Cyprus Pedagogical Institute and Teachers' Professional Learning on citizenship, inclusive and antiracist education

Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Cyprus

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New Policy on Teacher Professional Learning

- Cyprus undergoes a reform phase regarding the modernization of its educational system. Until recently there was no system for teachers' continuous professional learning. The new system which has been introduced since September 2015, provides opportunities for teachers' professional learning (TPL) in a systematic way and on a needs assessment basis either of the school or the individual teacher.

- The Council of Ministers, in August 2015, has approved the proposal submitted by the MOEC and assigned to the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI), which is the competent body for teachers' in-service training, the implementation of the new system.

- The aim of the good practice is to transfer the focus of professional learning to the school unit which now develops its annual professional learning plan. Teachers' professional learning is linked to the school's improvement plan and its main characteristics are that it is addressed to all teachers, it is continuous and systematic.

- The framework supporting the professional learning is structured in four stages: (1) investigation and analysis of needs; (2) planning and organization; (3) implementation of actions; and (4) final evaluation.

- A number of schools is supported the Pedagogical Institute's staff who act as critical friends.

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1. Citizenship – Human Rights – Gender Equality

The Ministry of Education Used to Set Goals Under Emphasis

(until 2016 - 2017)

- <u>2013-14</u>: One of the main aims of the Ministry of Education of Cyprus: "To cultivate a culture of active citizenship with emphasis on social solidarity", http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/files/epimorfosi/politotita/dme6781a.pdf

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1. Citizenship – Human Rights – Gender Equality

Policy papers from the Ministry of Education for:

- Sexuality Education (5/12/16)
  http://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/archeia/1/ypp5075b

1. Citizenship – Human Rights – Gender Equality

Interdepartmental Committees : Gender Equality

- The MOEC is focused on ensuring equal opportunities in education for both genders on a non-discriminatory basis at all levels of education.

- The Ministry has formed an Interdepartmental Committee with representatives from all its departments and services. This Committee oversees and coordinates all gender equality issues related to actions Taken.

- The work of the Committee has resulted to the development of an Action Plan which promotes gender equality (2014-2017), targeting to the inclusion of gender equality in matters related to the structures of the educational system and to the teacher in-service training. Examples of the implementation of the action plan are given below:

1. Training courses aiming to raise awareness on gender issues related to the gap between men and women in labour targeting to all teachers in primary and secondary education, all career counsellors in secondary education and all inspectors in primary and secondary education (Pedagogical Institute, Career Counselling and Educational Service and Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance).

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1. Citizenship – Human Rights – Gender Equality

Interdepartmental Committees : Gender Equality

2. Training of teachers and parents on issues related to gender, through school-based training seminars and programmes (Pedagogical Institute).

3. Workshops for teachers in primary and secondary education (Pedagogical Institute and the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies).

4. In-service training of teachers on issues related to prevention and combating delinquency with reference to transgender relationships (Departments of Education and Pedagogical Institute).

5. Organising conferences/seminars on gender issues for teachers of all levels (Pedagogical Institute).

6. Implementing programmes in schools with the aim of promoting gender equality and respect among all children in class, irrespective of their background or gender (Educational Psychology Service).

7. Workshops for teachers and pupils aiming at the promotion of equality and inclusion (Career Counselling and Educational Service).

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2. Inclusive Education

2. Inclusive Education

Policy papers from the Ministry of Education for:

- Integration of children with a migrant background in the Cyprus Educational system (28/2/17) (Translated in English for UNHCR Cyprus)

http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/files/anakoinoseis/2016_2017/metanasteftiki_viografia.pdf

2. Inclusive Education

Interdepartmental Committees : Integration of children with a migrant background in the Cyprus Educational system

- Introduction and Implementation of a new Policy for the Integration of children with a migrant background and for Teaching Greek as a Second Language by the Ministry of Education in May of 2016. (See the policy paper translated in English)

- After that, an Interdepartmental committee was formed and an action plan is being applied in order to achieve the committee's goals for the Integration of children with a migrant background in the Cyprus Educational system. (See the Action Plan of the committee translated in English)

2. Inclusive Education

Seminars

A series of teacher trainings is offered by the Pedagogical Institute and the Ministry of Education of Cyprus , in the context of professional learning (school-based seminars, one-day trainings , afternoon seminars, action research professional learning scheme):

