

Evelin Ilves visited two municipal schools in Milan and described the principles for the integration of disabled children with healthy peers and the organisation of healthy catering for students that she witnessed as "impressive".

Both children with disabilities and regular students are taught in the same class at Scuola di Via Giacosa pre-school. Great emphasis is put on manual work to develop manual skills and thinking processes in children.

"This allows disabled children to feel an integral and natural part of society from childhood," told Evelin Ilves.

She was also introduced to the activities of a municipal enterprise that is involved in school catering at Scuola dell'Infanzia di Via Adriano elementary school. One fourth of the raw materials used for school lunches there is grown by ecological methods and most of the ingredients are of local origin.

"The situation should set an example for everybody else – the municipal authorities of Milan observe the zero kilometre principle when it comes to school lunches – the students are therefore only eating school lunches made from local raw material," stated Evelin Ilves.

The school also runs a farm that raises poultry and has a vegetable garden. This allows the children of Milan, a city with a population of one and a half million, to see tomatoes growing and witness eggs arriving to their table.

Evelin Ilves is staying in Milan and Florence due to the working visit to Italy of the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves.

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