The impact of school organisation and environment on the performance of migrant students: Raising questions from Cyprus

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STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENTATION

- THEORETICAL BACKGROUND - SETTING THE SCENE
  - MIGRANTS IN EDUCATION
  - THE THREE LEVELS OF IMPACT IN EDUCATION

- THE CYPRUS CONTEXT
  - THE MACRO-LEVEL
  - THE MESO-LEVEL
  - THREE EXAMPLES FROM RESEARCH ON THE MESO-LEVEL AND MIGRANTS

Migrants and Education

- Students with migrant background
  - Often face tougher challenges than other students in achieving good education results
  - Have diverse needs
  - Show performance gaps when compared to native students that are largely explained by:
    - Language barriers
    - Socioeconomic status

(NESSE, 2008; OECD, 2010)

Migrants and Education

- Migrant students' results vary systematically
  - Between countries with different education systems and migrant background
  - Between schools of the same education system

(OECD, 2010)

Levels of impact explaining diversity of impact on migrants

- **The macro-level:** society and the education system

- **The meso-level:** school as an organisation and its environment - linking the individual to the society

- **The micro-level:** the classroom, the teacher, the students and their parents

(NESSE, 2008)

Educational achievement and levels of educational management

- The dynamic model of educational effectiveness
  - National/regional policy
  - School policy and its evaluation
  - The quality of teaching

- Model for arranging (school) factors referring to…
  - Behaviour of persons in and/or related to the school
  - Material conditions
  - School culture

    …in relation to their influence on learning

(Kyriakides et al, 2010)

The macro level: the education system

- Explicit policy goals within the broader education policy goals
- Regulations and legislation
- Effective funding strategies
- Standards and Qualifications
- Training and teacher support
- Awareness raising
- Monitoring

The macro-level : The Cyprus Context

- **Education Service Committee**:
  - ❖ 5-Member Committee appointed by the President of the Republic for a 6-year term
  - ❖ Responsible for the appointment, placement, and promotion of teachers and education officials (***www.eey.gov.cy***)
- **Ministry of Education and Culture (www.moec.gov.cy)**:
  - ❖ Department of Primary Education
  - ❖ Department of General Secondary Education
  - ❖ Department of Technical &Vocational Education
  - ❖ Department of Higher Education
  - ❖ Cyprus Pedagogical Institute
  - ❖ Cyprus Center of Research and Evaluation
  - ❖ Cultural Services (Arts, Culture)

Statistics of education 2009

School Level	Number of Schools	Number of Pupils	Number of Teachers	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
Primary (6-12 years)	**371**	**55552**	**4686**	**11,9**
Public	343	51498	4317	11,9
Private	28	4054	369	11,0
Secondary (12-18 years)	**165**	**65445**	**7652**	**8,6**
Public	127	54335	6433	8,4
Private	38	11110	1219	9,1

Statistical Service, Ministry of Finance, 2010

Statistics of education 2009

Student Origin		Primary		Secondary		Grand Total	
Cypriots		**48925**		**60176**		**109101**	
	Public		46404		50984		97388
	Private		2521		9192		11713
Foreign		**6627** (12%)		**5269** (8%)		**11896** (10%)	
	Public		5094		3351		8445
	Private		1533		1918		3451
European		**3824**		**3441**		**7265**	
Non-European		**2803**		**1828**		**4631**	

Cyprus Educational System Reform (2004)

- Revision of school curriculum (began in 2008)
- Moving from a highly centralized to a more de-centralized system
- Changing the system for appointing/promoting teachers
- Upgrading the quality of the initial training and continuous professional development of teachers
- The preparation of school leaders
- The establishment of the Centre of Educational Research and Evaluation
- The expansion of tertiary education
    - In August 2010 the New Revised Curriculum was handed to the Minister of Education and Culture

(http://www.moec.gov.cy/analytika_programmata/programmata_spoudon.html)

