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## Music Education for Every Child – Ideal or Reality?

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### ABSTRACT

Contemporary pedagogical, psychological and sociological research highlights the need to make music education available to every child. Starting from the fundamental point of view according to which music affects the development of the child's whole personality, this idea has been around since the 17th century. Various educators in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century emphasized the importance of music education for every child.

Through a historical and theoretical overview of this idea, this paper examine the potential for its realization in contemporary educational practice. The Venezuelan music education program El Sistema, which promotes the humanistic idea of changing society through classical music education, stands out as a unique example of good practice. As a form of music education which particularly promotes the idea of music being available to every child, the conception of Functional Music Pedagogy by the Croatian music pedagogue Elly Bašić (1908-1998) is also discussed. Considering the status of music in American educational policy, it indicates a significant change, in which music has been recognized as an educational priority for the first time in the history of education and has become a basic academic subject in the American federal education policy plan, as well as unprecedentedly incorporated in Federal law.

**Key words:** American educational policy, El Sistema, every child, Functional Music Pedagogy, music education

## Glasbena vzgoja in izobraževanje za vsakega otroka – ideal ali resničnost?

Pregledni znanstveni članek

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### POVZETEK

Sodobne pedagoške, psihološke in sociološke raziskave poudarjajo potrebo po glasbeni vzgoji in izobraževanju, ki bi bilo na razpolago vsakemu otroku. Izhajajoč iz temeljnega stališča, po katerem glasba vpliva na razvoj celotne otrokove osebnosti, ta zamisel izstopa od 17. stoletja. Konec 19. in na začetku 20. stoletja so pomembnost glasbene vzgoje in izobraževanja poudarjali različni strokovnjaki.

Z zgodovinskim in teoretičnim pregledom te zamisli poskuša ta članek proučiti možnost njene uresničitve v sodobni pedagoški praksi. Venezuelski glasbeni program El Sistema, ki podpira humanistično zamisel spreminjanja družbe s klasičnim glasbenim izobraževanjem, izstopa kot edinstven primer dobre prakse. Kot oblika glasbene vzgoje in izobraževanja, ki zlasti podpira zamisel o dostopnosti glasbe vsakemu otroku, je bila prikazana tudi zamisel funkcionalne glasbene pedagogike hrvaške glasbene pedagoginje Elly Bašić (1908–1998). Upoštevajoč status glasbe v ameriški vzgojno-izobraževalni politiki, je predstavljena kot pomembna sprememba, s katero je glasba prvič v zgodovini vzgoje in izobraževanja priznana kot vzgojno-izobraževalna prioriteta, postala je temeljni učni predmet v ameriškem zveznem načrtu vzgojno-izobraževalne politike, kot nikdar doslej pa je umeščena tudi v zvezno zakonodajo.

**Ključne besede:** ameriška vzgojno-izobraževalna politika, El Sistema, vsak otrok, funkcionalna glasbena pedagogika, glasbena vzgoja in izobraževanje

## Introduction

We live in a "knowledge society" in which human knowledge and competences are the most important resources for and drivers of economic and social change. In such a society, considering the modern way of life, knowledge and information are in the foreground. Highlighting these values encourages people towards activities and the acquisition of new perspectives, on the one hand; on the other hand, it also entails competitiveness and the constant need for approval, acquisition of awards, praise and so on. Furthermore, all of that often leads to the creation of an unhealthy, competitive atmosphere, which is the main cause of stress, tension, fear of mistakes and failure. With easily accessible information in the arts and other fields, today's society seeks something more, and that is creativity. Therefore, it is important to encourage its expression in children from an early age and to explore methods that will facilitate its development. Art education is one way to stimulate a child's creativity. The significance of art education and its availability to everyone were emphasized in *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 2010)*, as well as in the goals outlined by *The Second UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education (UNESCO, 2010)*. Both documents emphasize the importance of affirming the arts as the basis for achieving the balanced, creative, cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and social development of children and youth. Although music is an art form that is currently present in almost all aspects of human life, thanks to the development of technology, today's educational culture still does not recognize its numerous benefits in child development and does not understand the importance of its presence in schools and on modern curricula. The latest comprehensive and comparative report on artistic education in 30 European countries, which was made by The Eurydice Network coordinated and managed by the EU *Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)* in the study *Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe (2009)*, indicates that the general objectives of arts education are quite similar among the European countries. Almost all countries mention artistic skills, knowledge and understanding, critical thinking, cultural heritage, individual expression/identity, cultural diversity, and creativity as the learning objectives. However, lifelong learning/interest in the context of art education is mentioned in only 15 curricula. In the majority of countries, art education also aims to facilitate personal and emotional development, as it promotes social skills and self-fulfillment through experiencing pleasure and satisfaction.