- Stereotypes, Racism and Intolerance: towards an education on the basis of human rights,
- Diversity in everyday school life: anti-racist policies and actions,
- Multiple Identities in the school setting,
- Bilingualism and Teaching Greek as a Second Language,
- Teaching Controversial Issues in Education for Human Rights, Raising awareness in schools against racism and intolerance, Teaching Literature against Hate Speech,
- Applying anti-racist policy in our school: challenges in the management of racist incidents,
- Cultivating empathy,
- Racism-promoting and teaching equality, Stereotypes, Prejudices, Racism: towards an education on the basis of human rights, Integration of migrant students in the general classroom,
- Acceptance of the "Other",
- Developing empathy skills to students in the modern multicultural school.

3. Antiracist Education

3. Antiracist Education

The Ministry of Education Used to Set Goals Under Emphasis

- <u>2015-2016:</u> One of the main aims of the Ministry of Education of Cyprus: "Raising awareness against racism and intolerance and promoting equality and respect, in the context of the hate speech campaign of the Council of Europe", http://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/archeia/1/ypp2933a

- <u>2016-2017</u>: One of the main aims of the Ministry of Education of Cyprus: "Raising awareness against racism and intolerance and promoting equality and respect"http://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/archeia/1/ypp4467

3. Antiracist Policy

All schools in the three levels of education are encouraged to implement the MOEC's anti-racist policy "Code of Conduct against Racism and Guide for Managing and Recording Racist Incidents", developed and piloted in 2014-2015.

The antiracist policy was developed based on the Follow-up Report of Cyprus for Recommendation No 20 and a recommendation by the Anti-Discrimination Body. The development and implementation of the policy responds to the European Commission's against Racism and Intolerance guideline No 10 and is also in line with various international and European conventions that Cyprus has ratified, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe's Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states , the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women , and the European Social Charter .

3. Antiracist Policy

The Code discusses research and policy which identifies the need for a whole-school anti-racist policy, with a broad conceptualization of racism in all forms, in order to include all sorts of discrimination. It also provides schools and teachers with a detailed plan on how to deal with and prevent racist incidents, which they may adjust to their specific needs before they adopt it and begin its implementation. It includes definitions of basic concepts which form the theoretical background (e.g. racism, racist incident, discrimination, stereotypes, diversity, etc.), outlines the responsibilities and commitments, expected by each member of the school community, and provides the steps to be followed by schools for dealing with racist incidents in a practical rubric.

As the Code views diversity as a multidimensional phenomenon, involving various aspects of people's identities, it is contributes to the decrease of bullying and discrimination based on any form of diversity in schools (religion, ethnicity, language, appearance, disability, gender, sexual orientation, etc.).

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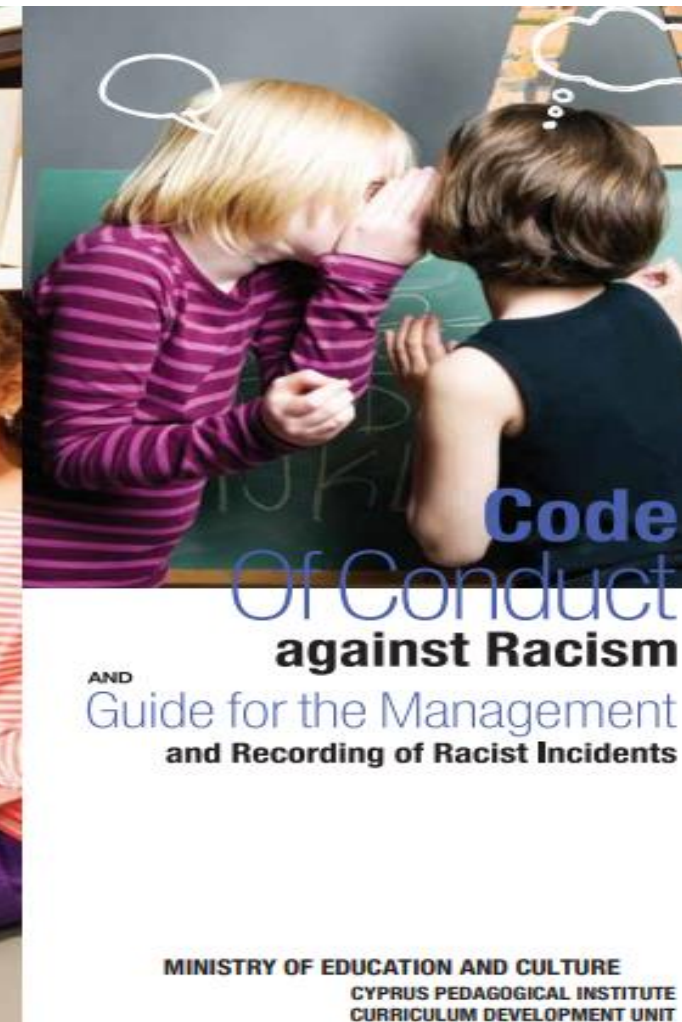
Dear parents and guardians,

