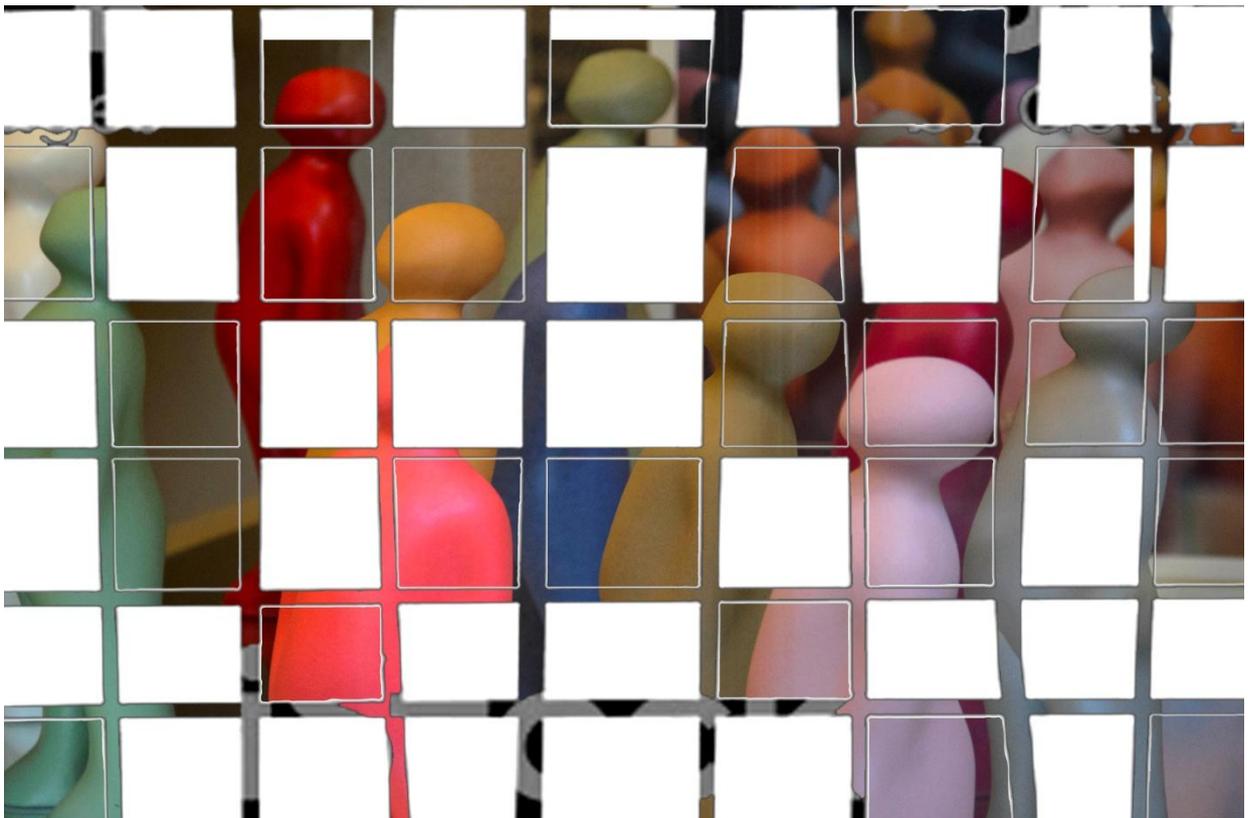


**GUIDELINES FOR  
CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION  
IN SCHOOL**

**THE INCLUSION OF  
MINORITY GROUPS**



**Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe**

**CiCe Jean Monnet Network, 2017**

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## Introduction

As demographic changes arise throughout European countries as a result of the continuing influx of refugees/migrants, the European Union has to handle the racial, cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic heterogeneity of the population, which raise questions of inclusion related to active citizenship, human rights, democracy and education. At the same time, the EU is responsible for providing refugees/migrants with the essentials for ensuring their successful inclusion and social growth (Spinthourakis & Lalor, 2011).

This guide attempts to capture the importance of inclusive education of minority students in 'school and early years' by examining both the challenges faced by European educational systems and examples of practices. These challenges and responses are reflected differently according to each country's social reality.

According to Banks (2007), in a pluralistic society ethnic, racial and cultural diversity should be reflected in all the structures of educational institutions, including the staff, rules and values, curriculum and students. Subsequently, the schools' profile is gradually changing, leading to the designation and need for the implementation of inclusive education. One way to do this is by utilizing multicultural education, which is a way of thinking and understanding the different perspectives of contemporary reality, aiming at "inclusive cultures" (Banks, 1993).

Inclusive education refers to the idea that all students are able to affect their education and learning goals and to be both active and equal parts of the shared learning environment (Idol, 1997). Sometimes, the terms "inclusion" and "integration" are used synonymously. However,

“integration” draws on practices from special education, which is characterized by group separation based on SEN status (Ainscow & Miles, 2008).

