Professional capacity regarding dealing with diversity in Patras

Report of a NAOS study visit May 2015

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1. Introduction

1.1 NAOS: background and goals

Countries face challenges in catering for the diverse needs of migrant students and narrowing the gaps in education outcomes between native students and immigrant students. (Inter)national evidence (OECD 2010 Reviews of Migrant Education) suggest that strategies to raise education outcomes for migrant students need to focus on school level and system level, such as:

• preparing school leaders and teachers to meet the needs of diverse student groups;

• increasing student opportunity to learn language (mother tongue as well as language of instruction) in regular school lessons;

• encouraging schools to build capacity in the area of dealing with diversity;

• making collaboration between school and community more effective.

The central topic in NAOS is professional capacity concerning dealing with diversity related to migration (in all its different forms). Professional capacity includes innovative forms of cooperation between educational professionals and other professionals dealing with children. Bender Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton and Luppescu (2006) who view professional capacity as one of the fundamentals of school improvement define it as follows:

"Professional capacity encompasses the quality of the faculty and staff recruited and maintained in a school, their base beliefs and values about responsibility for change, the quality of ongoing professional development focused on local improvement efforts, and the capacity of a staff to work together as a cohesive professional community focused on the core problems of improving teaching and learning." (p. 12).

The objective of NAOS is to strengthen professional capacity in the partner countries and their respective schools. With the ultimate goal to increase educational attainment and reduce drop out and unemployment among groups of migrant children. NAOS is a star that refers to the fundament of a Greek building. By choosing this name, we emphasize the idea that professional capacity is the fundament of good quality education.

The OECD country reviews in "Closing the gap for immigrant students" (2010) shows that developing policies and curricular adaptations at the national level is not enough for closing the achievement gap between native and immigrant students. It also needs institutional changes, made within every school, including changes in school leadership, teaching methodologies and school-home co-operation. NAOS wants to

take a deeper look at what kind of institutional changes inside schools are needed by looking at the professional capacity in schools.

Naos is complementary to the SIRIUS policy network carried out from 2012 - 2014. SIRIUS has promoted and enhanced knowledge transfer among stakeholders in order to improve the education of children and youngsters from migrant background. One of the focal points in Sirius was professional capacity. The difference between the Sirius activities in this area and the Naos activities concern the specific focus on pre- and in-service modules for professional development as well as the inclusion of schools in the network.

The current project partners (see below) have been chosen on the basis of complex migration histories (Netherlands and Belgium), language instruction (Estonia and Lithuania), a variety of strategies for building professional capacity (Norway and Lithuania), economic crisis in combination with educational issues (Portugal and Greece) and new EU countries facing future immigrants and educational challenges (Croatia and Cyprus). All partners in the Naos network are centres of expertise which will yield critical, theoretical and empirical contributions to the development of knowledge and practice on professional capacity. In each of the countries, the centre of expertise will connect to a set of schools and support the Naos activities.

The Naos partners:

Name of the Organisation
Risbo B.V.
Forum za slobodu odgoja
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO
Public Policy and Management Institute
Tartu Rahvusvaheline Kool Tartu International School MTÜ
PAIDAGOGIKO INSTITOUTO KYPROU - CYPRUS PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE
University of Patras
UNIVERSITEIT ANTWERPEN
Algemeen Pedagogisch Studiecentrum
HOGSKOLEN I OSTFOLD

1.2   The study visit: content and procedure

A review of the literature (Severiens, Wolff & Van Herpen, 2014) shows that strengthening professional capacity with the aim to stimulate school success among diverse groups of migrant students asks for expertise in five content areas.

1. Urban teachers (or teachers in classrooms with diverse student populations) should first of all know about language development in classes of pupils whose first language is not the language of instruction.
2. These teachers should be competent in using pedagogic and didactic resources that support the learning of all their pupils. Diverse classes need different didactic resources and different types of instruction than homogeneous classrooms. If schools and teachers are committed to encouraging the talents of all their pupils they should have knowledge of the use of teaching materials, methods and types of instruction designed for diverse classes.
3. Urban teachers should know about social psychology issues such as stereotyping, teacher expectations and ethnic-identity development issues.
4. Urban teachers that succeed in engaging the parents of their diverse pupils as well as
5. Cooperate with community organisations on a basis of equality will further support school achievement in their urban schools.

The review by Severiens et al concludes that if schools are committed to increasing achievement among migrant groups, and closing the achievement gap, they should facilitate high levels of professional capacity in these areas of expertise.