Music education in Croatia is mandatory in compulsory education. As stated in the current Curriculum for Primary Schools (2006), the fundamental objective of teaching music in compulsory education is "The introduction of students to music education, introduction to the basic elements of musical language, development of musical creativity, the establishment and adoption of value standards for (critical and aesthetic) evaluation of music" (*Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2006, p. 79*). According to this plan and program for music education, it is "not necessary to introduce musical notation and other theoretical content in music" (*Ibid., p. 78*), so additional music education is required to cover those elements and teach children how to play an instrument. While Croatia has a special system of state-funded music education, private music schools are prevalent in most developed countries in the world, including most European countries. Therefore, as indicated by a new study

from the UCL Institute of Education (IOE), the fundamental problem in additional music education involves limited resources, in terms of skills and instruments, as well as financial constraints – due to both school funding and family background. In more affluent families, the parents can afford to buy instruments or pay for their children’s music lessons if the school cannot provide them, but children from lower socio-economic backgrounds usually do not have those same opportunities (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news-events/news-pub/april-2016/children-still-face-barriers-in-accessing-music-education>).

*The National Association for Music Education* (NAFME) proclaimed “The Child’s Bill of Rights” (introduced in 1950 and revised in 1991), which states that every child in America should have the right to music lessons (Barret, 2009). Furthermore, the same law states that “the quality and quantity of children’s music instruction must not depend upon their geographical location, social status, racial or ethnic status, urban/suburban/rural residence, or parental or community wealth” (Glenn, 1992, p. 4).

## Research Problem

The aim of this paper is to point out the importance of music education for every child in contemporary society, and this will be done through a historical and theoretical overview of the development of this idea. It was the guiding point for various authors since the seventeenth century, and it remained so when alternative approaches and approaches within music education began appearing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Moreover, through an overview of various forms and ways of incorporating this idea into practice, the objective is to explore the potential for its realization in contemporary educational practice.

## Methodology

The primary research method is the descriptive method used in scientific pedagogical research, since we introduce and describe historical and theoretical facts found in literature without causal explanation. The comparative method characteristic of pedagogical research was also used, given that the concept of the availability of music education for every child was observed through varied ways and forms of incorporating music education into practice.

### *Sample, Data Collection and Analysis*

We included the primary theoretical resources in the research process. These cover the subject of the study, which is the availability of music education for every child. Altogether, 52 theoretical works by 55 authors and 5 legal acts have been examined.

### *Overview of the Development of Music Education Ideas – from Rousseau to Alternative and Music Education Approaches*

Throughout history, various pedagogical experts have emphasized the need for music education to be available to every child. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), one of the main representatives of the Age of Enlightenment, which has been called the pedagogical century, and who is perhaps nowadays better known outside the

musical sphere, was a passionate music lover, musician and worthy composer (Begbie 2013). Shklar (1969) stated that “even among his versatile contemporaries he was extraordinary: composer, musicologist, playwright, drama critic, novelist, botanist, pedagogue, political philosopher, psychologist” (Shklar 1970: 5).

