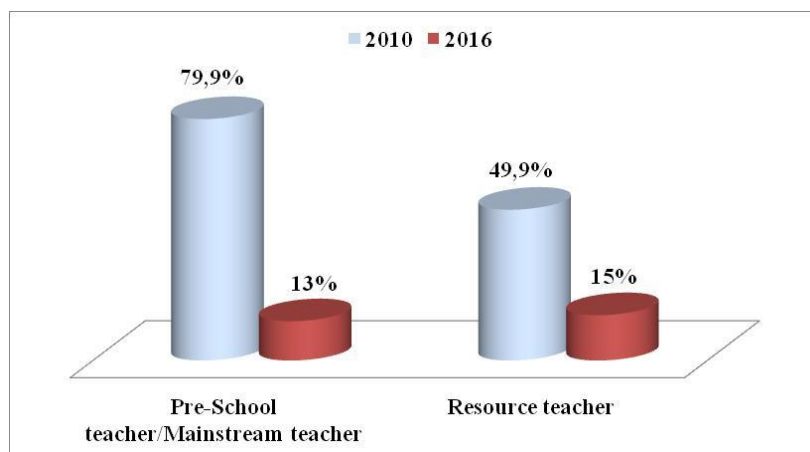
48 of respondents 1, with approximate percentage of 17.0%, and other (respondents 2 – 15.0%) give the answer *very good*. The majority of the teachers 118 of respondents 1 (41.0%) and 52 of respondents 2 (42.0%) have marked the assessment *good*. The answer rather good than bad has been given by 55 teachers of respondents 1 (19.0%) and 33 of respondents 2 (26.0%). Only 12.0% of both groups of respondents (respondents 1 – 27 (10.0%) people, and of respondents 2 – 3 people (2.0%), state that *I can't say* (option 4) (figure 11).



**Figure 11.** Comparison of the levels of assessments concerning the interaction

A relatively small is the percentage of people who give negative assessments. The answer *rather bad than good* have given 18 people of respondents 1, being 6.0% and 9 people of respondents 2, being approximately 7.0%. The answer *bad* have given only 13 pre-school teachers /mainstream school teachers (respondents 1), with an approximate percentage of 5.0% and 7 resource teachers (respondents 2), being 6.0%. *Very bad* as assessment of the interaction is given by an equal percentage of both groups of respondents (2.0%), distributed 5 people of respondents 1 and 2 of respondent 2.

Comparative analysis of the results of the experimental studies of K. Karadzhova 2010 (Karadzhova, 2010: 185; 195 – 197) with the present ones show a significant increase in positive assessments for the existing interactions (figure 12).



**Figure 12.** Comparative analysis between the answers of question №6

According to the regulations and practice, the two groups of respondents should have a very close interaction (Karadzhova, 2010: 196). They are key figures and the overall organization and implementation of integrated education depends on them and its quality is determined by

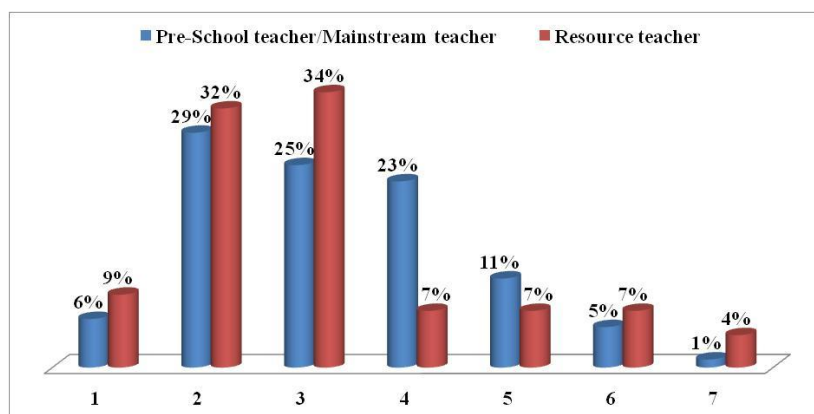
the good interaction between them. In this relation, the results confirm hypothesis 2 of the study.

The results of table 15 reveal that 16 people being 6.0% of respondents 1 and 11 being 9.0% respondents 2 evaluate the attitudes as very good. A large part of the mainstream teachers (83, 29.0%) and 40 of the other respondents, being 32.0% mark the answer (2) – good assessment. For 71 (25.0%) of respondents 1 and 43 (34.0%) of respondents 2, the attitudes are *rather good than bad* (3). A large number of respondents 1 (66), circle the option (4) – *I can't say*. In percentage they are 23.0% who cannot assess or understand the attitude of the parents of children with SEN towards the policy of the integrated education. It is found that there is not sufficient work with them, not sufficient understanding of their system of values. It is necessary the efforts to be directed towards understanding the philosophy of the integrated education and the benefits that can have their children from it (figure 13).

