# STAKEHOLDER INVOLVMENT IN NATIONAL/LOCAL LEVEL EDUCATION POLICY MAKING: THE CASE OF CYPRUS



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# Overview

- **Brief historical account-points of interst**
- **Organisation and Structure of the Educational System - Responsibilities**
- **Educational Reform Program**
- **Educational Council: aims, role, participation**
- **Policy Making Process**
- **Councils: Primary/Secondary and Higher Education-participation, issues**

# A brief historical account

- **The Cyprus Educational System, in its present form, is the outcome of the developments that established the Republic of Cyprus**
- **In 2010 the Cyprus Educational System celebrates its 50 years**
- **In 2005 the Education Council was established**
- **The aim of the legal framework, the structure, the curriculum, the staffing and the practices is to raise the quality of education**

# Points of Interest

- **1960: Establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the Educational System**
- **1960: Free primary education**
- **1972: Free secondary education**
- **1992: University of Cyprus**
- **1997: UNESCO Evaluation Report**
- **2004: Accession to the EU**
- **2004: Report of the Committee for the Educational Reform**
- **2005: Start of the Education Reform Program**
- **2005: Set up of Education Council**
- **2007: Establishment of Private Universities**
- **2010: Finalisation of the new National Curriculum – in service training**

# Organisation and Structure of the Educational System

- <u>Centralised</u> educational administration
- Highest authority of the Ministry of Education and Culture: the Minister followed by the Permanent Secretary
- Other departments and services help the overall functioning of the system, such as the "Educational Service Commission" which is responsible for the:

  - Appointments
  - Promotions
  - Transfers
  - Secondments
  - Disciplinary matters of teaching personnel.

# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

**MINISTER**

**PERMANENT SECRETARY**

- **ADMINISTRATION**
- **PLANNING**
- **EU & INTER-NATIONAL AFFAIRS**
- **REGISTRY**
- **ACCOUNTS OFFICE**

- **PRIMARY EDUCATION**
- **SECONDARY EDUCATION**
  - **COUNSELING AND CAREER EDUCATION SERVICE**
- **TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**
- **HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION**
- **PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE**
  - **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT**
- **CENTRE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION**
- **CULTURAL SERVICES**
- **TECHNICAL SERVICES**
- **OTHER SERVICES AND UNITS**
  - **EDUCATIONAL PSYCOLOGY SERVICE**
  - **SCHOOL CLERKS UNIT**
  - **CYPRUS RESEARCH CENTRE**

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# Responsibilities of the MOEC

- Administration of education
- Enforcement of educational laws
- Preparation of educational bills
- Public education is mainly financed by the Government
- Prescription of syllabi, curricula and textbooks
- Regulation and supervision of educational institutions
- Construction of school buildings
- Maintenance and equipment: shared responsibility with local School Boards

# Educational Reform Program

- In an environment where "the only factor that remains stable is change" (Greek Philosopher Heraclitus) the Government of the Republic of Cyprus has launched in 2005 an ambitious Educational Reform Program.