He stated his pedagogical attitudes in a book called *Emile, or On Education* (1761), for which Goethe noted that it was a gospel for educators (Žarnić 2001). Even though at his time Rousseau did not have any real influence on professional education and the development of education, progressive training in the twentieth century affirms that he was focused on the child (Oelkers 201). He pointed out that a child must be seen as an individual (Roth-Čerina 2011), who should be at the center of education as a primary subject. He emphasized that a teacher should respect the child’s abilities and interests and should especially respect the importance of the child’s developmental stages and musical affinities. He considered that it was important for every student to achieve music literacy, and he wanted to make that task easier by introducing into schools a new system of writing and reading notes: numbered musical notation.

In the early nineteenth century, J. H. Pestalozzi (1746-1827) advocated the need for general education, as well as music education, available to all classes of society. Even though H. G. Nägeli claimed that Pestalozzi was completely musically untalented, his pedagogical records show that he appreciated music and gave it special importance in the child’s education and development (Rojko 2012). Dahlhaus (2007) stated that Pestalozzi did not refer to music education as a form of art education, but as education by music in order to achieve humanity. He thought that music, singing especially, had great value for the development of a child’s character and the development of social relations; it decreased a child’s feelings of nervousness or anxiety and spiritually enriched him or her (Chernin 1986). Given all that, he thought that music science should be taught as a separate subject in schools.

In the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, the Art Education Movement (Pokret za umjetnički odgoj), Jugendbewegung and the Work School Movement (Pokret radne škole) had a significant role in the development of art education and music pedagogy as part of compulsory education. Various authors, such as M. Montessori, R. Steiner (Waldorf pedagogy), R. Agazzi, L. Malaguzzi, C. Freinet and A. S. Neill, gave special attention to these in their alternative conceptions of education. The Art Education Movement (Pokret za umjetnički odgoj) places art at the center of education, and the main aspiration of the movement was “upbringing for art with the help of art” (Jakopović 1984: 19). Artistic (aesthetic) upbringing became the principle that reflected on other school subjects, such as lessons in the mother tongue (experience of the text and text dramatization), physical education lessons (joy through movement, harmony of movements in gymnastics or dance), the beauty of handcrafting forms etc. (Gudjons 1994). Within the Work School Movement (Pokret radne škole), it is important to distinguish the approach which was advocated by Hugo Gaudig (1860-1923) and which indicated the importance of aesthetic and artistic upbringing.

The alternative conceptions of education from the beginning of the twentieth century by the authors Montessori, Steiner, Agazzi, Malaguzzi, Freinet and Neill give special attention to the development of the child’s senses. Particular attention is paid to the development of hearing, as well as to encouraging the child’s artistic sensibility in general. At the center of these pedagogical movements is the child, whose

development is adjusted to his or her individual potential, interests and needs, with an emphasis on the free and active way of acquiring knowledge. For instance, Maria Montessori (1890-1952) believed that education of children through hearing and their other senses contributed to their natural development. She thought it was especially important to expose the child to music and musical experiences from the age of two-and-a-half, until the age of five-and-a-half. In this period the child is particularly sensitive and receptive and can acquire some special forms of knowledge and skills, so she called it the sensitive period for learning (Montessori 1979).

Rudolf Steiner's (1861-1925) guiding point was that man is a musical being and that music creation is the foundation of experience. The music contained in the Waldorf curriculum awakens and nurtures the deep inner life of a child and accompanies the child's specific developmental stages (Lyman 2009).

Apart from Maria Montessori, Rosa Agazzi (1866-1951) also had a significant role in the development of pedagogical ideas in Italy in the early twentieth century. Just like M. Montessori, she observed musical and rhythmic abilities during the child's development (Hargreaves and North 2003). She gave special attention to the music arts, and at the beginning of the twentieth century she introduced the concept of "educational singing" (Zrilić 2014). Agazzi considered singing to be a human need: "A native sings when speaking to unknown forces; a mother sings when putting her child to sleep; a worker sings when he works; a farmer sings in the field and a child during playtime; an old man sings when the sun rises; one who loves and hopes, sings. And if humankind were forbidden to sing, then we would realize that singing is the need of human life" (Agazzi in Manasteriotti 1988: 5).