**Table 15.** Assessment of the attitude of the parents of children with special educational needs

QUESTION 7. What is the attitude of the parents of children/students with special educational needs to the policy of integrated education?							
Respondents	Very good 1	Good 2	Rather good than bad 3	I can't say 4	Rather bad than good 5	Bad 6	Very bad 7
Respondents 1	16	83	71	66	31	13	4
Respondents 2	11	40	43	9	8	9	5

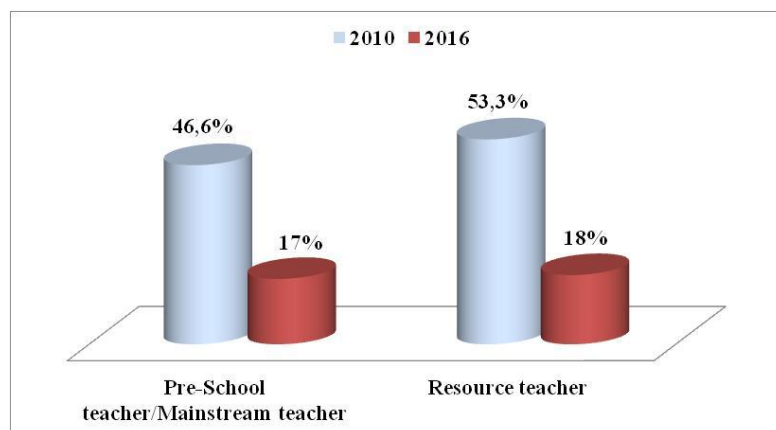
The resource teachers show greater certainty in the assessment. Only nine, being 7.0%, choose the option *I can't say*. 31 (11.0% of respondents 1) and 8 (7.0% of respondents 2) believe that the attitude of parents towards the policy of integrated education is *rather bad than good*.



**Figure 13.** Comparison between the levels of assessment concerning the attitude

Only 13 (5.0% of respondents 1) and 9 (7.0% of respondents 2) evaluate the attitude as *bad*, and 9 (5.0% of both groups of respondents), mark – *very bad*.

The results of experimental research of K. Karadzhova (Karadzhova, 2010: 198 – 199) show that 46.6% of respondents 1 and 53.3% of respondents 2 gave a negative assessment. The current assessment is 35.0% for both respondent groups. The tendency that we see in the responses of the two groups of respondents is positive and proves the reality of Hypothesis 2 (figure 14).



**Figure 14.** Comparative analysis of the results for question №7

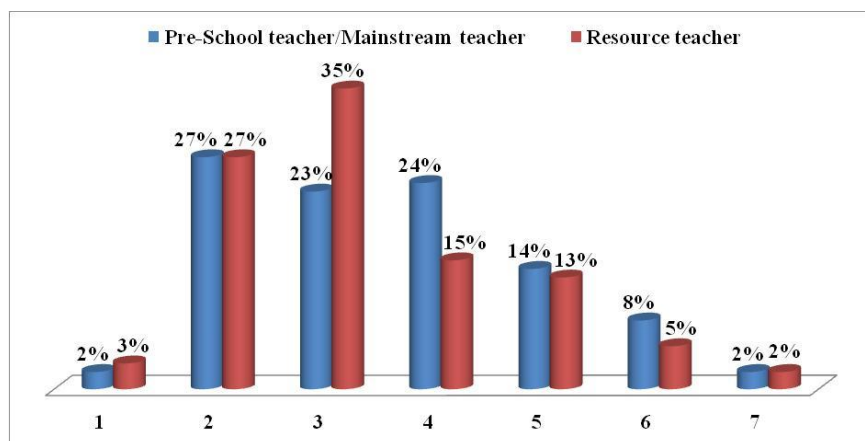
All respondents have good relations with the parents of children with special educational needs and know what they think about their future. In the course of time they have realized the values that offers the integrated education for their children.

Eight of the respondents, being 2.0% of respondents 1 and 3.0% of respondents 2, evaluate the attitude of the parents of the children without SEN towards the policy of the integrated education as very good. A great number (76 of respondents 1 and 34 of respondents 2), with an approximate percentage of 27.0% each give an assessment good. Close to these figures are the results who we observe for the assessment of the third level *rather good than bad* (3). 65, being 23.0% of respondents1 and 44 of respondents 2, with an approximate percentage of 35.0% prefer this option (table 16).