Research data have demonstrated that anti-racist education and fostering equality and respect function effectively only within a context where racist incidents are identified and dealt with without exceptions. The clear implementation of the anti-racist policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture in schools and management of racist incidents with consistency and a firm stance, help create a school environment in which each child feels well, regardless of any specificities, and where the demonization of persons involved in racist behaviours is avoided. At the same time, the implementation of an anti-racist policy can contribute towards fostering a culture of peace, non-violence and social justice in Cyprus.

Within this context, our school implements the anti-racist policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture "Code of Conduct against Racism & Guide for the Management and Recording of Racist Incidents".

The Code and the Guide aim at identifying any direct or indirect, deliberate or unnecessary spoken words, actions and procedures which lead to negative discrimination against specific individuals, based on their diversity, and taking active measures to prevent and address such negative discrimination, as well as for developing an ant-racist culture.

Since the school environment is characterized by multiple forms of heterogeneity, in terms of appearance, ethnicity, disability, community, gender, sexual orientation, language, age, socio-economic status, residence status in the country, etc., it is important to ensure that all students enjoy an environment of security, tolerance, respect for diversity, non-discrimination and equality, in which they can fully enjoy the educational opportunities provided to them.

Any manifestation of racist behavior must be identified, recognized and dealt with promptly and decisively. Otherwise, victims shall be hurt, not only as individuals

The Code and the Guide are posted on the Pedagogical Institute website (Antiracist Policy icon) www.pi.ac.cy

Code Of Conduct against Racism

AND

Guide for the Management and Recording of Racist Incidents

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
CYPRUS PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT

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but also as members of the minority they belong to, while at the same time there shall be a serious impact on the entire school community.

Racist incident: any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person (MacPherson, 1999). Typically, racist incidents have the purpose or effect of marginalization, exclusion, or discrimination against individuals and groups of individuals because of their diversity. It has the effect of influencing and cultivating an environment of hostility towards all persons who share these characteristics. Consequently, any such incident seriously harms not only the person who accepts it, but also the broader community, as well as society in general.

Schools must report any such incidents occurring within their premises. Not only this is not a sign of weakness but, on the contrary, it declares their determination to protect the school community and the rights of its members. Besides, addressing the incidents is being managed primarily in pedagogical terms and aims at changing behaviors without necessarily resorting to punitive measures.

The penalties proposed in the Guide shall apply within the context of the Regulations on the Operation of Public Schools of Primary / Secondary Education and may include completion of a reflection form, observation, written reprimand, informing the family, compulsory community service for the benefit of the school community, compensation for the damage caused to property of others or the school, discussions with the children involved and their families in separate and joint meetings, disqualification from attending events and sports within the school and in other school activities (for primary education) or expulsion for a few hours or days (for Secondary and Secondary Technical Education).

