

Integration of Children with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools in Albania

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Abstract

This study aims to highlight the inclusion of children with disabilities and learning difficulties in schools of basic education, providing quality education for them and reducing discrimination against these children. To realize these our work as teachers should focus on several areas: increasing the level of information and awareness of actors responsible for implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities, to increase the skills and professional capacities of employees education etc. It is estimated that 1 in 10 children who are born or have a severe harm during their lifetime, which, if it is not taken care of, properly, the chances are his her development is blocked. If we add other components which operate during their life, it turns out that 20% of students during school time represent special needs. ("One school for all" EFA 2000, Nr.32, f.2, Bulletin published by UNESCO.) Our understanding of "disability" is based on the social model, which focuses on human rights and obstacles created by the environment including the behavior of society, culture, prejudice, myths and mistreatment. Also occupy an important place and state policies and applications their education and health system. In this context, inclusion is not just school integration of students with disabilities, but also the transformation of reforming all society. We believe that comprehensive school, as education center, has the potential that will serve as a reflection model for community transformation of the Albanian society in an inclusive society.

Keywords: integration of children, disabilities, specialized school, mental retardation, emotional disorders

1. Introduction: A Retro in Years and the Current State of Affairs

Historically, lots of efforts and interventions to defend and assist disabled children, in an organized way, have always been, as well as the act of the failures and results achieved in this area.

The beginnings of institutionalized treatment for kids with disabilities in Albania date back in 60's. The first efforts were associated with the opening of some particular classes with blind and indifferent children. Step by step, their spread led to the foundation of a National Institute in Tirane which, after several years, managed to develop into two separate organizations, one for blind children with and the other for ones who do not take heed.

After the 70', to cope with multiple outs from schools, under a basic education compulsory, was felt necessary to build the country's principal urban centers of special schools for kids with easy mental retardation. For these schools were designed with specific curricula.

There are no official statistics on the number of children or persons with disabilities in Albania.

1.1 Statistical data on minors with disabilities in preschool and basic schools in Albania.

According to INSTAT, the number of kids with disabilities enrolled in basic education is 2400. This number represents only 0.5% of the total figure of kids enrolled in compulsory education. (<http://www.instat.gov.al>)

Granting to the Ministry of Education and Sports, distinguished the following categories of impairment:

Mental, physical (motor), mental and physical, visual, learning, spoken communication and autism.

Table 1: Total number of kids with disabilities in kindergartens and schools (<http://www.instat.gov.al>)

Out of the total number of children with disabilities	Comparing limited number of handicapped children with the number of The rest of the children	Total children with Disabled in%
Number of youngsters with handicaps Limited in preschool	511/ 1034920.49%	13,89%
Number of children in basic schools	3167 / 472891 0.64%	86,11%
Total	3678/ 576383	100%

Source: World Vision

2. Metodology

The research instrument was a structured questionnaire that asked participants to answer questions about the state of special education with disabilities children.

Most of these were closed questions.

To make the required answers and better known academic reality, during January-March 2002 Albanian Foundation for Disability Rights undertook a study many faceted in two major cities of the state, namely Tirana and Durrës. . (*Fondacioni shqiptar për të drejtat e paafetësise*).

The survey includes 520 subjects, teachers and pupils in mainstream schools of special education parents and administrators selected at random.

- 200 teachers from public instruction (basic education required)
- 200 students from mainstream schools (3/4 cycle low in the upper 1/4)
- 70 parents who have children with handicaps (10 with integrated child mainstream schools and 60 special schools with kids)
- 30 education employees not related to class work rest (school directors, employees in the Departments of Education, Institute of Studies Education, Ministry of Education and Science).
- 20 students with disabilities.

3. Currently in Albania for Children with Special Needs Work:

- 6 special schools (Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Vlora, Korca)
- 3 daily centers, 3 residential (mainly for those with mental retardation) and
- 2 national institutions: 1 for the blind and 1 for deaf children.

Effectiveness and work in these institutions leaves much to be desired. The staff is trained with short-term courses or transferring the experience from one generation to another, without a proper preparation.