**Table 16.** Assessment of the attitude of parents of children without SEN

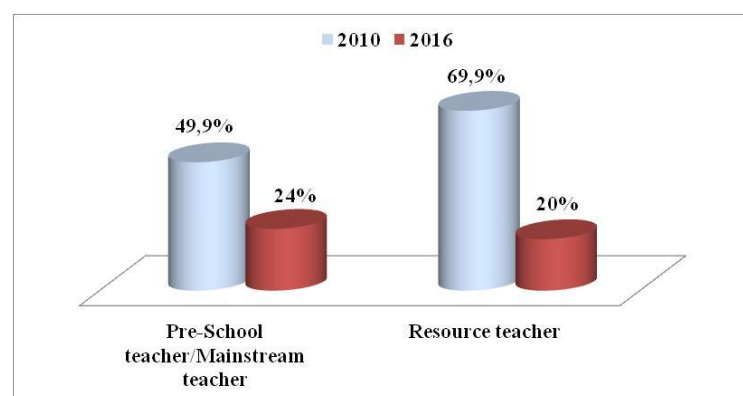
QUESTION 8. What is the attitude of the parents of children/students without special educational needs to the policy of integrated education?							
Respondents	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Respondents 1</b>	5	76	65	68	41	24	5
<b>Respondents 2</b>	3	34	44	19	16	6	3

Hesitation has been expressed by 24.0% (68 of respondents 1) and 13.0% (19 of respondents 2) with the answer (4) – *I can't say*. Totally 57 teachers (41 respondents 1, being 14.0% and 16 respondents 2, being 13.0%) think that the attitude of the parents of children without SEN is *rather bad than good* (5). The smallest number of answers are the negative ones on the scale for the options 6 and 7. As *bad* is the assessment of 24 of respondents 1, being 8.0% and 6 of respondents 2 (5.0%). As *very bad* is assessed the attitude by only 8 teachers (2.0% for each of the respondents groups) (figure 15).



**Figure 15.** Comparison between the levels of assessment concerning the attitude

A comparative analysis of the results of the experimental study of K. Karadzova 2010 (Karadzova, 2010: 200 – 201) with the present results shows an increase in the positive assessments of the attitude of parents of children without SEN to the policy of the integrated education (figure 16).



**Figure 16.** Comparative analysis of the results of question №8

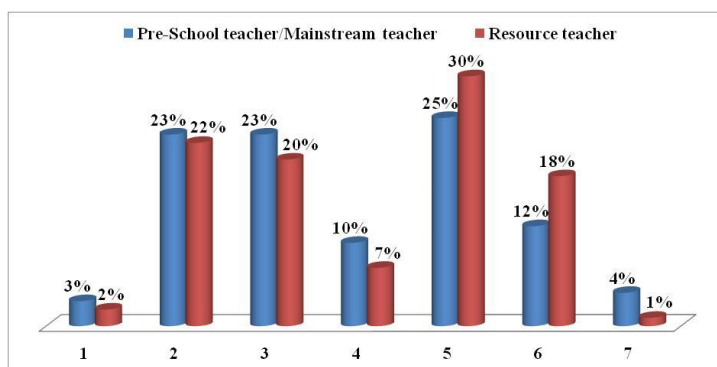
The positive assessments in the answers of all respondents confirm Hypothesis 2. The results of table 17 reveal that 12 respondents, being 9.0% of respondents 1 and 3, approximately 3.0%

of respondents 2 assess the preparation of the mainstream teacher, for work with children with SEN as very good. A major part of the mainstream school teachers (64, 23.0%) and 28 of the respondents, being 22.0%, mark the answer (2) – good. For 65 (23.0%) of respondents 1 and 25 (20.0%) of respondents 2, the preparation is *rather good than bad* (3).