Among various principles, the foundational principles and practice of Reggio Emilia pedagogy express the importance of having an art studio or atelier in every institution whose work is based on this pedagogical approach. The author himself, Malaguzzi (1920-1994), described it as follows: "Art studio is a place where you explore with your hands and mind... It allows rich combinations and creative possibilities within different (symbolic) languages of children" (Edwards et al. 1993: 68). A studio run by local artists is equipped with a range of artistic media for children to use, such as musical instruments, puppets and costumes.

As one of the five important elements of Freinet's theory of education, alongside class self-government and student cooperation in the classroom, independent work and study and discovery learning, Laun (1982) emphasizes the child's "free expression" in the wider sense of the concept. Therefore, students are allowed free utterances and "free" painting, sculpting, dancing, staging, making music and writing songs, which are all ways to freely show what interests them. At the same time, they give guidance to the teacher so that he or she can form and write further plans for the class (Koitka 1977).

Alongside these movements, the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century were marked by the music education approaches of the authors Orff, Kodály and Jaques-Dalcroz, whose guiding point was that music education should be available to everyone. That same idea guided Elly Bašić, a Croatian music teacher who emphasized in her musical pedagogical conception FMP (Functional Music Pedagogy) that every child had the right to acquire music culture.

Kodály's interest in music education began in the period between the two World Wars (Baumann 2010) and was prompted by the low quality of music used in schools,

as well as the desire to preserve the Hungarian national heritage from German and Austrian influences (York 1998). He completely and successfully reformed the Hungarian music education system, and he believed that "acculturation had to begin with the establishment of one's own national cultural roots as the basis for further cultural development" (Madden 1984: 19). As the primary medium of music education, he featured the singing of Hungarian national songs, through which learning to read sheet music and learning the mother tongue would happen simultaneously. Nowadays, Kodály's concept is used in other countries as well, and every country features its own traditional national music (Choksy 1974). He believed music education should start as early as possible, it should be acquired every day, and the child's love for music should be developed in the process (Brooke Bagley 2009). Kodály's student Lois Choksy stated that "even though the goals, philosophy, and principles of his conception of music pedagogy were original, none of the procedures were originally his own, but rather they represent a synthesis of various sources" (Choksy et al. 2001: 81).

While Kodály focused on vocal, i.e. choral, training with the use of onomatopoeia as a form of associative medium, Orff's approach was based primarily on movement, speech and making music on percussion instruments (Göktürk 2012). This is elementary music, which children naturally, spontaneously create; they do not need to practice it, but by doing so, they make a connection between natural music creativity and fundamental movement and rhythmic speech. Two basic aspects are contained in Orff's approach: exploration and experience (Mark and Madura 2010). These are based on play as a child's intrinsic need that contributes to musical and emotional development. Frazee (2012) describes the play in Orff's conception as active, socially grounded play, in which children make personal effort and experience engagement in their endeavors. The primary goal of Orff's system is to enable each child to express him or herself as an individual and as part of the group, regardless of their notation knowledge (Košta and Desnica 2013). Music activities are done in a non-competitive environment; therefore, children engage in these activities primarily for pleasure, regardless of their music abilities. Music is thus taught in an active and creative way by means of creation, exploration and improvisation (Choksy et al. 2001).

Unlike Kodály's and Orff's conceptions of music pedagogy, in which the guiding points were singing and rhythmic speech, Jaques-Dalcroze began with body movement. He believed that every child has a natural sense of rhythm, and he noticed that rhythmic music performance is based on the senses that call for muscular and neural response by the entire organism (Jaques-Dalcroze 1980: 8). He wanted to use education to improve and stimulate the child's natural tendencies for rhythm and movement (Yelin 1994). Given these viewpoints, he developed *eurhythmics*, a system of learning music through natural body movement that enables rhythm training. It unites rhythm, phrases and expression and is applicable in the learning of music from early childhood until postgraduate study (Choksy et al. 2001). The most valuable objective of Dalcroze's pedagogy was to indicate the embodiment of the human being and the embodied ways of learning within music education (Juntunen 2004). From a contemporary perspective and in modern terminology, such ways of learning could be defined as holistic (Westerlund and Juntunen 2005).