According to Gay (2002) a culturally responsible pedagogy tries to combine students’ previous experiences with cultural knowledge and different attitudes, in order to enhance the learning process. Multicultural education aims at a *transforming process* leading to the cultivation of active members of society, who are able to think critically (Banks, 1994, 2010). Banks’ (1993) five dimensional model of multicultural education, which focuses on the mitigation of prejudiced attitudes, is a prime example of this, where students have the opportunity to interact and produce their own cognitive schemas and knowledge through the maintenance of their own national cultural capital.

Given that defining terminology has the capacity to diminish misunderstanding of both the context and content, we begin this guide with the definitions of several fundamental terms.

## Terminology

Through this *Guide* a number of concepts such as *ethnic minority*, *immigrant minority*, and *inclusion* will be presented. A shared understanding of the terms *minorities*, *ethnic minorities* (or minority ethnics) and *inclusion* is important as these are key terms in this guide. A minority is a group of people who are singled out from others in the society in which they live, due to physical characteristics, religion, culture, or sexuality and receive unequal treatment compared to others. Numerical

deficiency is not a defining characteristic of minority status, as indicated by the treatment of black citizens in South Africa, under Apartheid policy (1948-1994). They were oppressed despite numerical supremacy. Their minority group status was due to their unequal legal status and subsequent lack of power. Similarly, Scots are a numerical minority in the UK but are not a minority group as their legal status and rights are equal to all UK citizens. Findings on elderly maltreatment (World Health Organisation 2011) combined with discrimination towards elderly people in the workplace, show that the elderly are a minority group, as this is a group that is not powerful. This applies to many groups of peoples in Europe.

Kahanec et al (2010) explain that the term *ethnic minorities* is complex because it is generally understood to refer to groups or people who exhibit different cultural preferences or who have different cultural and societal origins to those of the majority population. In practice, however, the term is often used to refer to individuals or groups born in, or citizens of, another country, or of racial backgrounds different to the majority population. Even if one recognises each of these an ethnic minority, the above categories remain insufficient to fully capture the complexity of certain groups, such as naturalised immigrants, per say. Perotti (1994:90) asserts that *ethnic minorities* can be distinguished from *immigrant minorities* by the presence of “political demands in the name of a specific identity”. And, while this is true of some ethnic minorities, it does not apply to the largest ethnic minority in Europe, Roma (including Travellers, Gypsies, Manouches, Ashkali and Sinti).

For Yinger (1981) an ethnic group is a one that is externally perceived to be different through a combination of factors pertaining to their language, religion, race, culture, and ancestral homeland. Dadzie (2000:9) includes

heritage, stating that ethnic minorities “refer to people who are identifiably different to the ethnic majority group because of their parents’ or grandparents’ origins”. This includes people who are born in one country and live in another, people who are born in one country but whose parents and/or grandparents were born in another, people from religious, cultural and linguistic minority communities, such as Muslims, Jews, Roma Gypsies and Travellers; “white” minorities, such as Albanians in Greece, and new arrivals, such as refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. It is this wide definition of *ethnic minorities* that we adopt in this guide.

Given that only 10-15% of countries in the world are regarded as ethnically homogeneous (Väyrynen, 1994; Connor, 1994) the citizenship of ethnic minorities in Europe today is highly significant. Banulescu-Bogdan and Fratzke (2015) categorise those seeking refuge in the EU member states into three groups:

1. Individuals making protection claims likely to be recognised by European authorities
2. Individuals fleeing instability or violence in their home countries, who may not qualify for refugee status but remain at risk for other reasons
3. Migrants who feel compelled to leave their countries for largely economic reasons.

These categories can be further refined to distinguish between individuals coming to Europe for safety and individuals coming to permanently live in Europe. More than 50% of arrivals to Europe in 2015 were from Syria, including Assyrians and Kurds, i.e. members of ethnic minorities in their home country.

Eligibility for EU citizenship varies from country to country but requires refugees/migrants to live in the EU member state for a set period of time and demonstrate a certain level of social and economic integration. This 'level' involves speaking the country's language, a lack of required proficiency in which can be a significant barrier to both integration and citizenship. The European Court of Justice (March, 2016) ruled that people with international protection status can be ordered to reside at a specific address if they are somehow unable to integrate into their host country. Those who obtain full citizenship of an EU member state can exercise full EU free movement rights.

Earlier definitions of the term *inclusion* reflected societal views of disability promoting equality in education (Hodkinson, 2011); more recent definitions consider that all pupils, regardless of their disadvantages and vulnerabilities, should become part of the school community. Inclusion is also defined as an educational reform that welcomes and supports diversity among all learners in order to eliminate the social exclusion stemming from discriminatory attitudes towards diversity (Ainscow and Miles, 2008). The fundamental principle of inclusive education is the provision of an effective education and the cultivation of a sense of belonging addressed to the majority of students with differentiated needs (ibid). Given the above, the goal must be the development of inclusive schools. Thus, "inclusive cultures" should be formed by taking into consideration the knowledge and perception of teachers, students and parents about obstacles of learning and participation that exist within the educational process (Booth and Ainscow, 2002).

## **Inclusive Education: A matter of parents' social and educational engagement**

Despite increasing diversity, minority students do not always feel included, due to their minority status (Ruggs, et., al, 2012). Parental support seems to be one of the crucial factors contributing to minority students' educational expectations and academic achievement (ibid). However, minority parents often offer inadequate support to their children (ibid), which may stem from the lack of parental inclusion in the educational system and the community itself. Minority students' educational inclusion thus seem to be linked to their families' involvement in the educational process.