Today the few centers and schools that exist are considered a privilege of some urban centers. In a number of urban centers and generally in rural regions (where reside about 60% of the population) lack of special education establishments. Data from few empirical studies conducted recently show that 2.7% to 3.2% of children school age exhibiting moderate light (mental retardation, emotional upsets, physical or sensory impairments, and so on). (*Fondacioni shqiptar për të drejtat e paafetësise*.)

Similarly to about 500,000 students who currently attend school in education compulsory nine-year, 10-13% of express their various disabilities learning (speaking, interpretation, composition, math, and so on

Opinion polls prove that in general the most serious cases parents want their children to be treated in special establishments. (*Sondazh Komëtar- "Opinionit Publik dhe Njerëzit me Aftësi të Kufizuara" FSHDP, Tiranë 1998*).

Looking for not less familiar solutions migrate to other cities or emigrate, while the majority of these children is kept indoors forcing make a secluded life away from ordinary social structures. In cases less who constitute the heavy highest percentage as for those with difficulties learning, parents stress to admit minors in public education closer to their matches. Current law prohibits either, but neither guarantees such action.

Not a few events show that teachers do not desire to sustain kids in their classrooms with disabilities. The opening of special schools has adversely affected by legislated teachers in a way to say "this kid is not for us, but for school Special ". In the aspect of school parents see the experience of the Disclaimer varied, ranging from declared by acquiescence.

Parental pressure some of these students fail to enroll in classes common, but soon after 1-2 years they leave school because of experiences with them. Grounds to raise teachers in these situations related to the fact that they feel unprepared for such work, have no conditions etc.

The medical model for persons with disabilities seems still strong.

Established on the experience so far with the right query:

4. How Organized is our School to Encourage the Consolidation Operation, which are Problems, Needs and Opportunities in this Area?

When speaking to the schoolhouse as an institution and more complex organism, where numerous factors interact, without question, in the foreground highlight three actors important: students, teachers and parents.

Table 2: How do teachers and students perceive people with handicaps?

		Teacher	Pupils
1	As usual, like everyone else without problems	19 %	20 %
2	Ask people to be respected	61 %	78 %
3	As a person to be pitied	16 %	30 %
4	How people to be kept neat	82 %	32 %
5	How people to be treated with consideration and Special care	77 %	80 %
6	As normal people / friendly / positive	40 %	63 %
7	How dangerous persons / with who should not Create about	1 %	4 %
8	As persons who is not worth taking care of	0 %	0 %

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

As a result, from the table , 3/4 of the teachers and 3/5 of the students expressed positive for persons with disabilities "they should be held before, should be respected and treated with special care. "

None of the students and teachers there said that it's not worth caring for them.

Table 3: Feelings and attitudes of common school teachers to students with disabilities.

1	Don't carry a particular attitude and consider them as Ordinary people	48 %
2	Worry about them and try to help	84 %
3	Don't feel comfortable around them and find it hard how to behave	17 %
4	Feel their influence and try to satisfy	25 %

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

4/5 of teachers feel that something must be done for these students and that, as stated those related to a greater effort that teachers should do their work.

Regarding point 1 of the questionnaire where about half of the teachers expressed, investigations made

Revealed that many teachers who consider these children as usual, with the really do not know the specifics of their daily practices are more neglect, and they are not making any specific class work

Table 4: Attitudes common school students when they are near a child with disabilities

1	Do not feel good	13 %
2	Try to help and not to remove	89 %
3	Difficult to understand with them	25 %
4	Want to help but do not know how to help them	62 %
5	They obey their wishes and try to satisfy	74 %
6	Try to avoid them	3 %

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

From the responses to item 2 and 5 is significant that in general students of class do not harbor negative feelings toward children with disabilities.

- From conversations with children who represent disabled shows that:
 - 78% of them feel good at classmates
 - 80% want to attend schools without distraction from their peers.

Table 5: How do teachers assess classroom acceptance and integration of a student with disabilities?

1	That this action is in the interest of these children	74 %
2	The teacher will be focused more on him while neglecting the others	12 %
3	That other students will be upset by not giving proper performance	12 %
4	That being near other children in school affects negatively on its development	10 %
5	That by his coming space required to operate with other students will reduce	6 %
6	Integration in the classroom will have a positive impact on other students	45 %
7	That would require numerous changes in format teachers' work	90 %

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

3/4 of teachers appreciate the benefit of integrating children with disabilities limited.

