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EKSEN

# Empowering Kids with Special Educational Needs in the Baltics (EKSEN)

2023-2-LT01-KA210-SCH-000173013
01/01/2024 - 30/06/2025



# Visually Engaging Booklet on Inclusive Practices



## Project Information

- **Title**: Empowering Kids with Special Educational Needs in the Baltics (EKSEN)
- **Project Number**: 2023-2-LT01-KA210-SCH-000173013
- **Duration**: 01/01/2024 - 30/06/2025
- **Main Aim**: To foster inclusive education environments in kindergartens across Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia through sports, arts, and music. The project enhances educational experiences for children with special needs, upskills educators, and equips parents with essential knowledge to support their children's development.

## Partners

- **Lithuania**: Vilniaus lopšelis-darželis „Giraitė“
- **Lithuania**: Asociacija IVAIGO
- **Estonia**: Tallinn Liikuri Kindergarten
- **Latvia:** Upesleju Primary School

# CELEBRATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE BALTICS



IInclusion is not just a practice—it is a philosophy. It ensures that children of all abilities have equal access to quality education, fostering belonging, participation, and personal growth. This booklet highlights the best practices in kindergartens across Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, showcasing real-life success stories of inclusive strategies.



Through compelling visuals, real case studies, and practical insights, this resource aims to inspire other kindergartens to adopt innovative arts, sports, and communication-based approaches that make education more accessible, engaging, and meaningful for SEN students.

# INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES: CREATING AN ENGAGING AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



## Why Use Arts, Music, and Sports?

Children with special educational needs (SEN) thrive in multi-sensory learning environments. Arts, music, and sports help enhance emotional well-being, cognitive skills, and social integration, making learning more interactive and accessible.

## Using Arts in Inclusive Education

**Visual Arts for Engagement:**

✓ Collaborative art projects (murals, group drawings, crafts) to promote teamwork.

✓ Adaptive art tools (larger grips, textured surfaces for sensory stimulation).

✓ Storytelling through drawing and painting for self-expression.

## Music as a Tool for Inclusion

**Music Therapy and Rhythmic Learning:**
✓ Repetitive songs and rhythm exercises to improve memory and focus.
✓ Body percussion and movement-based activities.
✓ Group music-making (drumming circles, collaborative singing).



## Sports and Movement for Inclusion

**Physical Activity for Social and Emotional Growth:**
✓ Adapted team sports (wheelchair basketball, goalball).
✓ Cooperative over competitive games to encourage teamwork.
✓ Movement breaks to aid focus and reduce anxiety.



# Effective Communication: Collaboration Between Educators, Parents, and Caregivers

## WHY IS COMMUNICATION CRUCIAL?

**A strong partnership between educators, parents, and caregivers creates a holistic support system for SEN students.**
**It fosters:**

- ✓ Early intervention
- ✓ Consistent learning reinforcement at home & school
- ✓ Stronger emotional and educational support

## STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

**Building a Partnership:**

- ✓ Establish open communication channels (emails, newsletters, parent meetings).
- ✓ Use accessible formats (audio recordings, translations).
- ✓ Create visual progress reports (charts, video updates, student portfolios).

**Active Listening and Empathy:**

- ✓ Host parent workshops to discuss concerns and expectations.
- ✓ Provide emotional support by connecting parents with support groups.
- ✓ Develop home-learning strategies parents can use.