**Table 17.** Assessment of the preparation of the mainstream school teacher for work with children/students with special educational needs

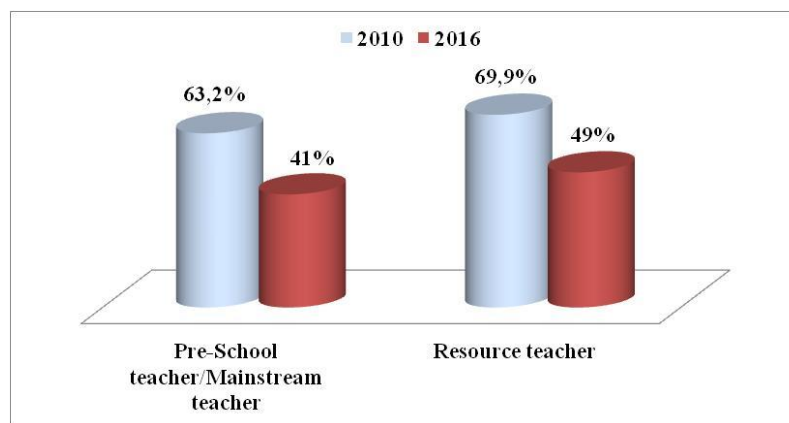
QUESTION 9. What is the preparation of the mainstream teacher for work with children/students with SEN?							
Respondents	Very good <i>1</i>	Good <i>2</i>	Rather good than bad <i>3</i>	I can't say <i>4</i>	Rather bad than good <i>5</i>	Bad <i>6</i>	Very bad <i>7</i>
Respondents 1	9	64	65	29	72	34	10
Respondents 2	3	28	25	8	38	22	1

29 teachers of respondents 1, with an approximate percentage of 10.0% and 8 of the respondents (7%), circle the option (4) – *I can't say*. A part of them is nor oriented. The major part has opted for the assessment: *rather bad than good* (5) – 72 of respondents 1, with an approximate percentage of 25.0%, and 38 of respondents 2 (30.0%). At the same time the answer *bad* have given 34 people of respondents 1(12.0%) and 22 of respondents 2 (18.0%), and only 11 of all respondents (5.0%) determine the preparation of the teachers as *very bad*. (figure 17).



**Figure 17.** Comparative analysis between the levels of assessment concerning the preparation of the mainstream teacher

The results of the experimental study of K. Karadzhova (Karadzhova, 2010: 203), show that 63.2% of respondents 1 and 69.9% of respondents 2 give a negative assessment.



**Figure 18.** Comparative analysis of the results for question №9

The present results tend to be positive concerning the answers of both group of respondents which proves and confirms the reality of Hypothesis 2 (figure 18).

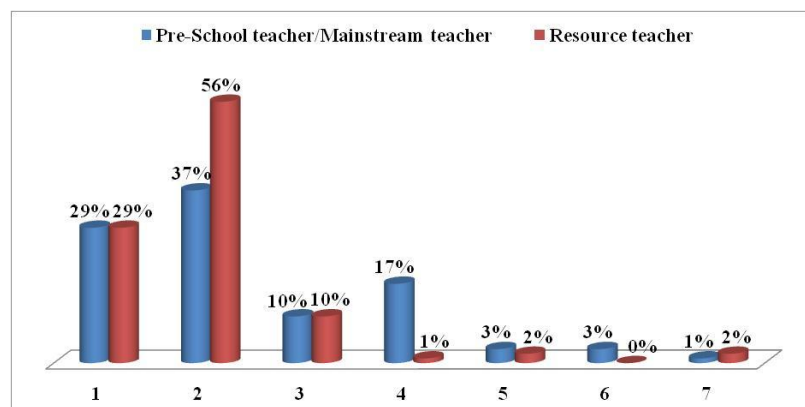
The quantity measures of the answers of question No 10 study that opinion of the respondents about the preparation of the resource teacher for work with children/students with SEN (table18).

**Table 18.** Assessment of the preparation of the resource teacher for work with children/students with SEN

QUESTION 10. What is the preparation of the resource teacher for work with children/students with special educational needs?							
Respondents	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Respondents 1</b>	83	106	29	46	9	8	2
<b>Respondents 2</b>	36	70	13	1	3	0	2

The largest number of the options opted for by both respondent groups are 1, 2 and 3, i.e. positive assessments (figure 19). The preparation of the resource teacher for work with children/students with SEN is assessed as very good by 84 of respondents 1, whose percentage is amounting to 29.0% and 36 of respondents 2, being 29.0%. The prevailing part of the respondents consider that the preparation of the resource teachers is good. This is the answer that is given by 106 of respondents 1, being 37.0% and 70 of respondents 2, being 56.0%. 42 respondents (29 of respondents 1 (10.0%) and 13 of respondents 2 (10.0%)) choose answer (3) – *rather good than bad*. There is hesitation in the answers of only 47 of all respondents, being approximately 17.0%, who have marked the option 4 – *I can't say*. The lowest number of answers are for the options 5, 6 and 7, i.e. a very few of all respondents evaluate the preparation of the resource teacher for work with children with special educational needs as *rather bad than good, bad and very bad*.