- Most of them (80%) do not consider the integration of children with disabilities in mainstream schools as a concern for the school, even 45% of their stated that this process positively affects the other students.

From the survey data show that many teachers are trying to keep those children to working with them even after the lesson, giving easy task to don't feel inferior, encouraging, motivating and continually advised, treating with kindness and warmth.

- 90% of teachers assess integration processes can be effective when they provide.
 - Activation inside and outside the classroom
 - Friendships in patronage
 - Work differentiated
 - Cooperate and work with parents
 - Activate to not feel inferior
 - The most common use of games
 - Keeping longer in first grade

The opinions of teachers most appropriate place for treatment

Table 6: Children with disabilities

1	In common schools	40 %
2	Special schools	58 %
3	Keep them at home	2 %

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

Table 7: With what categories of students with disabilities are most often encountered teachers during their career?

1	In children who have difficulty in hearing	25	
2	In children who have visual impairments	40	
3	In children with exhibiting speech	60	
4	Children who have physical difficulties / movement	42	
5	In children with emotional / behavioral	53	
6	Children who have health problems	50	
7	With children who present difficulties specific learning	Reading	81
		Writing	83
		Mathematics	60

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

The above data show that during their career teachers generally are encountered with children in difficulty, most with the students that present difficulty in reading, writing, math, children who has mobility problems, speech and emotional, without excluding students with disorders of cognitive skills.

Table 8: Which group can teachers work easily with?

1	Upon hearing impaired children	4
2	With children who have dyslexia	6
3	With children exhibiting speech	18
4	With children who have physical difficulties / movement	12
5	With children with emotional problems / behavioral	7
6	With children who have health problems	10
7	With children the specific difficulties learning	43

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

Fewer teachers feel prepared to work with students who do not listen to the vision or who have motor problems. This fact shows that so far these students less have violated mainstream schools (maybe the fact of the existence of special institutions or lack of material and technical conditions in schools.)

Somewhat more capable feel teachers to work with students exhibiting the speech, behavioral, or health concerns.

Most teachers feel prepared to work with children who have difficulty in reading, writing, mathematics.

Why fear the encroachment teachers have in their classrooms with children with disabilities limited?

5. Present Below some of their Responses:

"By recognizing the specificities of children with disabilities."

"That they will attract attention and so other students will be distracted."

"That he will take teachers more time, so he will not be able to handles all students "

That the teachers do not know how to communicate and behave with them.

Their presence in the classroom constitutes an obstacle to the development of the learning process, a greater burden on teachers. "

"We are not prepared to address them."

"Lack of adequate premises to the school classroom, so the base necessary materials. "

That work group within the classroom is difficult. "

"That so have to work harder in order to differentiate with others."

"That teacher prefers an easy job, routine."

"That teacher don't have who helps no class."

"How much prejudice from grade students and their parents."

What is different must happen in classrooms and schools, the organization and content teacher to be successful, and these students feel good? (*Ainscow.M, Special Needs in the Classroom. UNESCO 1994*)

5.1 From the responses of teachers emphasize:

- Reduce the number of students in classes.
- Develop special programs for these children, for the improvement of technical changes.
- To leave of the use of traditional methods.
- To change the mentality of the students and the whole school to them.
- Teachers assisted by other support services as a psychologist, teacher aids.
- Within schools to create support services for students and teachers.
- The school should have more didactic materials and basic materials.
- Create the appropriate environments at the campus
- To apply multiple awareness programs.
- To have extra programs for these youngsters, teachers should be allowed to get up and assign it for specific plans and plans.
- Develop evaluation criteria for these masses.
- These people should not be separated, but to take part in any activity inside and outside the school.
- Ensure co - operation and financial backing from parents.

- The revised texts and the plans of different subjects treated problems persons with handicaps.

6. How are Hosted and Treated the Children with Disabilities Currently Attending Mainstream Schools ?

- 3/4 of children with disabilities integrated schools have embraced the basic needs advance preschool together with other minors, an aspect which speaks for a beneficial drift.
- In the beginning moments of involvement in school only 38% of the examples were well received from the shoal.
- To 62% of children's responses to teachers have been relatively acceptable to approach normal.
- For the inaugural year of integration, but also later in the higher grades, 50% of parents filled in the way their kids are treated at school and 50% are not filled.