## Results and Discussion

### *Representation of the Concept of Music Education for Every Child in Contemporary Educational Practice*

Any form of music education, whether individual or collective, is meaningful for the development of the child's whole personality. Considering the varied philosophical origins and the primary idea of the availability of music education for every child, Kodály, Orff and Jaques-Dalcroze developed, established and elaborated on the music education systems in their concepts of music pedagogy. Nowadays, their ideas have been partially implemented in the curricula of various educational systems worldwide. As stated by the authors Juntunen and Westerlund (2011), these are seen as the embodiment of normative metanarrative, meta story connected to music education that can be used in today's teacher education and in the enrichment of teachers' reflective practice. Improvisation is emphasized as the primary methodological procedure, which, in Orff's opinion, provides the potential for each child to explore, create and experience music. For example, in the Croatian primary school curriculum (*Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu 2006*), improvisation of rhythm, music, melody units, as well as voice, percussion and movement improvisation and imitating sounds are emphasized as a means of stimulating the child's musical creativity. Such forms of improvisation also represent elements of musical creativity.

Jaques-Dalcroze's pedagogy is incorporated into music education in many countries. In Croatia this form of music pedagogy had no significant influence on music classes, both in the general educational system and in music education. The only exceptions are kindergartens and schools whose work is based on alternative concepts, such as Waldorf or Montessori schools.

Kodály's ideas were disseminated in Croatia in the 1950s by Miroslav Magdalenić (1906-1969), who studied composition in Zagreb and continued his education under the mentorship of Z. Kodály in Budapest. He published *Solfeggio na osnovu narodnog muzičkog izričaja* [Solfeggio Based on National Music Expression], a textbook which is based on music folklore (Magdalenić 1961), in a manner similar to Kodály's concept of music education.

### *Elly Bašić's Functional Music Pedagogy*

While Orff, Jaques-Dalcroze and Kodály's approaches and ideas are nowadays implemented in current curricula or are realized through varied forms of education (classes, workshops, projects, private lessons etc.), the concept of music pedagogy by the Croatian music teacher Elly Bašić (1908-1998), Functional Music Pedagogy (FMP), was mostly confined to Croatia (The Solfeggio functional method is also used in some music schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, since Elly Bašić worked as an Assistant Professor at the Sarajevo Music Academy), where it is conducted as a special educational program within the Department of Music Education at the Elly Bašić Music College in Zagreb and in a music school in Slavonski Brod. In her concept of music pedagogy, FMP, Bašić integrated Orff, Kodály and Jaques-Dalcroze's general ideas, as well as their ideas on music pedagogy. "The functionalist method uses historically confirmed conventional forms of work, some of which the author has modified and upgraded in an entirely original way" (Kazić 2013: 82-83). Elly Bašić sought to humanize