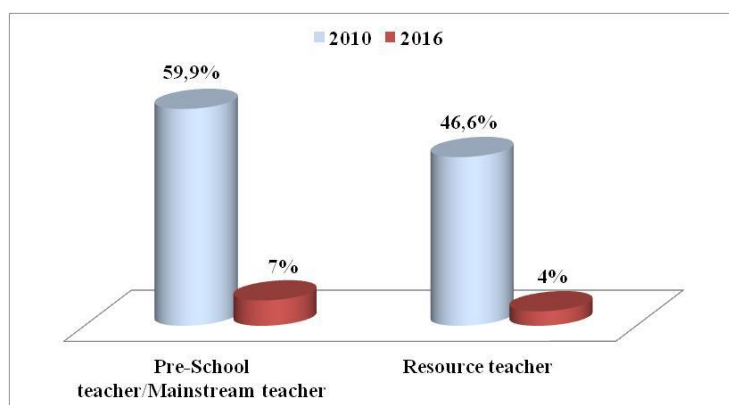




**Figure 19.** Comparative analysis of the levels of assessment for the preparation of the resource teacher

The high positive results prove that there are criteria for assessment and self-assessment of the work of resource teachers in the Republic of Bulgaria. In this regard it should be noted that their functions, duties and rights are legally regulated. There is publicity and transparency in the public domain of the integrated training and of the activities of resource teachers, in order them to gain a greater understanding and motivation to work.

Comparative analysis of the results of the experimental study of K. Karadzova of 2010 (Karadzova, 2010: 204 – 205) with the present one shows a sharp increase of the positive assessments concerning the preparation of the resource teacher (figure 20).



**Figure 20.** Comparative analysis of the results for question №10

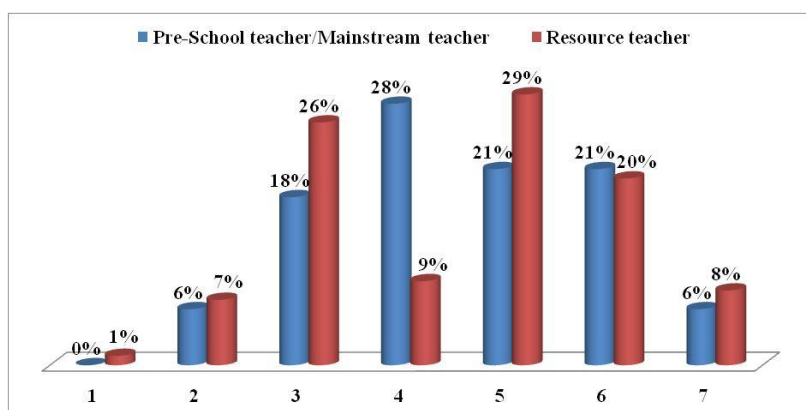
The positive assessments in the answers of all respondents confirm definitely Hypothesis 2.

As a whole there are negative assessments concerning the possibilities for professional realization of students with SEN after graduating from their 8 year at the mainstream school. (table19).

**Table 19.** Assessment of the development perspective of the integrated students after terminating their 8<sup>th</sup> year in mainstream school

<b>QUESTION 11. What is the development perspective for the integrated children/students after terminating their 8<sup>th</sup> year in mainstream school?</b>							
<b>Respondents</b>	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Respondents 1</b>	1	17	51	79	58	59	18
<b>Respondents 2</b>	1	9	32	12	36	25	10

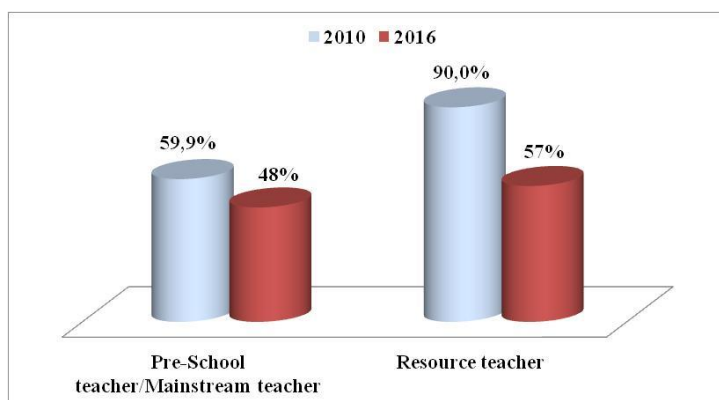
Only one person of each group of respondents, being 1.0%, gives the assessment of the development perspective for the integrated students – *very good*, and totally 26 (17 of respondents 1 (6.0%) and 9 of respondents 2 (7.0%)), indicate option 2 – *good*. The third option (3) – *rather good than bad*, is preferred by 51 (18.0% of respondents 1) and 32 of respondents 2 (26.0%). The fourth degree (4) – *I can't say*, is circled by 79 (28.0%) of respondents 1 and 12 (9.0%) of respondents 2. From both groups of respondents, the majority has opted for the negative assessments, i.e. options 5, 6 or 7 (figure 21).