We **request your assistance** to work together with us, in order to urge and encourage any person who believes that he/ she was or continues to be the victim of racist behavior or was a witness to such a behavior, **to report the incident it as soon as possible,** without any fear, to a teacher or to the officer in charge/ or the teacher who has been assigned to implement the Code and the Guide at the School. We call upon the families of the students of our school, to support your children in their commitments under the Code and Guide to:

- **respect** the personality, freedom and dignity of children, teachers, parents and other people inside and outside the school;
- **be informed** about their rights and obligations in relation to racism and discrimination;
- **recognize** the various racist incidents and report them directly to a school teacher;
- **refuse** to engage in racist attitudes;
- **inform** people who use racist jokes, that by doing so, they can hurt some other people or groups of people;
- **include** children that may be excluded because of their diversity in groups and activities;
- **question** any stereotypes or racist perceptions they come across in their personal environment;

- **respect** national and religious symbols, not only their own but those of other people too;
- **to reflect** on their behavior and consider whether it may have racist implications for other individuals or groups.

Racism concerns each and every school, each student, teacher, the parents, and consequently, society as a whole. It is an obligation for all of us to ensure that everyone enjoys the fundamental right of education free of discrimination.

Thank you for your cooperation

For further information, please contact the School Administration

3. Code of Conduct and Report Racist Incidents

http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/files/epimorfosi/kodikas_oct16.pdf

4. Collaborations of the CPI for Citizenship, Inclusive and Antiracist Education

Collaborations of the CPI

- The MOEC and the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute collaborate with:

- Commissioner for Children's Rights
- The UNHCR Cyprus Office
- The Council of Europe on Various Projects
- NGO'S
- Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies

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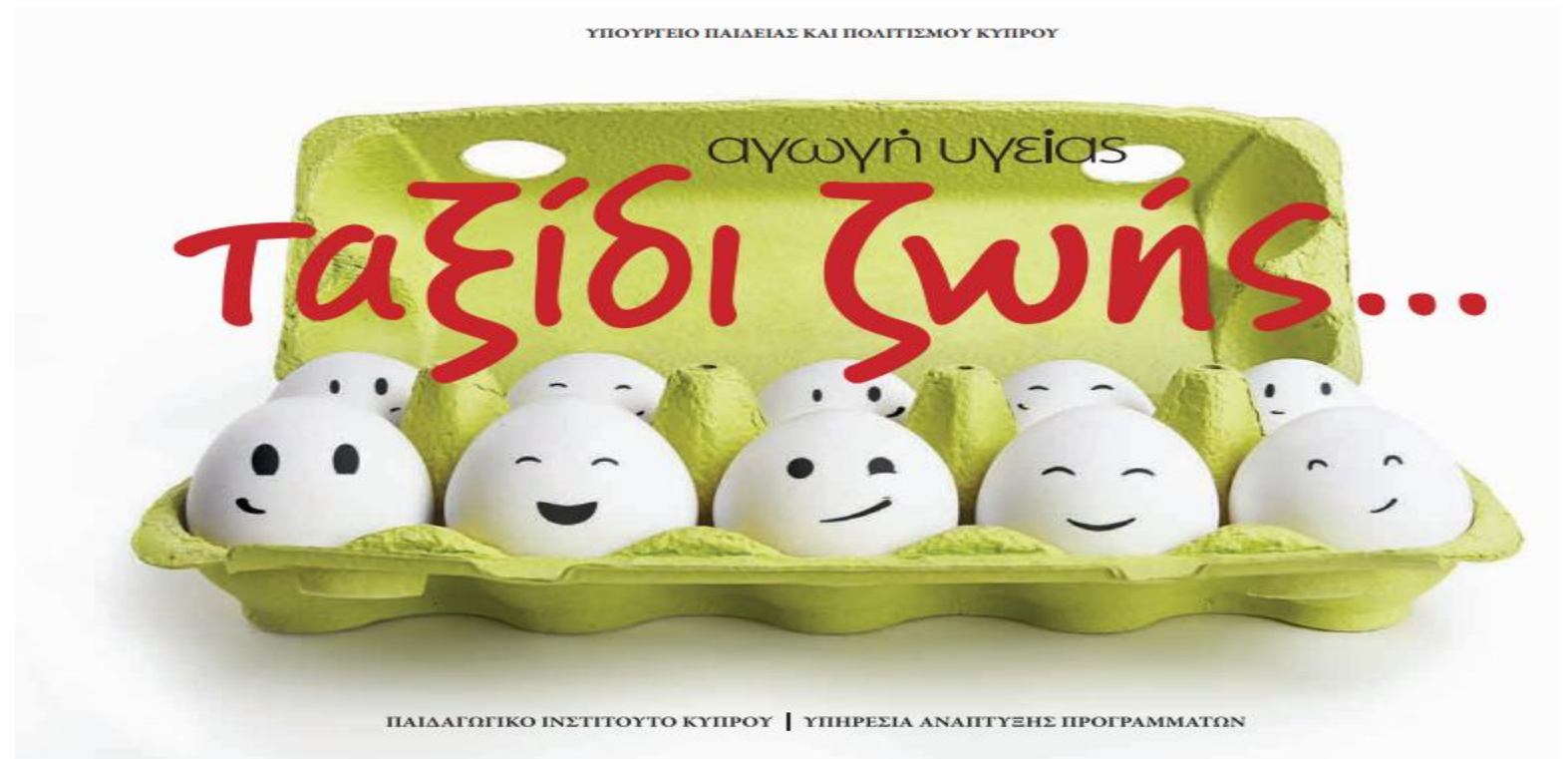# 4. Toolkits and Other Useful Material for Citizenship, Inclusive and Antiracist Education