Lot of parents express concerns about the different teachers that have pulled them to even to change their child's classroom or school, or every bit they put parents "from the outset we were greeted with front legs, it is for me this child, brought in a school Special worries children, do not have time to handle its ". Similarly, merely in the otherwise, the other half of the parents said that "instructors have maintained close these children have handled carefully and without favoritism. "In both places it is a parental experience that runs from 5 to 8 years of the comportment of these school children basic needs. If in the first years of school, things move better in higher years, especially after grade IV (classes V-VIII) added problems as the result of work by many teachers in a schoolroom.

- **As activated child in the schoolroom?**

- 12% of parents say very little
- 63% of parents say little
- 25% of parents say good

- **As assessed child in school?**

Parents say: "Poor, enough, little more than what deserves as wise try to teach, even as other scholars have departed for the fall, putting negative marks. "

- **How are your child's relationships with acquaintances?**

"Friends of love, do not mix much, not so safe, normal, good, keep close friends, the primary had better relations, teachers in basic school neglect this aspect, often hang separately, is willing to stay with friends but they have to make more. "

- **If you have struggled with school, with whom and why?**

"The teachers do not want fatigue, children do not understand is how others, peculiarly in the cycle of 8-year-old high; Director he wanted to draw me from school "

Table 9: What would be according to parents the best school for their children

1	School usual with necessary equipment	41 %
2	Special School	83 %
3	A school where kids feel happy and safe	67 %
4	school that treats children under 62% opportunities and skills	62 %
5	The school has high demands on students	31 %
6	Special Boarding School	43 %
7	Common school care for pupils Troubles	36 %

Source: Albanian schools in the integration process

The fact that 83% of parents say to a particular school, indicates that these establishments have created better conditions for children with handicaps. Parents say to them is important that children feel full, happy, and safe, treated preferably drinking capabilities, without putting aside the mainstream, only on condition that it be improved (45% of parents)

To furnish a more complete appraisal of wellness and working status of a child with disabilities, institutional system of evaluation that rising designs based on:

Evaluation standards of ICF - International Classification of Disability "design The World Health Organization (WHO),(World Vision). This categorization is a acknowledgment system, which regulates the level of function and the development potential of children with disabilities, which bears a detailed account:

The nature and status of the disability;

Needs and education and health services, which have risen due to the ability of limited;
Appropriate services to satisfy those demands;
The point within which should be reassessed the situation of the minor;

6.1 In an ICD-10 system of evaluation of disability defined 4 stages: (World vision)

- 1 - easy,
- 2 - moderate,
- 3 - heavy (and / or combination diagnosis) and
- 4 - deep.

Besides the above cases, the Law 69/2012 "pre-university education in the Republic of Albania" sanctions education at home when the child has long-term damage, which inhibit follow mainstream or specialist.

In conclusion, we can aver that the law, as ever, has sanctioned the inclusive teaching of kids with handicaps. Culmination of this law and the drafting of bylaws that will orient and guide its concrete implementation will pave the way for the initiation of a comprehensive arrangement of education of children with handicaps ".

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Presented below summarizes some of the conclusions that resulting from the view information.

First, you have to accept that the integration of children with disabilities in our public schools is not a mass phenomenon. As a result of multiple pressures some parents of children with disabilities, of these more minor cases, fail to be included in mainstream schools. Over the years, their performance at school becomes more difficult, particularly in the upper basic school. Not a few of them leave school without even completed the fourth degree.

For pupils with impairments are included in mainstream schools, the general attitudes of teachers and students are positive, loving and human. According to them, these children benefit from the experience in mainstream and not care for the classroom and school. Indeed, what is more, they themselves benefit of these processes professionally teachers and scholars in many other aspects. (*The Standart Rules on the Equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities. United Nations 1994*)

90% of pupils in the class want and feel able to assist these children, simply do not know as well.

Without denying the value of a range of interesting activities that special teacher organizes their classes to support integration processes, for most teacher characteristic is the absence of an organized work and programmed with clear finishes.