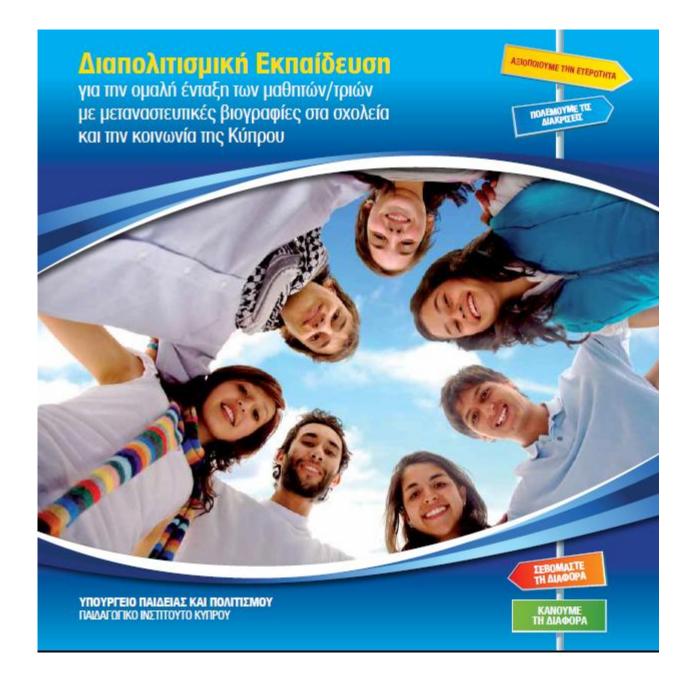# New Revised Curriculum – the main Principles

- Democratic school:
  - Common school environment for all children
  - All children have the right to be educated
  - All children have the best, in the quantity as well as the quality of education
- Human School:
  - No child is left behind
  - No child is excluded
  - Children enjoy childhood

- Knowledge – Attitudes-Competences

Cyprus Educational System Reform and Migrants:

The macro–level of the educational system

- Reception guide
- Language support
- Teacher training
- Data report on migration flow
- New Curricula

Διαπολιτισμική Εκπαίδευση για την ομαλή ένταξη των μαθητών/τριών με μεταναστευτικές βιογραφίες στα σχολεία και την κοινωνία της Κύπρου

Διαπολιτισμική Εκπαίδευση

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ΑΞΙΟΠΟΙΟΥΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΕΤΕΡΟΤΗΤΑ

ΠΟΛΕΜΟΥΜΕ ΤΙΣ ΔΙΑΚΡΙΣΕΙΣ

ΣΕΒΟΜΑΣΤΕ ΤΗ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΑ

ΚΑΝΟΥΜΕ ΤΗ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΑ

ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΙΚΟ ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ

The meso-level: school experience as part of the integration process in the Cyprus context

RECENT FINDINGS:

- Parents and children perceived the school as the most important social network that promotes social integration

- Being at school and interacting with teachers offered reassurance that refugees can be integrated

- Schools do offer to refugee children and parents opportunities to develop friendships and to develop feelings of acceptance

- At school, refugee parents are satisfied with:
  - The teachers (77%)
  - Kids receiving valuable knowledge (66%)
  - Kids being happy 62%) and feeling comfortable (56%)

(Hadjitheodoulou and Papasolomontos, 2010)

The meso-level: Four factors at the school level

- School <u>policy for teaching</u> and actions taken for <u>improving teaching practice</u> (e.g. management of time, policy on homework)
- Policy for creating a <u>school learning environment</u> (e.g. teacher collaboration)
- <u>Evaluation of school policy for teaching</u>
- <u>Evaluation of the school learning environment</u>

(Kyriakides et al, 2010)

Example 1: Promoting closer ties and cooperation between the school, the family and the community

- Project implemented in four schools
- The focus: Policy for creating a <u>school learning environment</u>
- The aim: promoting closer ties and cooperation between the school, the family and the community in the framework of intercultural education

(Hadjitheodoulou and Symeou, 2007)

Example 1: Promoting closer ties and cooperation between the school, the family and the community

MAIN FINDINGS

- Broadening sense of belonging and solidarity with people from diverse backgrounds started from initiatives of headteachers and teachers
- Bureaucratic characteristics of the educational system were important in encouraging and supporting school initiatives
- The basic indicators:
  - School culture
  - Collegiality
  - Use of external support
  - Participation in decision making

Example 1: Promoting closer ties and cooperation between the school, the family and the community

MAIN FINDINGS

- Schools that handled and approached parents with respect, generated a positive climate in the schools and led to changes in parents', teachers' and children' attitudes and behaviours

- Schools can be the centres where the encouragement and development of learning can be implemented locally and thematically

Example 1: Promoting closer ties and cooperation between the school, the family and the community

- Teachers', pupils and parents' willingness to participate differentiated among schools
- Successful innovations were encouraged by staff and heads' initiative in certain pedagogical methods, interactions and material
- Greatest effectiveness was achieved when external factors influence directly the activities in the classroom
- The schools' "relationship" with the Pedagogical Institute was a first step forward to set out work that is to be supported at all levels of social educational interaction by the structures of the educational system.

