

Susanne Schwab

# Attitudes Towards Inclusive Schooling

A study on **S**tudents', **T**Eachers'  
and **P**arents' attitudes



O F E B

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and Parents' attitudes



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*We all like to be loved and accepted,  
just the way we are.*





## Let me tell you a story ...

It is a story about a disabled penguin (perfectly illustrated by Dillon Voisin). If you or I were to look at a penguin ashore, we might be surprised. Their wings are too short, they have no waist and it seems that God has forgotten to give them knees. Penguins are physically disabled for life ashore. But as soon as the penguin is in the sea, it's in its element. It can swim 2500 kilometers, only needing the energy equivalent of one liter of petrol. This is far more efficient than any means of transport humans have ever designed.

What we can learn from this story, written in German by Eckart von Hirschhausen (2012), is:

1. How quickly we judge, and how wrong our judgments can be.
2. The surroundings in which we find ourselves can make our competencies or weaknesses visible.

All of us have strengths and weaknesses. We should accept these and not change who and how we are. Even after many years of psychotherapy you could not become a giraffe if you are a penguin (Eckart von Hirschhausen, 2012). It really makes one think about 'being born disabled vs. becoming disabled by one's environment'.



(painted by Dillon Voisin)



## Acknowledgements

This monograph forms part of the longitudinal study: Attitudes Towards Inclusive Schooling – Students, TEachers and Parents (ATIS-STEP). The author of this monograph initiated this project, which was funded by the Styrian government [grant number: ABT08-247083/2015-34]. In addition, the University of Wuppertal (Germany) sponsored some of the costs. The core team of the project consisted of Susanne Schwab and Mike Trauntschnig who were supported by a project team (e.g. Cornelia Gerdenitsch, Stefanie Kupper, Nora Schauer) and cooperation partners (e.g. Norbert Tanzer, Andrea Holzinger, Silvia Kopp-Sixt, Anke de Boer). The instruments used in the study were discussed with the support of project partners of the University of Applied Sciences Styria (Andrea Holzinger & Silvia Kopp-Sixt), University of Graz (Norbert Tanzer), the University of Groningen (Anke de Boer) and some others. For instance, Katja Petry (KU Leuven) discussed the importance of also including parents (not only students and teachers) with me. Moreover, Markus Gebhardt (TU Dortmund) gave a feedback for the manuscript. In some cases, these project partners even developed instruments specifically for the present study or gave us permission to use their previously-developed instruments. When I use the word ‘we’ in this monograph, it is because I would like to stress that a project like this cannot be conducted by just one person. Furthermore, my staff members (Janka Goldan, Lisa Hoffmann, Stefan Markus, Mike Trauntschnig and Sebastian Wahl) provided invaluable comments on the manuscript, Stefanie Zarnhofer formatted it while Debbie Schaffler, Erika Marie Pace and Nathalie Leblond proofread the work. Oskar Dangl, member of the executive committee of the Austrian Association of Research and Development in Education (ÖFEB) reviewed the present monograph for the ÖFEB. I would like to thank Oskar for his support and his time. Moreover, I would like to thank the ÖFEB, the school research and school development division of the ÖFEB and the Initiative for Children and Youth with Disabilities for their financial assistance with the publishing and proofreading costs. In addition to the data collected in Austria, which was organized under Mike’s lead, we also collected data in Germany and plan to collect further data in South-Africa (which will be led by Mirna Nel and Lisa Hoffmann). I would like to thank all the supporters and collaborators of the ATIS-STEP project. The project team was supported by students at both bachelors and masters levels who wrote their theses within ATIS-STEP. These students were primarily assigned to collect the data. Without all those helping hands that supported us on a completely voluntary basis, it would not have been possible to run this project the way it was run. I would also like to thank Sabine Habersack, secretary of the Institute of Educational Science of the University of Graz, for helping with the administrative parts of the study. Last but not least, I would like to thank all the schools that participated in ATIS-STEP. They opened their doors to us and gave us the opportunity to collect data from their teachers and students. All the participants (teachers, students and parents) dedicated their time to committedly fill out questionnaires, answer numerous questions during the interviews, and provide us with a large amount of data to analyze. Thank you for helping us to improve inclusive education. For the painting on the cover, I am thankful to Mathias Wagener, Head of School at the primary school “Engelbertstraße” in Schwelm. We organized a paint-

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Finally, I would like to refer to publications based on the ATIS-STEP study that have already been published, accepted or submitted. Recently, an editorial book was published by Mike and myself, in which the students wrote about their theses.

- Gaicher, S. (2018). Die soziale Integration von SchülerInnen mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 123–149). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.
- Ganotz, T. (2018). Der Zusammenhang von vertikalen Beziehungen und der Resilienz von GrundschülerInnen. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 173–197). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.
- Kienreich, S. (2018). Selbstsicht der Sozialen Partizipation von VolksschülerInnen in der Steiermark. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 41–62). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.
- Rainer, S. & Lorbek, M. (2018). Freundschaften von Kindern mit und ohne Verhaltensprobleme. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 15–40). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.
- Steindl, C. (2018). Soziale Partizipation von SchülerInnen mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf und ihren Peers – Ein Vergleich der Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 95–121). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.
- Trabe, A. (2018). „Wie gerne gehst du in die Schule?“ – Einblicke in das schulische Wohlbefinden von SchülerInnen in Integrationsklassen. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 63–94). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.
- Trauntschnig, M. & Schwab, S. (eds.) (2018). *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung. Band III. Empirische Einblicke in das ATIS-STEP Projekt*. Hamburg: Kovac Verlag.
- Tschanter, J. (2018). Soziale Lernformen und Soziale Partizipation von SchülerInnen der vierten Grundschulstufe. In M. Trauntschnig & S. Schwab (eds.), *Ausschnitte aus der Grazer Inklusionsforschung* (p. 151–171). Hamburg: Kovac-Verlag.

In addition, several articles have been published, submitted or are in preparation:

- Hoffmann, L., Schwab, S., Trauntschnig, M., & Wilbert, J. (submitted). *Are we good friends? – Friendship preferences and the quantity and quality of mutual friendships between students with and without special educational needs.*
- Hoffmann, L., Trauntschnig, M., Gerdenitsch, C. & Schwab, S. (submitted). Die soziale Akzeptanz von SchülerInnen mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf aus der Selbstsicht sowie der Sicht der Peers, der Lehrkräfte und der Eltern. *Behinderte Menschen. Zeitschrift für gemeinsames Leben, Lernen und Arbeiten.*
- Schwab, S. (2017). Interprofessionelle Lehrkraftkooperation im inklusiven Unterricht aus der Perspektive der Schülerinnen und Schüler [Interprofessional teacher cooperation in inclusive education from the perspective of students]. *Unterrichtswissenschaft, 4*, 262–279.
- Schwab, S. (2018, in press). Soziale Partizipation von Schülerinnen und Schülern mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf im Vergleich zu ihren Peers ohne sonderpädagogischen Förderbedarf. Status Quo und Einblicke in Präventions- und Interventionsansätze. In K. Rathmann & K. Hurrelmann (eds.), *Leistung und Wohlbefinden in der Schule: Herausforderung Inklusion*. Beltz Juventa.
- Schwab, S. (submitted). *Teachers' student-specific self-efficacy in relation to teacher and student variables.*