During their professional career teachers in mainstream schools are battling often in their classrooms with children with learning difficulties or skills limited, less in the sheath of an isolated project and often long experience their many years.

And yet these experiences have failed to impact on their work style, much less be imposed. Yet in most school sites in our country dominates frontal routine work, a program, a text for all, less or no adaptation to the needs, possibilities and interests of pupils. For quite teacher has more importance than the student program or textbook. (*Putnam.J,W, Cooperative learning & Strategies for Inclusion. British Library 1995*)

Not a few teachers see working with children with disabilities more like a kindly act as an unreasonable burden and not as a responsibility of their own, to justify this with the statement that: "*For these pupils have special schools, we are not trained for this study, we hold no class conditions less for those who cause physical problems, etc.*"

If we await at the situation realistically and teachers in our schools show that they are generally doing close study, insulated in their classrooms, less cooperate in cooperating among themselves to solve problems encountered in the schoolroom. In schools lack of support services for instructors and pupils. Often, the place of lonely face different problems teachers feels failed, not moved.

Thither are many cases, teachers passionate about their profession without having organized support, with interest and endeavors that do, fail to provide very good outcomes in their classrooms for kids with handicaps.

The reactions from the questionnaires and focus group discussions highlight a dynamic enough complex the determinants that lead to the recognition of an inclusion of successful kids with handicaps.

Straining for a sufficient qualification of instructors and sustain them in the process, seen as necessary to change daily practices. Only working to determine the most effective instructors are convinced that this process is to benefit of all scholars. Teachers must obey virtually owning skills to care for kids with handicaps. In this room they set up professionally, know where to seek help or correct information, become more motivated by gradually achieve what

evaluated as the most delicate element, but still more important: to accept the desire and willingness to learn in their grades and children representing disabled.

The survey also shows that school integration process should be implemented in Gradually, be educated with care, in lodge to avoid mistrust and initial refusals lead to teachers or students create negative attitudes which is later to unrooted.

At the same time the teacher organizes activities inside and outside the classroom should be organized, pleasant, with more elements of cooperation and less competition elements.

Self schools do not possess a clear policy for the realization of integration processes.

Provisions current normative public education does not offer clear instructions for action.

All these often create confusion. The law recognizes the right of anyone to educate the educated in accordance with the possibilities and capabilities of the individual, but does not explain the guarantees ways how will this process.

For the realization of integration processes has great importance and sensibility change the attitude of people and especially that of teachers. Compared to previous years can say that in this regard the positive changes. We must not forget also that the change of ideas, viewpoints, to change practices ahead of a process long and complex issue related to the change not only the school, but the society.

7.1 Recommendations for the future

Integration of children with disabilities in mainstream schools is not related simply to the introduction of these children in schools. First, and most important of all is that all of us: teachers, students, parents, officials and administrators try to eliminate and reduce all those factors that create isolation, embarrassment and negative attitudes to accept and teach each student.

After the family, school is the child's first model of an organized society.

If at this stage we do not make part of our school community, it will be too late tomorrow, that children with disabilities to be part of our social community. This is an undeniable right of every man.

We must acknowledge that the realization of integration processes is a challenge true for all of us: teachers, students, parents and administrators. To move towards the integration processes is necessary:

- Promote and support the integration process as early as possible, that at Preschool.
- Study, generalization and gradual expansion of positive experiences associated with integration of kids with disabilities in mainstream schools. Making a database for the needs and accomplishments in this sector.
- Various forms of public consciousness, awareness of students, teachers and rulers of the values and advantages of integration.
- The gradual restoration of schools in communities where the dominant culture cooperation, attention and respect, where the differences between students not seen as obstacles, but as qualities to be valued.
- Creation and implementation in schools of a comprehensive curriculum (programs, flexible, effective strategies and methods).
- Efficient use of human resources, various sorts of cooperation within the school, teacher-parent collaboration, student-student support, the role of volunteer forces, backed by several specialists.
- The realization of integration processes in schools should not be viewed only as a matter of one or several instructors. In the demand to invade the whole school within a major office to work as school principal.
- Organize flexible, lessening the students in the classrooms, improvement of conditions material, technical suitability of construction, more dependable support