- The aim is to turn into reality the vision of a better educational system that would meet pupils´ future needs and society's challenges of the 21$^{st}$ century.  Great emphasis is given on a democratic school.
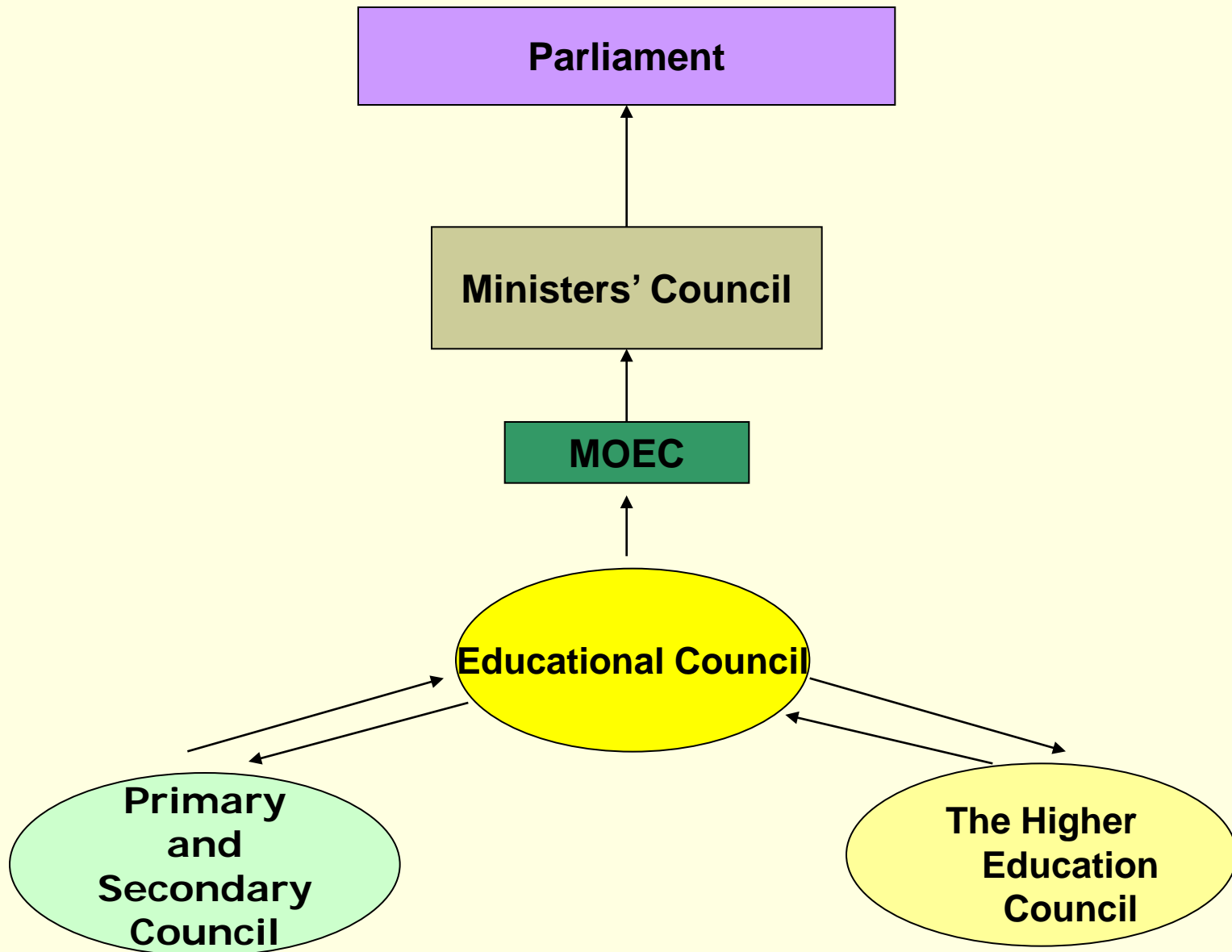
# Stakeholders Involvement in the Educational Reform Program

- Educational Reform was seen as a «public initiative» and not as a matter of the MOEC.
- Within the framework of the Reform the Government has invited dialogue among all stakeholders:
  - Political Parties
  - Teacher Unions, Parents Associations, Federation of Students
  - Governmental departments
  - Academics
  - All Cypriots
- Apart from the official councils, stakeholders and other interested parties could participate in the formulation of the reform by joining the meetings,lectures,seminars organised by the MOEC, sending letters, participating in the electronic dialogue set up on the MOEC webpage.