Parental involvement includes their participation in school activities. In school, this can manifest as participation in school events, direct communication between parents and school personnel, and at home as assisting with homework. According to Epstein's multidimensional system, parental involvement behaviors are classified into six categories of influence (Epstein, 1995), which focus on three areas: family, school and community. Epstein's model specifically includes the following six types: parenting, school-home communication, volunteering at school, home tutoring, involvement in school decision making, community collaboration, (Epstein, 1995).

This results in an important question regarding the actual role of the family in the process of inclusion of minority students in school and early years. Specifically, minority group parents seem to face serious difficulties in engaging with their children's educational achievement and often feel detached affecting inclusive education. The following reasons may explain

the challenges that minority group parents confront regarding parental involvement.

1. Teachers' xenophobia and prejudice may stem from cultural and social differences among parents of minority children, thus obstructing parental involvement. Specifically, stereotypes affect the collaboration between school and parents, as teachers believe that minority parents do not value education and have low educational expectations, doubting their capability to get involved in the educational process.
2. Minority group parents' differentiated cultural and social attitudes. On the one hand, many minority parents believe that the school alone is responsible for their children's education and as a result they choose not to interfere with the educational process. On the other hand, some minority group parents believe that any suggestions or interference with the work of the school could be viewed as disrespectful to teacher's work, especially due to the educational system's connection with rules, language and values that minority parents may be unaware of (Gonzalez et al., 2013). Thus, minority parents' lack of knowledge regarding the structure of the national educational system benefits some forms of involvement and impairing others (Salili & Hoosain, 2010).
3. Many immigrant and refugee parents often seem to abstain from children's' educational processes and activities, such as communicating with the teacher, participating in Parent Association Bodies or even claiming their children's rights, as they have limited knowledge of the local/national language, especially in countries where schools utilizes monolingual communications (Spinthourakis

& Karakatsanis, 2012). For teachers, parents' lack formal language competency seems to present a significant obstacle in their communications, especially regarding parents from vulnerable groups, condemning them to peripheral and symbolic participation (Díez, Gatt, & Racionero, 2011).

Consequently, failure to realize the influence of cultural diversity on parent's actions and involvement but also to incorporate these features into educational strategies and programmes may result in less effective parental involvement in the educational process (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Inclusion is an ambitious agenda. While citizens and non-citizens in the member states of the Council of Europe are protected by the European Convention on Human Rights (1950), and professional educators are aware of the individual's right to education, it is essential that teachers are clear as to the entitlement of their learners to human rights education (Osler and Starkey, 2010). However, this requires recognition of migrant populations and particular ethnic minorities vulnerability to xenophobia and prejudice in contemporary Europe.

## **Xenophobia and Prejudice**

Despite widespread acceptance and promotion of equal rights, inclusion and opportunities for Roma, they are one of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable minorities in Europe. This is significant because, with an estimated European population of 10-12million, the Roma are also Europe's largest ethnic minority. 'Roma', a term commonly used in EU policy documents and discussions, encompasses diverse groups of people

that include Roma, Gypsies, Travellers, Manouches, Ashkali, Sinti, and Boyash. It is also important to note that most of the six million Roma living in the EU are EU citizens.

Examples of Roma disadvantage and discrimination exist throughout Europe. Mortality rates among Roma infants in Romania are three to four times higher than the national average (Open Society Foundations, 2012). Several EU countries, including Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Turkey and the United Kingdom, conduct forced evictions of Roma. Evidence provided by the European Roma Rights Centre and Amnesty International, demonstrating the persistent discrimination and segregation in the Hungarian education system towards Roma or Romani children has led to an investigation by the European Commission (2016). There are currently approximately 400 segregated schools in Hungary that deny Roma children access to integrated state education, and the Hungarian Government want to introduce a bill into Parliament exempting some schools from the Equal Opportunities Act, thereby sanctioning school segregation of Roma. This may explain Myers' claim that the Roma "are positioned on the outside of our society and not seen as deserving of very basic human rights" (2012:209).

The role of teachers and educators in integrated schools cannot be underestimated. In the UK, Myers (2012) emphasises the need for schools to develop their students' understanding of Roma culture, which places importance on self-employment and strong community values, and Roma history, which includes their attempted genocide by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust. These approaches are supported by the European Platform for Roma inclusion who concluded in their 2015

plenary report that integration and inclusion of Roma begins in schools, by teachers and educators who are knowledgeable about Roma history and Roma culture. This includes an understanding of the role of Roma in civil society, and the recognition that anti-Gypsyism is a distinctive form of discrimination.

Bhopal (2004) highlighted that Roma students are treated less equitably in UK schools because of school policies and practices. This suggests that schools must conduct an introspective analysis of their practices and consider constructing policies and practices that promote inclusion of Roma students. Bhopal and Myers (2009) identify the following school approaches as models of good practice:

- The establishment of one or more services such as the Traveller Education Service, which determines lines of communication between Roma families and schools
- The development and maintenance of links with the above service
- Senior staff building relationships with Roma families
- Recognition of Roma cultural heritage
- Respectful treatment of Roma family practices (e.g. employment)
- Recognition that fears of bullying and racism are often well founded.
- Employing Roma role models in student peer groups.