the child's artistic upbringing, and her basic frame of reference for that was that every child has the right to gain music culture, which was also the primary motto of her music pedagogy concept. Therefore, the development of the child's entire personality through music is set as the primary goal of music education, not just acquiring music skills and knowledge (Bašić 1987). Elly Bašić's concept was modeled on Kodály's concept and idea of music literacy being available to every child in general education schools. She had the same idea in mind, and it was incorporated into practice during her early years of work. With that in mind, in the Study of the Functional Music School (Elaborat Funkcionalne muzičke škole - srednje kadrovske s nižom školom i isturenim odjelima pri osnovnim školama) (Bašić 1962 in Perak Lovričević 2005), based on which the Functionalist music school was founded in 1963 at the primary school Gračani in Zagreb, the importance of their cooperation and mutual working relationship are emphasized. Elly Bašić (in Perak Lovričević 2005: 19) states that "the new school should be equal in meaning to the art and culture center of the local area." Wanting to elevate the culture of the area to a higher level, she pointed out the need to open kindergartens that would function within and under the supervision of the Functional Music School, as well as conducting evening lessons for adults and music clubs, which would have the same goal. She believed that every child has rhythm and therefore satisfies the necessary predisposition for engaging in any music. She also emphasized that rhythm was not the same as musicality. "It is a completely mistaken distinction and music schools still stand by it nevertheless. What we need to do is accept the state at which the child is currently and complexly develop it from there. Not the 'voice' or the 'ear,' but the entire child's personality" (Bašić 1994 in Letica 2014: 67). Moreover, compared to music schools that work according to a standard program, the system of not grading primary school students' knowledge is emphasized as a special advantage. This has particular importance in today's competitive world, given that this refers to art education.

The author gave special attention to the child creativity phenomenon, emphasizing that the child's creative forces can significantly contribute to the forming of his or her personality later in his or life and career (Bašić 1968). Nowadays, the ideas about parallel conduct and cooperation between music and general education schools, as well as the importance of having instruments available for every child, which the author has pointed out in the study, are no longer applicable. Therefore, regardless of the numerous advantages of the music pedagogy concept and its basic idea about the availability of music education to every child, it still demands that certain material resources be provided by the parents, such as tuition fees, which are symbolic compared to those in private music schools, and buying the necessary instrument.

### *El Sistema*

*El Sistema*, the music education program which was started in 1975 by the economist, politician, musician and visionary José Antonio Abreu, is a unique example of collective music education available to every child. The foundational humanistic idea involved changing society through music, and the goal was to prevent problems which result from social difficulties, alcohol, drugs, marginalization and violence. Hundreds of thousands of children are included in this music education and are thus less exposed to crime and poverty. It is a form of educational inclusion, and it attracts children and young people from all layers of society, as well as children with developmental and learning difficulties. Since



its beginning, this music social project has fallen under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and not the Ministry of Culture, which strategically aid in its survival. Specific pedagogical methods are not used in the strict sense of the curriculum (Govias 2011), but are adapted to the students' needs. The basic meaning and philosophy of this social project is best described in its slogan *Tocaryluchar* (to play and to fight). The orchestra and the choir represent models of social community in which competition is replaced by the personal effort of each individual, which ultimately, after collective hard work and endeavor, leads to a greater accomplishment. Moreover, as opposed to the classic form of music education, Abreu believed that "it is necessary to develop *passion and love* first, and then comes perfection" (in Lui 2012: 37). He also emphasized that music should be recognized as the driving force that stands behind social development. It transmits values such as solidarity, harmony and empathy and contributes to the expression of positive emotions, as well as to community unification (in Fayer and Lohstöter 2013). The success and significance of this music pedagogy concept is confirmed by the fact that nowadays there are around 500 children and youth orchestras and choirs, as well as 30 professional ensembles in Venezuela. Altogether, they include around 400,000 children, among which over 70% come from low-income families. This social music project has grown to become the biggest youth music movement of this kind worldwide, which is confirmed by the fact that during the 39 years of its existence, around 2 million children have been musically educated in it (Fayer and Lohstöter 2013). It is also important to mention that, unlike the original social version of the Venezuelan music educational program, most of the versions that exist worldwide are not funded by the government, so in some states they are even partially funded by the parents.

The English government has recognized the importance of this project, so a program called *In Harmony* has been started, modeled on the music education program conducted in underdeveloped regions of England. The aim of *In Harmony* is to produce positive changes in the lives of children, young people and their communities. It includes over 3100 children in 12 schools, and it is financed by the *Department for Education and Arts Council England*. Accordingly, in 2011 the English government also published *The Importance of Music, A National Plan for Music Education*, in which they propose creating new music educational centers in order to enrich local communities with music programs and activities, so that children from varied backgrounds and social milieus could have the possibility of music education in all regions of England. The *National Plan* shows that the Department for Education, as well as the Department for Culture Media and Sport, has recognized the importance of music in young people's lives. Since they emphasize the importance of early music education, they plan to include children between the age of 5 and 18, in school and outside of it. Regardless of the original plan which was to have ended in 2015, the deadline for financing this program has been extended till 2020.

