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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on inclusive, learner-centred practices in early childhood education and care and school education. - <i>Approval</i> - <i>Statement by Sweden</i>

Delegations will find attached a statement by Sweden in relation to the above-mentioned subject.

Statement by Sweden on the Council conclusions on inclusive, learner-centred practices in early childhood education and care and school education

Sweden would like to explain why it does not fully agree on the content of the Council conclusions on inclusive, learner-centred practices in early childhood education and care and school education. However, Sweden is not opposed to the approval of the conclusions.

The Swedish Education Act clearly states that all children and pupils in all types of schools and after-school care must be given the guidance and stimulation they need in their learning and personal development. Pupils who, due to a disability, have difficulties meeting the various grading criteria or relevant criteria for assessing knowledge, should be provided support aimed at counteracting the consequences of the disability as much as possible. Furthermore, Sweden is one of the countries that have long implemented a strong inclusive agenda in education, and inclusive policies have been an integral part of both theory and practice in Sweden. Sweden's experience is that while inclusive education has its time and place, it can also be counterproductive. When a teacher is expected to provide different support measures to several pupils in the same classroom, there is a risk that inclusion, in terms of teaching all pupils together, actually becomes exclusion, as a result of pupils in practice not getting the individualised support that they need.

The Swedish Government therefore wants to emphasise that it is not a given that all pupils in need of support measures receive them in the best possible way within the framework of regular teaching or in mainstream classrooms. In some cases, support measures are needed outside of regular teaching. These can include measures to improve basic skills in reading and writing, but also support from special education teachers, access to smaller teaching groups and access to high-quality student health services.

For this reason, Sweden would like to point out that the suggested Council conclusions do not adequately reflect the complexity and nuances that come with everyday school practice.