These practices undoubtedly present many challenges. However, schools must demonstrate their valuation of cultural diversity by ensuring all their students feel they have an equal contribution to make in the school community.

## Culture and Religion

Issues of inclusion can relate to the role played by culture and religion. The modern world is comprised of diverse groups of people with different religions, beliefs, norms, and traditions. Religious education can play an important role in promoting tolerance among people of different faiths. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (The United Nations 1948), Article 18, and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (European Union), Article 10, wherein:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or in private, to manifest religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance; and,
2. The right to conscientious objection is recognised, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

The above begets the question of how religion factors into a guide dealing with the inclusion of minorities? How and to what extent are schools able to ensure that religion does not become a barrier to participation? One way is to use the religious diversity inherent in multicultural societies and schools as a “fertile soil” for the development of differing dimensions of intercultural education (Education Scotland, 2013: 24). However, sometimes religion seems to be an obstacle towards intercultural and inclusive education. Examples from Greece, Lithuania, Scotland and FYRO Macedonia can provide a field of observation on how differentiated

teaching of religious education and its implications on issues of inclusion may have on multicultural societies.

## **GREECE**

The Greek education system includes obligatory Religious education throughout Primary and Secondary Education (Law 1566/85). It seeks to cultivate religious conscience; however, the religion curriculum and textbooks focus more on an Eastern Orthodox interpretation of the Christian faith and social issues and in secondary school bringing in the study of other religions. Students participate in religious assemblies (prayer) every morning before the beginning of class. These practices present challenges to schools in a multicultural Greece and are often seen as creating an unfavorable environment for inclusion of religious minorities. The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs though, guarantees non-Eastern Orthodox or atheists' students the right to be excused from obligatory religious education and all the above practices for reasons of religious conscience. According to the Law 1566/1985 (A' 167) of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, schools' Principals and Teachers' Association are responsible for including these students in different teaching subjects such as research work or projects. Neither parents nor students are obliged to disclose their religion, as they have the right to keep personal beliefs private.

Concerning religious issues, the Orthodox Church seems to want to operate as a homogenizing and unifying force, theoretically affecting the process of ethnic and religious minorities' inclusion. Ultimately, however, while there are instances where this is the case, the Church of Greece has also shown a resistance to diversity, challenging both

the inclusion of minorities and social cohesion (Molokotos-Liederman, 2003).

## **SCOTLAND**

Through the Education laws and their amendments, Religious education is available but is not compulsory in Scottish state-funded schools. As in other parts of the United Kingdom, religious education in Scotland tends to be interpretive. As outlined in the Education Scotland (2013: 28), religious education in Scottish Roman Catholic schools promotes learning and teaching experiences that, among other things, “encourage children and young people to probe the basis of different beliefs within an ethos of inclusion and respect”. Within the parameters of religious and moral education, there are principles and practices that highlight “developing awareness and appreciation of the value of each individual in a diverse society through religious and moral education engender[ing] responsible attitudes to other people and [that] will assist in counteracting prejudice and intolerance as children ... [this thus] consider[s] issues such as sectarianism and discrimination” (ibid: 29). Whereas according the Religious Education in a Multicultural Society (REMC) project, in non-religious schools, religious and moral education are seen as a means of promoting inclusiveness and world religions (Riddell, 2009, p. 1).

## **LITHUANIA**

According to Liutkus (2016, n.p.), “The Lithuanian Constitution [adopted in 1992] ... accords ethnic communities the right to administer their affairs, including cultural, educational and charitable

organisations and mutual assistance. It promises state support for ethnic communities and gives the right to citizens who belong to ethnic communities to foster their language, culture and customs.” Specific minority rights were established by the Citizenship Law (1989 later amended in 1991) and thereby recognized, with Lithuania becoming the first Central and East Europe nation to enact a law on national minorities. It also certifies that every citizen has the freedom of religious choice, whereas the Law of Education provides for the choice of religious studies without “infringement of his or her religious orientation” (Pranevičienė & Margevičiūtė, 2012:448). Lithuania ensures religious education only under religious education programmes approved by the state but which “allow for loose interpretation” (ibid: 455).

### **FYRO Macedonia**

According to Mirascieva, Petrovski, & Gjorgjeva, (2011), Religious education in FYROM is introduced in primary schools within the subject Ethics in religion as an optional subject including ethics and basic ethical concepts in different religions (such as Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Catholicism, Judaism, Evangelical). The basic goal of the subject of Ethics is to acquaint students with the different religious affiliations represented in the community and promote capabilities of respect, mutual understanding and dialogue among all students.

Students who select the subject of Ethics in religions, with parental consent, are able to acquire knowledge of ethics founded on Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Catholic and Evangelical - Methodist teachings, they can cultivate sentiments of critical thinking

and moral behavior and are encouraged to respect human relations among people. As a result, it has been argued that FYRO Macedonia is able to embrace religious diversity and actually move forward to the implementation of inclusive education (Mirascieva, Petrovski, & Gjorgjeva, 2011).