**Figure 21.** Comparative analysis between the levels of assessment of the development perspective of the integrated students

From 94 respondents (58 of respondents 1 и 36 of respondents 2) have marked the option 5 – *rather bad than good*. In percentage, this is 50.0% for both groups of respondents. They are not disoriented because their answers are more directed towards the negative assessment than the positive one. This is due to the fact that they don't have information about the professional preparation of the students with SEN and because of this they give negative assessment for the development perspective of the integrated students after terminating their 8<sup>th</sup> year in school. The same conclusions can be made for option 6 – the assessment *bad*. 59 (21.0%) of respondents 1 and 25 (20.0%) of respondents 2 circle this option. *Very bad* is the development perspective of the integrated students, according to only 28 teachers – 18 (6.0%) of respondents 1 and 10 (8.0%).

A comparative analysis of the results of the survey of K. Karadzhova of 2010 (Karadzhova, 2010: 206 – 207) with the present survey shows a minimal decrease of the negative assessments regarding the vision of the development of the integrated students after terminating their 8th year in mainstream school (Figure 22). There is a partial confirmation of Hypothesis 1, which assumes that if the negative and uncertain positions in the respondents' answers prevail, it will lead to the consolidation of the old positions and emergence of new barriers for the integration of children/students with SEN.



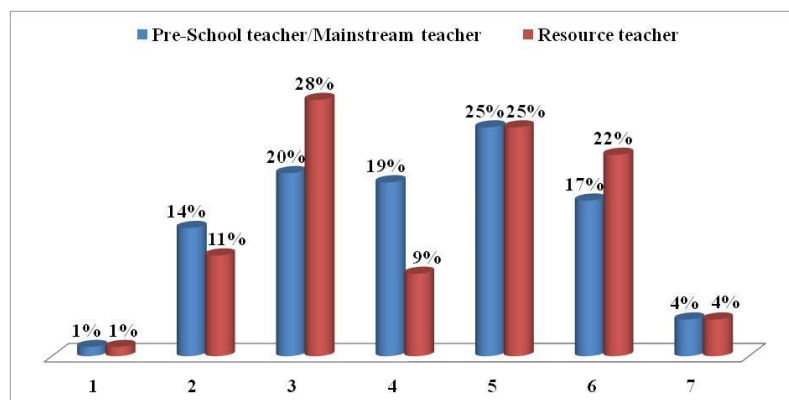
**Figure 22.** Comparative analysis of the results for question №11

There are negative assessments concerning the attitude of the state institutions towards the problems of students with special educational needs (table 20).

**Table 20.** Assessment of the attitude of the state institutions towards the problems of the integrated children/students

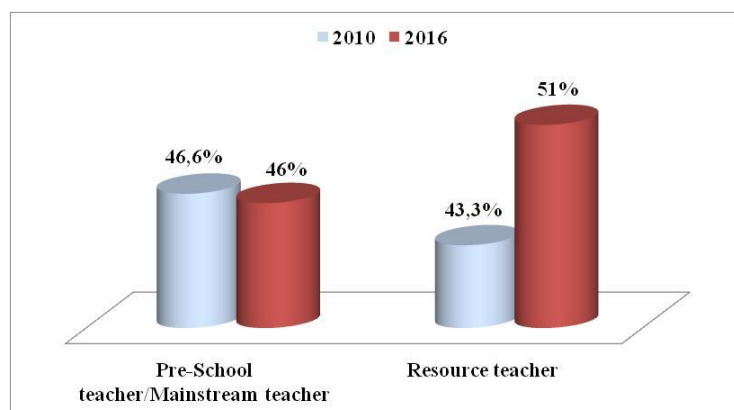
QUESTION 12. What is the attitude of the state institutions towards the problems of the integrated children/students?							
Respondents	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Respondents 1	4	39	58	52	72	47	11
Respondents 2	1	14	35	11	32	27	5

Only 5 respondents, with an approximate percentage of 2.0%, determine the attitude as very good. 39, being 14.0% of respondents 1 and 14, being 11.0% of respondents 2, mark option 2 – good. The answer 3 – *rather good than bad*, is chosen by 58 (20.0% of respondents 1) and 35 (28.0% of respondents 2). 63 people marked *I can't say* concerning the attitude of the state institutions (52, being 18.0% of respondents 1 and 11 respondents (9.0% of respondents 2). An equal percentage of 25.0% from each of both groups respondents, give the assessment *rather bad than good* (72 people of respondents 1 and 32 of respondents 2). The attitude is determined as *bad* by 47 respondents, i.e. 17.0% of respondents 1 and 27 people (22.0% of respondents 2), and only 16 respondents give the most negative assessment – *very bad* (by 2.0% each of the respondents group) (figure 23).