# Establishment of Advisory Councils

- **An innovative feature set up as part of the process for the reform of the education system**

- **Based on the Council of Ministers' Decision (No.61.602, Date 16/2/2005) titled "Establishment of framework and mechanisms for dialogue with regard to the Education Reform" 3 councils were set up:**

  - **The Cyprus Educational Council**
  - **The Primary and Secondary Education Council**
  - **The Higher Education Council**

- **The "Scientific Council" with the participation of academics, educationalists as well as technical committees formed by the MOEC contributed to the formation of education policy making**

# Policy Making Process

# Policy Making Process (National Level)

- **Discussion at the Primary and Secondary Education or Higher Council of Education Council with stakeholder participation**

- **Education Council Discussion**

- **MOEC final formulation of proposals**

- **Approval of proposals by the Council of Ministers'**

- **Approval by the Parliament** (if necessary)

- **Legislation** (if necessary)

# Education Council:
# Aims and Members

**Aims:**

- To ensure the stakeholders involvement in structured dialogue
- To build up <span style="color:red">consensus</span> to the highest possible degree
- To achieve continuity of educational policy, through extensive discussion of main issues

**Members:**

- Minister of Education and Culture (Chairman)
- Ministry's Permanent Secretary
- President of the Education Committee of the Parliament
- Representatives of the major political parties
- Permanent Secretary of the Planning Bureau

# Education Council: Its role

- **Advisory role**
- **Major priority is the enhancement of the implementation of the education reform at all levels and in every aspect of the education system**
- **Responsible for setting the priorities for dialogue**
- **Coordinates and monitors the dialogue among all the major stakeholders involved in education.**
- **Responsible for establishing technical committees or appointing experts for the preparation of reports/ studies**
- **Contributes to the formulation of educational policy, based on the work done by the technical committees and the two other councils.**

# Council of Primary and Secondary Education

**Stakeholder participation:**

- Minister of Education (Chairman) or representative
- Representatives of other Ministries of the Government
- Representatives of the major political parties
- Representatives of the Primary and Secondary Teachers' Unions
- Representatives of the Primary and Secondary Education Parents Associations
- Representatives of the Primary School and Secondary School Inspectors' Association
- Representatives of the Pancyprian Federation of Students of Secondary Education
- Other stakeholders and educationalists appointed by the Minister

# Council of Primary and Secondary Education

- **Discussion of issues related to the content of education such as:**
  - **Restructuring of the National Curriculum from pre-primary to upper secondary education, general technical and vocational education.**
  - **Reforming of school-timetable.**
  - **Unification of the whole educational system.**
  - **Promotion of All-Day Schools in Primary Education.**
- **Discussion of issues related to the administration and the appointment system of the Educational System such as:**
  - **Restructuring of the MOEC (e.g. the establishment of the Centre of Educational Research and Evaluation)**
  - **Teachers training (e.g. Pre-service teacher training program, Induction program for newly appointed teachers)**
  - **Redesign of the Teachers' Assessment System**

# Council of Higher Education

**Stakeholder participation:**

- **Minister of Education (Chairman)**
- **Permanent Secretary of the MOEC**
- **Permanent Secretary of the Planning Bureau – MOF**
- **Representatives of the major political parties**
- **Dean of the University of Cyprus**
- **President of the Governing Board of Cyprus Open University**
- **President of the Governing Board of Cyprus University of Technology**
- **Representatives of the Pancyprian Federation of Students of Higher Education**
- **Representatives of the Cyprus Scientific and Technical Chamber**
- **Representatives of the Union of Local Authorities**
- **3 Members appointed by the Council of Ministers**
- **Other stakeholders and educationalists**

# Council of Higher Education

- **Discussion of issues related to Higher Education and the formulation of proposals for policy making, such as:**
  - **Restructuring of Final examinations of Lyceums and Public University Entrance Examinations**
    - ➤ **Unified exams**
  - **Promotion of Life Long Learning through open and distance learning**
    - ➤ **Establishment of Cyprus Open University**
  - **Setting up of more public universities**
    - ➤ **3 in total**
  - **Establishment of private universities**
    - ➤ **4 in total**
  - **Establishment of the Cyprus Quality Assurance Agency**

# We should always keep in mind:

- ✓ **If you plan for one year, plant rice.**
- ✓ **If you plan for ten years, plant trees.**
- ✓ **If you plan for centuries, educate people**.

*Thank you for your attention!*