Example 2: The Zones of Educational Priority

- Project implemented in three ZEP
- The focus: Evaluating <u>school policy for teaching</u> and policy for creating a <u>school learning environment</u>
- The aim: Evaluating the ZEP initiative

Example 2: The Zones of Educational Priority

- The Zones of Educational Priority Policy is based on the idea of affirmative action

- It allows local partnerships to develop approaches to raising educational standards in disadvantaged (mainly urban) areas and prevent bullying and anti-social behaviour

- The programme started in 2004 and it now covers 8 areas (9 upper secondary schools, 24 primary schools and 9 nursery schools)

Example 2: The Zones of Educational Priority

- The ZEP policy is based on the development of relationships and actions between schools, local education authorities, parents and other representatives from the local community

- Project work, cooperative learning, action research work, cross curricula Greek language learning and authentic assessment are the basic tools

(Arnensen et al, 2010)

Example 2: The Zones of Educational Priority

- Main findings from the first evaluation of the project three years after the implementation (Vlami et al, 2007)
  - Successful actions for
    - combating racism, exclusion
    - sustaining school attendance
    - promoting participation in school activities
    - improving school achievement

  - Students particularly satisfied with
    - School climate and teacher pupil relationships

Example 2: The Zones of Educational Priority

- Main findings from the first evaluation of the project three years after the implementation
  - Indirect connection between actions selected to be promoted and the school curricula and student achievement
  - Teachers were reluctant as regards the ability of schools to take advantage of the good school climate in order to raise educational achievements
  - Diversity of perceptions regarding parents' involvement
  - "Overlapping" of school actions and ZEP actions

Example 2: The Zones of Educational Priority

- Issues related to autonomy in financial allocation in ZEP schools and the centralised system of control and monitoring and power relations were reflected in activities chosen and promoted by each school.

  (*Hatcher and Leblond, 2001*)

- Low level of teachers' satisfaction regarding the implementation of ZEP actions revealed
  - low level of participation and involvement
  - lack of adequate supporting measures from the Ministry

Example 3: Teaching Greek as a second language in secondary schools

- Project implemented in all secondary schools
- The focus: Evaluating <u>school policy for teaching</u> and policy for creating a <u>school learning environment</u>
- The aim: Evaluating the implementation of a pilot programme for teaching Greek as a second language

Example 4: Teaching Greek as a second language in secondary schools

- Centralised decisions for implementing actions to cope with linguistic diversity in schools:
  - Directives and "regulations" for implementing a pull-out system for teaching Greek
  - Intensive teacher training for teachers appointed

  - Vague status of the students
  - Clashes of the directive with school regulations

(Hadjitheodoulou and Fokaidou, in press)

Example 3: Teaching Greek as a second language in secondary schools

- Diverse implementation of the centralised directives
- Differentiated integration of the Programme for teaching Greek as a second language, the use of materials and means and people's actions and commitment in different schools
- People selected or appointed to implement the Programme played a significant role for its effectiveness

«The classroom arranged and decorated in a nice way played a positive role in motivating students… and that was great... They enjoyed working with some of the units in the books but they preferred the material that their teacher brought and used in the classroom (worksheets, pictures, songs, comics etc)" (Head teacher)

«… there is also something that is very important. There are no adequate means and materials.. It's pointless to have the kicking off of the programme. Go to school and have no classroom to work in. We are having the lessons in a storehouse…. Or we may spend 10 minutes out of the 45 to find an empty classroom" (teacher)

Example 3: Teaching Greek as a second language in secondary schools

- Need for
    - improving the cooperation between the Deputy Heads in charge and the language teachers
    - mentoring on teaching Greek as a second language
    - monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of teachers' work
    - adapting the legislation to the new so that it was applicable to all students in state secondary education schools

- Inadequacies of the program and its implementation resulted from its inflexibility to transform practices and strategies in order to enable linguistic achievements of migrant student

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

- Issues revealed:
  - Supporting and monitoring school initiatives – the role of the school head teacher and teachers
  - Enlarging teachers' expectations
  - Reconsidering issues of power relations
  - Manipulating allocation of initiatives, duties and responsibilities between the macro- and meso-level

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

- What can maximise the impact of the school factor in the education of students of migrant background?

Thank you for your attendance