**Figure 23.** Comparative analysis between the levels of assessment concerning the attitude of the state institutions towards the problems of the integrated children

A comparative analysis of the results of the survey of K. Karadzhova (Karadzhova, 2010: 207 – 208) with those of the current survey shows a tendency of keeping the level of negative assessments about the attitude of state institutions towards the problems of children with special educational needs (Figure 24) and confirms Hypothesis 1. It assumes that if the negative and uncertain positions in the respondents' answers prevail, it will lead to consolidation of the old barriers and the emergence of new ones for the integration of children/students with special educational needs.



**Figure 24.** Comparative analysis of the results of question №12

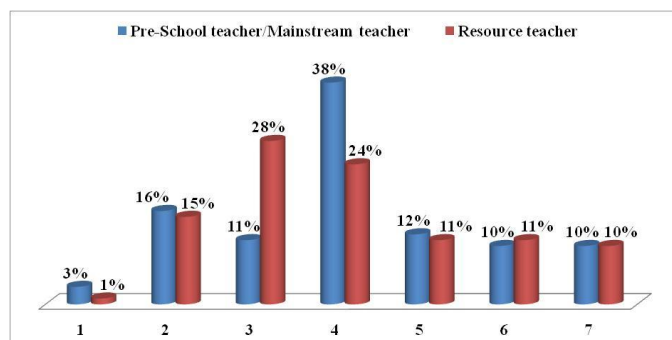
The frequency distributions reveal again the necessity for the state institutions to be more engaged and sensitive to the problems of the integrated children in the Republic of Bulgaria, which would contribute to the formation of more positive attitude towards them (figure 24).

Only 11 respondents, being approximately 4.0% (10 of respondents 1 and 1 of respondents 2), assess the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN as very good (table 21).

**Table 21.** Assessment of the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN

Question 13. What are the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN?							
Respondents	Very good	Good	Rather good than bad	I can't say	Rather bad than good	Bad	Very bad
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Respondents 1	10	44	32	106	33	29	29
Respondents 2	1	19	35	30	14	14	12

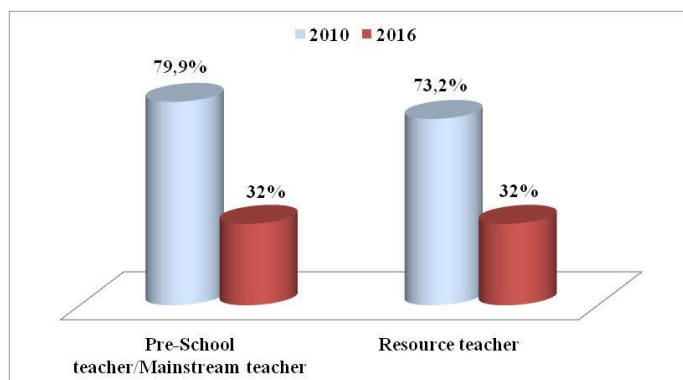
16% of respondents' group 1 and 15% of respondents' group 2 give the assessment good. The option 3, i.e. assessment – *rather good than bad*, is given by 32 people (11.0% of respondents 1) and 35 people (28.0% of respondents 2). The majority of respondents have chosen option 4 – *I can't say*. Hesitation have expressed 106 (38.0% of respondents 1) and 30 (24.0% of respondents 2). 33 of respondents 1 and 14 of respondents 2 prefer answer 5, the assessment of relationship between both educational institutions is *rather good than bad*. The option 6 – *bad*, is marked by 29 (10.0% of respondents 1) and 14 (11.0% of respondents 2). For the answer *very bad* (7) the results are similar: by 10.0% for both groups of respondents (29 of respondents 1 and 12 of respondents 2) (figure 25).



**Figure 25.** Comparative analysis between the levels of assessment concerning the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN

There is a need of promotion of the modern functions of the specialized schools for children with SEN, which are stipulated by the new law on pre-school and school education. Needful is the explaining of the activities and programs that are to be implemented into the centers for special educational support and into the centers for personal development.