Most observers can agree that religious education can promote not only tolerance but ultimately inclusion, if used appropriately. However, overlooking the role that religion and religious education can play with regard to the subject of inclusion can sometimes lead to phenomena such as exclusion and racism. Knowing about and working with, diverse religions, can lead to mutual understanding and inter-religious dialogue among groups of children.

## **The Case of Inclusive Education Policies and Practices in the FYRO Macedonia**

### **General legal framework related to rights for education**

The Macedonian Constitution and the general legal framework guarantee equal access to education for all of its citizens, in accordance with international law and related conventions. The country is signatory to all important international declarations with respect to human rights, children's rights and rights to education. They are translated into the domestic legislation, and strategic documents and programmes. In this context, the *Law on Prevention of, and Protection Against Discrimination* (Official Gazette of RM, 2010) legally provides for the prevention of, and protection against discrimination, and the exercise of those rights

guaranteed by the Constitution. Concurrently, it prohibits direct or indirect discrimination based on sex, race, colour, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnic origin, language, nationality, social background, religious beliefs, other types of beliefs, education, political affiliation, personal or social status, mental and physical impediment, age, family or marital status, property status, health condition or any other basis that is prohibited by law or international agreement. Articles of international conventions regarding children's rights to education are translated into the *Law on Primary Education* (Official Gazette of RM, 2008) and *Law on Secondary Education* (Official Gazette of RM, 2002), which systematically regulate education at these levels.

In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) adopted the *National Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion (Revised) 2010-2020* (MLSP, 2010), with a special chapter on the importance of education. The strategic objective of this adoption is to provide full inclusion of students into primary education, full inclusion in secondary education, to raise the literacy level of the whole population, to facilitate education for the vulnerable groups, to adapt the educational system to the needs of the labour market, and to strengthen the market potentials for engaging workers at all levels, in order to improve social inclusion.

Among other strategic documents, the Government (together with the MLSP) outlined the *National Strategy for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia* (MLSP, 2005), placing special attention on the improvement of Roma education, in an attempt to raise Roma children entry to primary education rate to 100% in the period following its ratification. MLSP also adopted the *National Strategy for equalizing the rights of persons with invalidity*

*(revised) 2010-2018*, whose central focus is the improvement of the education and inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

### **Challenges for implementation of the inclusive educational policies into inclusive educational practices**

Although general regulation provides solid framework for equal access to quality education to all, actual implementation into educational practices is faced with important challenges. Main challenges are due to the following factors:

- Relevant legislation is not harmonized or is understated.
- Inclusive education related goals are marginalized due to contemporary issues considered to be “higher” political priorities.
- The meaning and importance of inclusive education is not adequately understood.
- Teachers and school staff are insufficiently prepared for inclusive education.

Such challenges and gaps need to be considered and faced by educational authorities. These barriers regularly lead to vulnerable group members’ educational exclusion (Ombudsman, 2013, 2014; Spasovski, 2011). In addition, although de jure segregation is forbidden, other forms of segregation remain a possibility. Some de facto exist and, by virtue of doing so, jeopardize the many children’s quality of education (Spasovski, 2015).

*Inclusive education*, its meaning and principles, are poorly understood in all educational instances. Education-related stakeholders could be satisfied

just having children enrolled or registered as students in schools, regardless of how regularly they attend the school or the quality of their education. The terms “special education needs” and “disabilities” are often used interchangeably; their meanings mixed. Such misunderstandings and the lack of a systematic approach to the students in need of additional learning support can have many consequences. One such example can be found in the case of underachieving students placed in special educational needs groups due to their disadvantaged socio-economic conditions, who are often wrongly transferred to special education schools and classes established for students with disabilities (Ombudsman, 2013, 2014). At the same time, many children with disabilities are not identified by the authorities and remain, thus, excluded from the educational system.

Another of the most important challenges for implementation of inclusive education is to provide appropriate pre-service and in-service training to teachers and expert staff in schools. For now, there is no defined and systematic preparation of teachers for diversity, or teaching about diversity. Preparedness for diversity (or teaching about diversity) is not among the requirements in the national competence framework for teachers, nor are there national standards or guidelines regarding preparing teachers to deal with diversity.

Collectively the Roma community is extremely disadvantaged. It faces limited access to pre-school education, low quality primary and secondary education, the overrepresentation of Roma students in special schools, and salient segregation between Roma and non-Roma in schools.

Education-related laws provide children from all the larger ethnic communities the opportunity to learn in their native tongue, under certain

circumstances and conditions<sup>1</sup>. Education is realized in the Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian languages. Also, the language and the culture of the representatives of other ethnic communities (Roma, Bosniaks and Vlachs) could be learnt as an elective subject. The lack, however, of qualified teachers and educational materials in these minority languages challenges the implementation of native tongue education. UNICEF found that while the ratio of Macedonian pupils to Macedonian teachers is 14.5 to 1, and the ratio of Albanian pupils to Albanian teachers is 19.7 to 1, Turkish pupils have a ratio of 29.8 to each teacher, and the Roma have 1 teacher for each 524.5 pupils (UNICEF, 2008).