## ENHANCING PEER AND EDUCATOR COLLABORATION

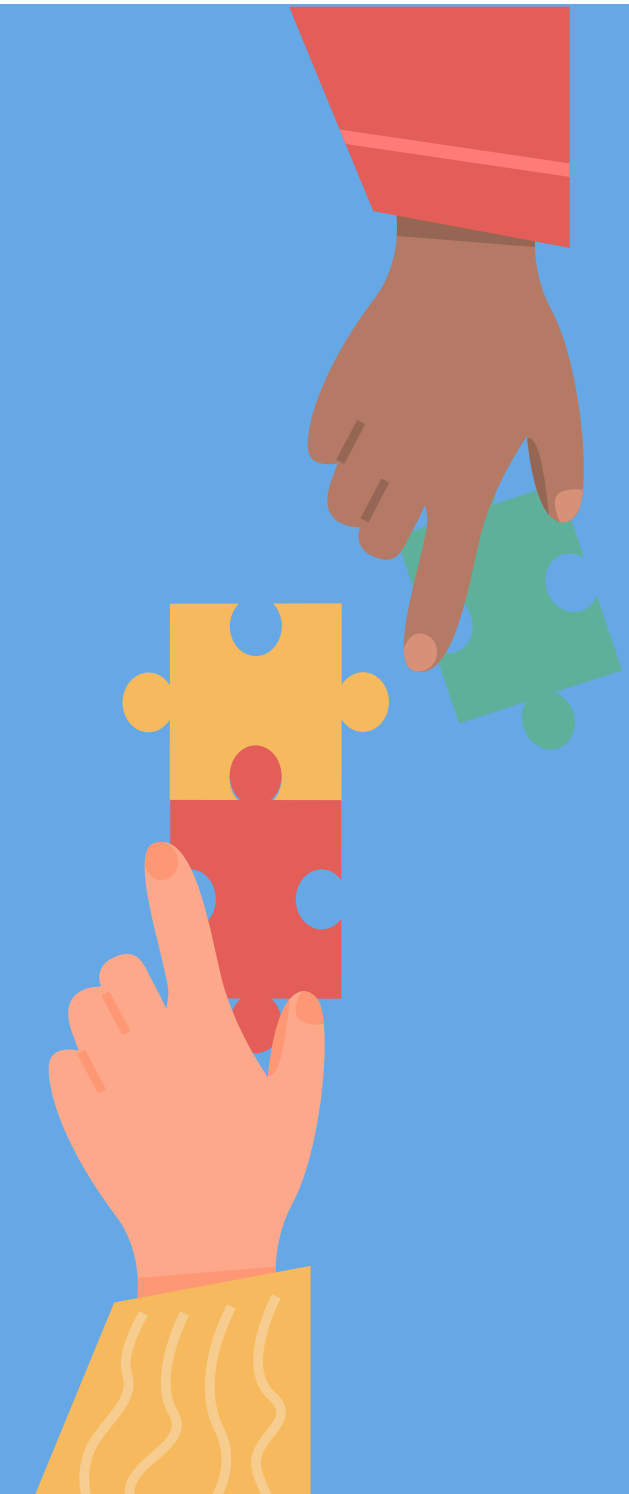
**Creating a Supportive Team Culture:**

- ✓ Implement peer mentoring programs for educators.
- ✓ Use case studies and group discussions to share best practices.
- ✓ Organize collaborative lesson planning sessions.

**Cross-Country Collaboration and Best** Practice Sharing:

- ✓ Participate in exchange programs with international educators.
- ✓ Use online forums for continuous learning.
- ✓ Organize joint professional development workshops.

This booklet serves as both a reflection and a roadmap for kindergartens, educators, and parents aiming to create a truly inclusive learning environment. By integrating sports, arts, music, and effective communication strategies, we can break down barriers and ensure that every child—regardless of ability—feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.
Let's continue working together to make inclusion a reality—one child, one classroom, and one community at a time.



## Next Steps for Educators and Kindergartens

- Join the conversation! Participate in educator forums and exchange best practices.
- Apply these strategies in your own classrooms and share results.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to actively engage in their child's learning.
- Keep learning! Explore additional resources, courses, and Erasmus+ programs.

## Resources & Further Reading

- Special Educational Needs in Art and Design – NSEAD
- Teaching Art to Students with Special Needs – Beverley Johns
- Music, Language and the Brain – Aniruddh D. Patel
- Inclusion Strategies That Work: Research-Based Methods for the Classroom – Toby J. Karten
- Adaptive Physical Education and Sport – Joseph P. Winnick
- Teaching Disability Sport: A Guide for Physical Educators – Ronald W. Davis

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