7.2 Financial information for schools

- Acceptance of parents as equal partners in teaching.
- The qualification of teachers for inclusive education problems. Your teachers given the chance to read, reflect and learn new ways of intending and behaving.
- Building capacity at university level and qualification in teaching facilities for inclusive education problems.
- Preparation of publications along the consolidation procedures to assist instructors and parents.
- Supporting ordinary schools with various psycho-pedagogical services, special social.
- Return of special schools into resource centers to assist the process integration into mainstream schools.
- Collaboration and cooperation between governmental structures and non governmental organizations (NGOs) for the integration processes. (*The Standart Rules on the Equalization of opportunities for persons with*

disabilities. United Nations 1994)

- Improving school legislation in order to favor, facilitate and ensure the realization of integration processes.
- The creation of the Ministry of Education and Science of an advisory group problems of inclusive education.
- The realization of integration processes considered a major priority Educational Reform.

7.3 Teaching strategies - autistic children (World Vision)

7.3.1 Use different strategies to solve world problems.

Choosing appropriate support for these kids is significant. Below is a scope of attacks that can be applied according to the needs of the kid.

- 1- Use visual aids. Kids with autism have easier to understand message through visual means. For instance you can use a schedule that tells them the time through simple drawings, in order to know precisely what to suffice and when.
- 2- Use lists, items, calendars, pictures etc., Which may help to see the steps to follow, and predict what will take place next.
- 3- Communication system by exchanging photos (pictures). It is one of the systems that used to instruct children with autism who suffer significant delays in speech evolution. Instructors use the pictures of this program to teach pupils with autism names of different aims.
- 4- Social stories can help immensely. Kids with autism are able to read, can be instructed how to face different situations through social stories technique. Reports are written by the teacher taking into account the small fry, which is expressed aside the words and photo simple, step by step, what will happen in situations where you feel anxious and how to confront difficult situations (e.g. A social situation can be used to find out what to do in the street, on the bus, with friends, and so on).
- 5- TEACCH (Treatment and Education of children with autism and similar obstacles in communication). This is one of the models implemented in special schools, but that ultimately is fit successfully in mainstream schools. It is based on environmental change and the use of visual aids, such as schedules, photo, to help your child have a structured routine.

This routine reduces stress by getting clear what should find during the daytime, and to improve understanding. Youngsters were given instructions for each phase of activity primarily visually.

7.3.2 Adapt language to the level of students

Use patterns and optical instruments to communicate with them.

Be clean and say just what you have in mind. Example: "Can you sit here?", "Can you hold the piece of paper and put it on the workbench?". (*Ainscow.M, Special Needs in the Classroom. UNESCO 1994*)

Use direct language, avoiding the habit of language with double meaning, sarcasm, ridicule, complicated questions, jokes, if you are not completely sure that he read.

Drag attention before you communicate with. Are called by name, but not definitely expect to catch you in the eye, because it is hard for them.

Talk slow and pass a few seconds time to process raw information, which later answers, or restate the query. (*Clark.C, Dyson.A, Millward.A, Towards Inclusive Schools? London 1995*)

Determine if you understand what to do in class or what tasks there. The fact that the reiterates guidance that you passed on me, does not entail that it has seen. Verbal Information processing is difficult to visual tools can serve.

Make certain you see what is required of him in school, p.s. Where it should be in the classroom or in any classes, where to suffer during the break, and thus along

7.3.3 The impact of physical impairment in learning and growth

7.3.4 Adapting to the environment

What to keep in judgment when exercising with pupils with physical impairments.

For pupils in wheelchairs or using crutches or cane, is a necessary adjustment class (primarily banks) to get them easier access and a wider corridor to travel.

Some pupils with physical disabilities can do lack a long stop, therefore, teachers must work independently and sometimes to go on home.

More or less of them may also have epilepsy. Determine if they remove the medication and report to parents all cases of crisis.

Be meticulous in implementing security procedures, but not too much protect these students.

How many times has the possibility, encourage to participate in activities with other scholars. Gym teacher must recognize how to adapt physical activities to include these pupils in class actions. The significant matter is that they are not left behind as witnesses.

Some pupils with physical disabilities will have to use tables or chairs modified.

It is the obligation of the student teachers to utilize these gimmicks.

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