A comparative analysis of the results of the survey of K. Karadzhova (Karadzhova, 2010: 209 – 210) with the present survey shows a sharp increase of the positive assessments for the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN (figure 26).



**Figure 26.** Comparative analysis of the results for question №13

The tendency that we see in the answers of both groups of respondents is positive and prove the reality of Hypothesis 2, which statement is that if the resource teachers and the teachers working into mainstream schools have positive attitudes, it will lead to the full and quality integration of the children/students with SEN and there will be all prerequisites for the implementation of the transition from integrated to inclusive education.

## Conclusions

The theoretical analysis that was made (content analysis) and the results achieved from the survey give us grounds to conclude:

Integrated education is a human right that guarantees equality and equal opportunities of children/students with SEN with the other members of the society. In this regard and in the process of theoretical interpretations, quantitative and qualitative analysis of the study reveal that a major part of the respondents from both groups of respondents have positive attitudes towards:

- the attitude towards the integrated children with SEN and the quality of their education, which assumes good results in the future achieved through the integrated education;
- the team work and the interaction between all participants of the integrated education. It includes teachers, parents, directors of the kindergarten/mainstream school, teaching staff, society, various specialized institutions and organizations, specialists such as psychologists, speech therapists, special educator;
- the attitude of parents of children with and without SEN towards the policy of the integrated education;
- the professional preparation of the mainstream teacher and the resource teacher for work with children/students with disabilities;
- the relations between the mainstream school and the specialized school for children with SEN.

There are negative attitudes of the respondents concerning:

- the professional realization of students with special educational needs termination their 8<sup>th</sup> year in mainstream school;
- the attitude of the state institutions towards the problems of the children/students with special educational needs;
- familiarity with and application of the national and international legal framework for integration.

### **Recommendations**

The analysis that was made (correlation and regression analysis) of the attitudes of the participants into the integrated education towards its values and the reasons and factor that determine it, orient us towards the following recommendations:

1. To optimize the integrated education it is necessary to use all channels of mass information to form positive motivation and attitudes in teachers and to allow the constant communication in various forms between parents, specialists and students.
2. Elaboration of a national strategy, working mechanism of the state institutions concerning the problems of the integrated children/students and their families.
3. Introduction of classes into different professional high schools in the country and presentation of their character, advantages and prospects.

In conclusion we must notify that the theme of the integration of children/students with special educational needs into the Bulgarian mainstream school continues to be complicate and in much aspects – theme leading to many discussions. It provokes the interest and the researches of many specialists from different scientific areas. The integration is open and not limited in time process, requiring new approach, new attitudes and elaboration of new priorities.

Undoubtedly attitudes play a major role in human life. They are not inborn, but part of the process of socialization. They are formed as a reflection of the individual's relations with the outside world and are developed thanks to his/her own activity. The attitude towards people with disabilities cannot and should not be viewed in isolation from social, cultural, material and economic history of the world. In this relation, there begins a change of: many stereotypes, stigmas, values and attitudes towards them – the different people.

The effectiveness of integration depends on the quality of interaction between the main participants in the integrated education and their professional training for work with children/students with SEN. In this sense, the present survey reflects their attitudes in details. Because of this, the implementation of integrated education should be adequately reconsidered by the whole society, based on the idea that students with SEN can be integrated in the conditions of the real social environment because they have resources and potential capabilities. Thus, to a greater extent their individual rights will be realized into the modern democratic society.

Studying the attitudes of mainstream teachers and resource teachers, the main conclusion is standing out – and it confirms the alternative Hypothesis (X2) of the survey that if the resource teachers and the teachers working in mainstream educational institutions have positive attitudes, it will lead to the full and quality integration of children/students with

special educational needs and there are all prerequisites for the implementation of the transition from integrated to inclusive education.

In support of this statement and in the context of the new educational paradigm and educational standards, integrated education is practically modern. The problem of its capabilities is still a subject of scientific searches and discussions, because it is an important factor in the formation of the complete personalities with interests and needs. The theme of integration of people with disabilities will continue to be up-to-date until it evokes questions and provokes attempts to find the most appropriate answers. The results of the study of the problem will enrich the educational activity – in order to achieve coherence, variability, flexibility and originality in the planning and implementation of the integration process.

The experimental work confirmed the topicality of the problem for the practice of the Republic of Bulgaria. The formulated conclusions allow us to summarize that the aim and tasks of the study were achieved, and the hypothesis is confirmed.

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### **Notes**

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