Naos organizes ten study visits in a period of three years. The general aim of these study visits is to collect and exchange good practices between schools. These good practices concern one of the areas of expertise as described above. In this way, each area of expertise will be the topic of two separate study visits.

Each of the ten partners was asked to choose an area of expertise and indicate two schools with a good practice in this area. During the kick-off meeting the distribution of areas of expertise was made as follows:

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Organizing Partner	Visiting partner 1 (writers)	Visiting partner 2	Theme
Belgium	Netherlands	Greece	School-community relationships/parent participation
Greece	Croatia	Norway	Social psychology
Norway	Netherlands	Cyprus	Language/pedagogy/social psychology
Croatia	Portugal	Lithuania	School - community relationships
Cyprus	Belgium	Netherlands	social psychology/School - community relationships
Estonia	Greece	Belgium	Pedagogy
Lithuania	Cyprus	Estonia	Language/pedagogy
Portugal	Estonia	Netherlands	School-community relationships/pedagogy
Netherlands	Lithuania	Croatia	School-community relationships/language
Netherlands	Norway	Portugal	Pedagogy

Some partners indicated that whereas the distinction in the five areas of expertise could be made on a conceptual level, in practice many schools combine different areas and conduct activities in several areas at the same time. For example, oftentimes parent participation and school-community relationships are combined, but other combinations are also possible. In the schedule above it becomes clear how the areas of expertise are combined in each of the study visits.

Procedure

The focus during the study visits is on the good practice itself, but especially on the in-service training or professional development activity that supported the development of the good practice. Two general questions guide the study visit:

1. What does the good practice entail?

2. How were the teachers prepared for this good practice?

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In the first session of the study visit, these general questions are translated to more detailed questions that refer to the specific area(s) of expertise and are relevant given the context of the study visit. In general, a distinction is made between questions regarding the context, the goals of the good practice, the activities, the results and the professional development activities.

This more specific set of questions guides the school visits as well the reflection during the final session of the study visit. In paragraph 2.7 (as well as in the addendum) the questions that were used in the Study visit in Antwerp are phrased.

All participants take turns taking notes (observations and notes of interviews), which are shared with the partner responsible for writing the report. The writing partner analyses the notes and wrote the report according to the general questions and the basic categories (context, goals, activities, results and professional development).

1.3   Participants in the Patras study visit

The study visit started with a presentation by the organizing partner (the University of Patras) on education in Greece.

They organized and participated in the visit to two schools. The visiting partners were Croatia (Forum for Freedom) and the Netherlands (APS). In total, a group of 7 visiting participants took part in the study visit, among which were teachers, teacher educators, educational consultants and researchers, all with expertise in the area of education and migration.

1.4   Content of this report

This report will describe the second Naos study visit that took place on 27th, 28th and 29th of May in 2015. Both the introduction as well the school visits will be described in separate chapters. The report will end with some general reflective notes.

Study visit Patras

Context

Migrations, social exclusion and political context

When talking about Greek education a number of macro-economic and political factors should be taken into consideration (Spinthourakis, Karatzia-Stavlioti, Lempesi, & Papadimitriou, 2008). Looking into second half of 20th century, three extremely important events can be pointed out. One is the fall of military junta in 1974, the other one is Greek accession to European Union and third factor was the shift in migration processes – from an emigration country Greece became an immigration country. Each of these three events has had a profound effect on Greece's policies and education.

Starting from the mid-twentieth century trend of modernization and democratization of what was believed to be an anachronistic and deficient educational system began (Spinthourakis, J.A. et al 2008). Attempts of reforming educational system towards democratization had another burst after the fall of military junta in the 70s. Especially nowadays when Greece is under economical pressure, education is given special attention. Policy makers perceive education to be the main mechanism that promotes social equality, social mobility, and economic growth.

Secondly, Greece's policies, including educational policies are EU driven. Policies implemented by Greek government are derived from EU agencies, directives and treaties (Spinthourakis, et al 2008), and in some cases educational programs are EU funded. One of them was educational programme for immigrants about Greek language, culture and history done within the Odysseas project (http://www.inedivim.gr/index.php/2012-11-14-14-20-27) which was in this case jointly founded by the EU and the Greek state.