### **The role of language in inclusion of ethnic minorities/refugees**

The concept of linguistic diversity, usually defined in terms of national boundaries, confronts policy makers in the sphere of education with difficult decisions regarding languages of schooling<sup>2</sup>. States adopt different models to address the issue of language of instruction and curricula at all levels of formal education, ranging from a full implementation of the right to learn in one's mother tongue, to providing education in only one, official state language, which usually coincides with the language of the ethnic majority.

Teachers work within accepted policy frames and are expected to harmonize their teaching with the objectives and goals promoted in

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<sup>1</sup> In municipalities where ethnic community constitute more than 20% of the population

<sup>2</sup> At the same time, there are strong educational arguments in support of mother tongue instruction (Cummins, 2000; Baker, 2000; Bender et al., 2005), and counter-arguments suggesting that an attentive balance also needs to be made between providing the right to learn in mother tongue and enabling students to use the language of the majority through education (UNESCO, 2003).

educational policy documents. They are frequently faced with demanding situations when trying to find ways to provide opportunities for children from non-majority linguistic backgrounds to fully realize their potentials. These challenges become even more complex in contexts where different ethnic communities (typically coinciding with different languages) experience a high level of mistrust and social distance, and protracted ethnic or religious conflict. An even more challenging situation where language diversity acts as a barrier to inclusion is created by the pressing need to integrate large communities of refugee children who are often at risk of being perceived as a "problem" or discriminated against and harassed (Dryden-Peterson, 2012).

It may be assumed that the opportunity to study in one's mother tongue is a fundamental right, which ensures the preservation of one's ethnic/cultural identity and sense of belonging and leads towards improving educational quality. As a result, some states implement a system which *fully provides education for minorities in their mother tongue as a language of instruction*. In this arrangement, students from different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds attend classes divided according to the language of instruction and have teachers whose ethnic background coincides with their own. This division along language lines that coincides with students' ethnicity continuously prevents inter-ethnic interaction and deepens inter-ethnic distance (e.g. Petroska-Beshka et al., 2009). Furthermore, lack of proficiency in the majority population language contributes towards minority isolation rather than their social integration. This is especially true in cases where the majority population's language coincides with the nation's official language. Research in an international context suggests that such divisions in education can have a detrimental impact on the individual level (i.e. students from the minority group not being able to

integrate into the wider community, where the language of the majority group prevails), social cohesion (e.g. Gallagher, 2010; Barbiery, Vrgova & Bliznakovski, 2013), and could subsequently replicate themselves in the other domains within broader society (Smith, 2010).

At the other end of the educational language model continuum are those states that implement *schooling exclusively in the language of the majority group*. More often than not, children from minority groups are not given opportunities to learn about the culture of their own ethnic group or to study any of the subjects by using their mother tongue. Learning in a language other than one's first, creates both the challenge of learning the second language and at the same time acquiring new knowledge contained in that language. These difficulties could be also exacerbated by educational vulnerabilities such as low literacy rates in the family and/or the other vulnerabilities that stem from belonging in a community with minority, refugee or immigrant status.

There are at least seven different organizational models (Garcia, 2005). Regardless of which one of these strategies is implemented, strong consideration must be given to the approach to teaching and learning regarding the manner in which identity factors are properly addressed or considered. A review of the relevant research suggests that the following principles and/or activities are significantly important:

### ***Appreciation of different languages***

When equal use of all languages cannot be implemented within the given model, it is important to acknowledge equality whenever possible on, at least, a symbolic level. It could be done by providing all students (including

those belonging to the majority group) with opportunities to learn the language(s) of the majority. This reduces the actual or perceived asymmetry in power between different ethnic/cultural groups when they speak different mother languages and sends a clear message that everybody's culture is valued in the same way.

***Providing contact among students from different language/ethnic groups that requires cooperation***

Teachers must make the best efforts possible to create as many opportunities as they can to bring children from different backgrounds together (Hughes & Donnelly, 2006). In school systems where students are separated in different language groups, it is very helpful to organize joint extracurricular activities (sport events, festivals etc.) where students from different backgrounds are given tasks that have common goals and require cooperation for its achievement.

***Implementing culturally sensitive and human rights based contents***

There are subjects or part of curricula, like citizenship education, history or social studies that usually convey implicit or explicit messages about the position of the different ethnic groups in the society that directly inculcate attitudes towards citizenship, multiculturalism, equity or values and concepts contrary to those. There are arguments that citizenship education oriented towards human rights and diversity, as opposed to national unity, promotes greater development of trust among different ethnic/cultural/religious groups (O'Connor, 2008; Magill, 2010).

***Providing support from parents and authorities***

Support from parents is particularly beneficial. Parents should be involved in joint activities and informed about their advantages, based on documented evidence of the important role they play in such programmes' sustainability (see McGlynn, 2009). This is especially important when children study in a "two schools under the same roof" model, because many indicators show that their parents are the most anxious for their children's safety (UNICEF, 2008).