#### *Advances in the American Education System – Music as the Main Subject*

American Federal, state and local governments have introduced standardized testing in schools with the aim of improving the public education system. Since student achievement on these tests also represented a means for assessment and evaluation of the quality of the education system, it was necessary to spend extra time on student preparation, as well as to provide an adequate program for it. This has

caused a change in the curriculum: the subjects that are not tested (social subjects, history, civic education and art) are put in last place or are completely eliminated, so students have less chance of a rounded education. Not giving children the extra art education means not granting them the opportunity to learn important academic, creative and social skills that are by themselves characteristic of the artistic exercising of an individual (Ngai 2006). This has also been confirmed by research results which show that students who are involved in art activities achieve better results on tests later on, as well as have greater work accomplishments and better developed life skills, such as motivation, responsibility and team work (Catteral and Waldorf 1999). Since the 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLBA), of which the primary goal was to secure high quality education for all children, did not clearly define what is understood by that, it has only strengthened the existing practice of testing knowledge with the aim of achieving better results on the state academic evaluation tests (Ngai 2006). This has meant that many generations of American teachers and parents did not cover art and music in their education, and because of it the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) put a major effort in July 2015 into the passing of the act for another change in the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) (1965) by the Senate (The act was originally passed in 1965, but was re-authorized by the government every five years). *Every Child Achieves Act* (ECAA) (2015), which represents the new version of the ESEA, was passed. It has a special article called *Literacy and Arts Education Program*. For the first time in education history, music was recognized as a primary subject in the American Federal education policy plan and was unprecedentedly incorporated into Federal law. This is a significant step for American education policy, which has finally recognized the importance of making music education available to every child.

## Conclusion

Although idea of offering music education to every child has been deemed a necessity by various authors since as early as the seventeenth century, music education today still is not recognized as a crucial factor in the child's development. In America, music was neglected as part of general education, with the aim of achieving better test results in other, more important subjects. Only the social music project *El Sistema* in Venezuela, where this idea has fully come to life, can be singled out as a unique example of good practice. It promotes the possibility of free classical music education for every child, regardless of his or her musical predispositions and economic status. Although various forms of this music initiative have emerged worldwide, unlike the original *El Sistema* and its English version, their work is not based on financial support by the state (Majno 2012), so they require some funding from the participants, i.e. the participants' parents.

In Croatia, there is still a special system of music education that is funded by the state. These exist in other European countries, but such forms of music education also contain certain factors which make music education for every child impossible. These factors include tuition fees, the cost of an instrument, and selection of students by their musical predispositions, as well as consideration of the distance from the home to the music school and the time needed for the parent to bring his or her child to music school etc. Functionalist music pedagogy by the Croatian music pedagogue Elly Bašić is a unique example of a form of music education that is not based on enrolment selectivity.

We can conclude that nowadays the ideal of music education for every child is dependent upon various factors, such as financial means, inclusion and the support of parents and communities, differences between various forms or programs of music education, some of which demand a certain musical predisposition in the child, as well as financial support, etc. Next to the cultural society awareness, the economic factor is frequently the key element that makes the implementation of this idea impossible, and makes music education available usually to children with better social status, i.e. music education is dependent on the parents' financial situation.

This idea will be fully implemented into practice only when we raise awareness about the significance of music education, not only for the children and citizens, but for the progress and prosperity of the entire society. Music sensitizes, enriches and affects the development of the child's creativity and universality. Only that kind of person can contribute to the creation of a better, more progressive, more humane and happier society, for the benefit of us all.

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