4. Toolkits and other helpful Material

- «Ανακαλύπτοντας τον Ελέφαντα» (*Discovering The Elephant*: material and activities on stereotypes, family planning, citizenship, racism, difference, human Rights)

4. Toolkits and other helpful Material

- «Ταξίδι Ζωής» (*Life Journey*: material and activities on stereotypes, family planning, citizenship, racism, difference, human Rights, homophobia)
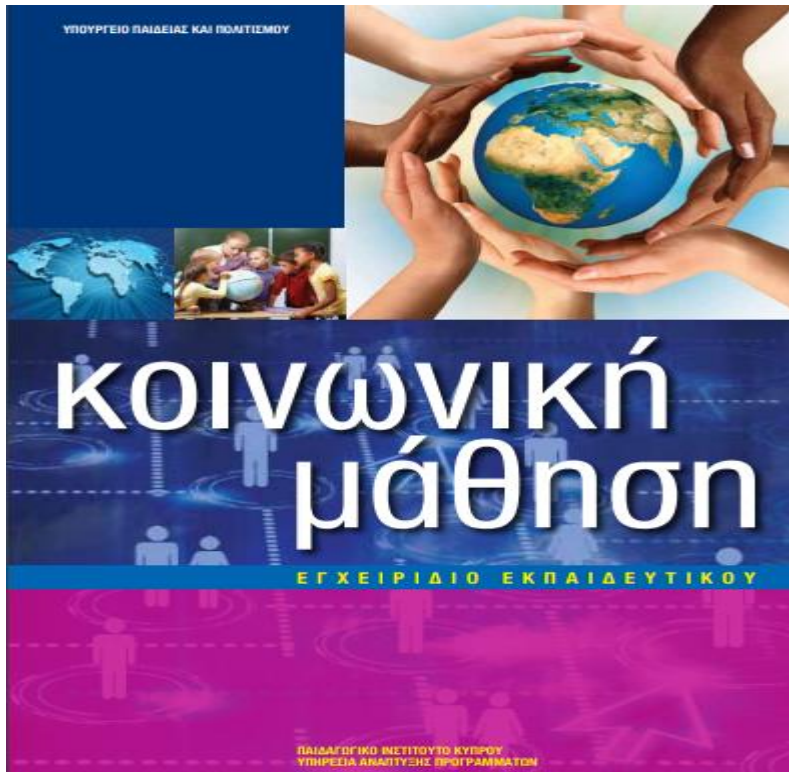
4. Toolkits and other helpful Material

- «Compasito» (material and activities on stereotypes, family planning, citizenship, racism, difference, human Rights, homophobia)

4. Toolkits and other helpful Material

- «Κοινωνική μάθηση» (*Social Learning*: material and activities on stereotypes, family planning, citizenship, racism, difference, human Rights, homophobia)

4. Other helpful Material

On the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute's Site, there are links for:

- Citizenship education:
  http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=955&Itemid=422&lang=el

- Antiracist education:
  http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1429&Itemid=448&lang=el

- Gender equality:
  http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=910&Itemid=420&lang=el

- Integration of children with migrant biography in the Cyprus educational system:
  http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1712&Itemid=463&lang=el

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