## **The Case of Inclusive Education Policies and Practices in Greece**

### **Language Policy in Greece**

Migrant movements and EU policies have also affected the educational practices applied in Greek Classrooms as for language teaching. Officially, the European Commission and the Council of Europe promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism, as every citizen should be able to speak two foreign languages in addition to their native tongue (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). From a practical standpoint, educational disadvantage with respect to religious, linguistic, indigenous and ethnic minorities has been dealt with in various manners the last few decades (Palaiologou, 2012). These approaches can be largely broken down into two time periods:

1. The decade of the 1980s until the mid-1990s: Tutorial and Reception Classes were established according to relevant Presidential Decrees and later with the Law 2413/1996 (Palaiologou 2004).

2. From 1997 until 2010: The application of Law 2413/96, for the operation of Tutorial and Reception Classes according to the Presidential Decree in 1999. Also, the implementation of community funding programmes on Intercultural education which were appointed to Greek Universities.

Educational policies dealing with multiculturalism in Greek schools applied in the early 1980s, involved the establishment of Reception and Support (or Tutorial) classes in mainstream schools (Law 1404/1983). Greek was taught as the dominant language, aiming for the linguistic assimilation of immigrant students through intensive teaching of the Greek language and by ignoring their linguistic and cultural background (Damanakis, 1997; Dimakos & Tasiopoulou, 2003). Reception classes were 'parallel' to regular classes, offering five-to-ten hours of instruction in the Greek language per week. The number of teaching hours offered differed depending on the number of years students had lived in Greece, the number of years of remedial instruction they had followed and their linguistic competency in the Greek language (Dimakos and Tasiopoulou 2003; Palaiologou, 2012). Support classes provided tutoring courses (three to ten hours per week) at the end of the ordinary school hours for minority students who had not studied in Reception Classes and faced language difficulties or students who had received these support measures but continued to have difficulties in regular classes (Dimitrakopoulos, 2004; Palaiologou, 2012).

In the late 1990s, Law 2413/96 entitled "Greek Education Abroad, Intercultural Education and Other Provisions", was implemented resulting in the establishment of 26 "intercultural" schools across Greece (Palaiologou, 2012). Intercultural Education Schools adopted the curriculum of the traditional state schools, while concurrently managing to

meet the educational, social and cultural needs of minority and repatriated students (Spinthourakis et al., 2008). The Reception Class was modified and divided into two cycles/levels, which were integrated into the ordinary school curriculum. In these classes, Greek language was planned to be taught as a second language.

- In Reception Class I, students who are scheduled to enter the Greek education system take an intensive course to learn Greek as a second language. Its duration is one academic year.
- In Reception Class II, there is the implementation of a short internal and external linguistic and learning support course that takes place in ordinary classes with parallel language teaching support. This type of course lasts up to two academic years, following the completion of Reception Class I, (Spinthourakis et al., 2008).

Although the intercultural schools had the potential to contribute to the linguistic and cultural inclusion of minority students to the educational process, this ambitious project did not succeed. Despite the fact that many minority students enrolled in these schools, native students did not choose intercultural schools due to their perception that they offered limited potential (Mitakidou, Tressou, & Daniilidou, 2007). As a result, intercultural schools proved unable to enhance students' awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity (Damanakis, 1997; Mitakidou & Daniilidou, 2007; Mitakidou et al., 2007), and ended up functioning more so as ghettos for migrant pupils than real intercultural learning places integrating both migrant and native pupils (Nikolaou, 2000). Thus, the Greek educational system has been criticized as being both monolingual and mono-cultural (Frangoudaki & Dragonas, 1997; Katsikas & Politou, 1999), as the

responsibility of teaching and learning immigrants' languages remains at the immigrant groups' discretion (Kiliari, 2005).

As a member of the EU, Greece does recognize the importance of linguistic diversity and multilingualism, evidenced by its inclusion of three languages in the current general education school language curricula: English (obligatory), German and French (where one of the two is obligatory, to be selected at student's discretion). The exclusion of migrant languages from the state curriculum, however, may result in the reproduction of the language hierarchies maintained in EU (Dendrinou & Mitsikopoulou, 2004). Ultimately, immigrant children's bilingualism remains largely "invisible" in education (Gkaintartzi & Tsokalidou, 2011; Tsokalidou, 2005).

Reforms are required, at both the ideological and socio-economic levels, for the establishment of the multilingual state school in Greece. These must be considered, formulated and carried out within a context aware of both European reality and that of the ongoing humanitarian, economic and refugee crisis (Kiliari, 2009). The integration and promotion of migrant language in the Greek educational system is a crucial issue, which must be dealt with, since immigrant students still constitute a large percentage of the Greek school population, which can only be expected to grow, for the foreseeable future.

### **Inclusive educational practices in Greece**

Inclusive Education is also promoted through extracurricular structures and activities in Greece. Mobile School and the Guide to Anti-Racist Education serve as examples of good practice in Greece, embrace diversity,

and are committed to supporting intercultural activities and protecting human rights through inclusive policies and practices.

The Greek educational system has had a primarily ethnocentric orientation, however with its increasingly diverse student profile; efforts have been made to address the challenge. This has included changes to the national curriculum in 2003 specifically referencing multiculturalism and diversity. Earlier efforts included the development of the 1997 Guide to Anti-Racist Education (the European Year against Racism) consisting of a manual introducing teachers to the phenomenon of racism and its characteristics, allowing them to both identify racist incidents and making them capable of dealing with them. The Guide to Anti-Racist Education also includes anti-racist strategies and practices that teachers can apply within the context of the curricular activities (Tsiakalos, 1997).

Mobile School NPO, a Belgian organization which became active in Greece on 2009, aims at helping excluded homeless children. The Mobile's School motto is 'If a child cannot come to school, we will bring the school to the child'. Its employees mobilize in the streets, organizing street educational activities empowered by the abilities, talents and the identities of the culturally differentiated students who participate in them. Mobile School has developed initiatives focusing on the school and social inclusion for children, youth and teachers, which can be included into the school curriculum (<https://www.mobileschool.org/en>).

### **Enhancement of Parental Involvement**

As we mentioned previously, parental involvement is another crucial part of inclusive education. Hence, it is important to promote participation of all school stakeholders (students, teachers and parents) in the local

community and policies encouraging parent-community-school partnerships applied (Spinthourakis & Karakatsanis, 2012). These partnerships primarily require teachers to show sensitivity to the cultural values that define parents' educational priorities and to encourage parents to actively become an integral part of school improvement efforts (Xu, & Filler, 2008).

According to research findings, the following interventions aim at cultivating the participation among school stakeholders and strengthening feelings of trust among parents and school:

- Programmes for teaching the national language to the foreign-born parents: The first and most important action for promoting parental involvement and subsequently minority students' inclusion is to organize adult classes teaching them the national language as a second or foreign language. In Greece, this pilot programme, applied in the 132<sup>nd</sup> Public Primary School of Grava, showed that teaching Greek accelerated the participation of foreign born parents in the school affairs and the creation of a harmonious school environment (Spinthourakis & Karakatsanis, 2012).
- Interactive Groups: This project requires the reallocation of human resources or the participation of community members such as students' relatives and friends, in order to increase learning interaction between students and adults (Valls, & Kyriakides, 2013). Interactive groups promote dialogue and cooperation in class, as students and adults coexist in a learning environment, forming a heterogeneous group in terms of ability level, gender, culture, language, and ethnicity. This mixture provides knowledge and

educational resources to students with different ability levels and backgrounds (Gonzalez et al., 2013).

A range of adult volunteers and collaborators including family members, community members, and students can contribute to eliminate stereotypes and improve cohesion and learning (Gonzalez et al., 2013). Interactive Groups could accelerate the pace of learning, offering access to essential resources for all students, resulting in the educational success of these children, which actually is a community issue (Valls, & Kyriakides, 2013).

## Conclusion

### ***School, Family and Community cooperation towards educational inclusion and achievement***

This guide has sought to examine issues revolving around the inclusion of minority groups in school and early years. Family-School relations and parental engagement appears to play prominent roles in the educational process, contributing to the reduction of demographic gaps in achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009), while also helping the dropout prevention (Gonzalez et al., 2013). To this end, communication between families and schools may enhance not only academic achievement (Delgado & Gaitan, 1994) but social adjustment (Gonzalez et al., 2013), while concurrently improving community support (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Taken together, the combination of these factors has the potential to result in inclusion.

Descriptions of good practices that have been found to work and are related to inclusion of minority groups in school and early years can be found in a variety of sources. One such example may be found in NESET II's

(Herzog-Punzenberger & Kepler, 2016) examples of good practice for the successful integration of migrant children which, although not exclusive to Europe remain highly contextually adaptable. Another is the description of programmes offered via the EPASI project (Charting Educational Policies to Address Social Inequalities in Europe)<sup>3</sup>. It contains analysis policies, thematic reports and case studies for fourteen European countries targeting “disadvantage” in particular groups, which include minority groups in school and early years.

In light of the conditions discussed above, cooperation between all school stakeholders (students, teachers, parents and communities) and policy makers can play a decisive role in promoting innovative inclusion practices. Intercultural dialogue coupled with collaboration is called for. The implementation of methodological approaches that bolster diversity sensitization at all levels and the provision for an educational policy development framework that is addressed to all, including the culturally different, can lead to the sought-after inclusion of minority groups in school and early years.

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The CiCe Jean Monnet Network is a consortium of universities with interest in how and what people learn about their society, a partnership that grew out of the CiCe Erasmus Academic Network, which had been in existence in various forms since 1998 with the support of the European Commission. Closely related to the Network is the CiCe Association, an independent body of individuals and institutions with academic and practical focus on citizenship education and identity formation in young people in Europe and the world.

The CiCe Jean Monnet network links 25 institutions in network from 17 states that are involved in training education professionals (teachers, social pedagogues, early childhood workers, youth workers etc) and concerned with citizenship education and the development of identities in young people.

Partners involved in the Network:

London Metropolitan University, UK (Coordinating university)

VIVES – Catholic University College, Belgium

Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Education, CZ

University of Tartu, Estonia

University of Helsinki, Finland

Ss Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, FYROM

University of Augsburg, Germany

University of the Peloponnes, Greece

University of Patras, Greece

Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary

Latvian University, Latvia

Rezekne Higher Education Institution, Latvia

Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy, Latvia

Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania

University of Warmia and Mazury, Poland

Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências, Portugal

Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra, Escola Superior de Educação, Portugal

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