Thirdly, a significant process of structural demographic change has begun since 1990s. As Kiprianos, Balias and Passas (2003) explain, Greece did not have any experience in dealing with immigrants before becoming a reception country. Until that point in time, Greek society was homogeneous which was perceived as a positive social feature. Until then, as it is still now, Muslim minority in Western Trace was the only officially recognized minority in Greece. Recently, Greek population has become less ethnically homogeneous due to the influx of Albanians, Poles, Filipinos, Greek-Russians who came to Greece because of the breakup of Soviet Union, changes in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Additional changes happened because Greeks who had left their own country in 60s and 70s returned making a significant group of repatriates. As Skoutrou, Vratsalis and Govaris (2004) mention, more than 150 000 repatriates and more than 1 000 000 immigrants live in Greece of which 98 241 are school children.

This change in ethnical structure has forced policy makers to redefine and rethink certain aspects of Greek education. Groups that were at risk of social exclusion and whose inclusion into society was attempted to be achieved through education were economic unprivileged groups, single parent families and orphans and finally, mentally and physically "handicapped" people (Spinthourakis, J.A. et al 2008). Although this can be considered as a traditional view on groups that are on verge of social exclusion, Kassimati (1998) explains that other social groups that could be socially excluded were identified during the 1980s. Among them were repatriates, immigrants, and people with specific cultural and religious characteristics.

It is not always easy to agree on what social exclusion is and from an academic perspective, there are many views on this concept. Haisken-DeNew and Sinning (2007) describe it as a phenomenon that deals with inability to access something, not because one chose not to

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have it, but rather because it was simply beyond the reach of a person, whether due to economic, institutional or other restrictions. The concept of educational exclusion arises from the idea of social exclusion and deals with different cultural ways of life, cultural values and languages, power relations and the diversification of knowledge (Spinthourakis, et al, 2008). All of these political and socio-demographic changes have led to modifications of the Greek education system in order to make it more susceptible to groups at risk of social exclusion.

2.2.2. Features and changes of Greek education system

Despite the educational reforms that attempted to democratize Greek education system by decentralizing it, this goal was not achieved with complete success. Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs is responsible for the overall management of the education system, which makes it a centralized system and very resilient to changes. The idea of education as stated by Greek Constitution is fairly noble, aiming at moral, intellectual, professional and physical education of the Greeks, the development of national and religious awareness and the formation of free and responsible citizens.

Education in Greece is divided in four vertical levels: pre-school, primary school, secondary school of two cycles (upper and lower) and tertiary school (Spinthourakis et al, 2008). More specifically pre-primary and primary education are distinguished into general, all-day, cross-cultural, special needs, public and private. It is compulsory and all public schools are free of charge. Lower secondary education is compulsory and such schools are called *Gymnasio.* Upper secondary school, the second cycle in secondary education, consists of *Lykeio-General* and *Voc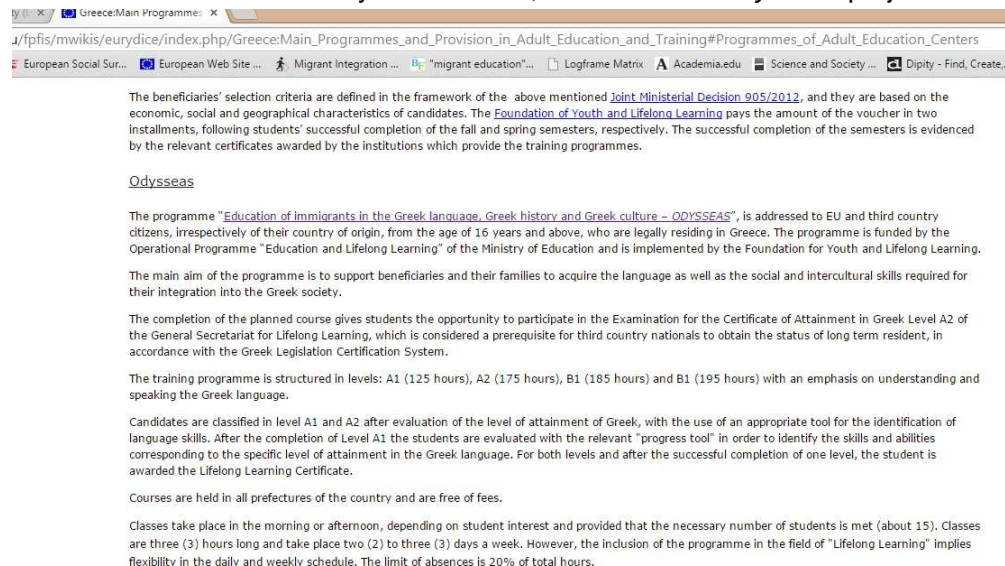ational school* which are not compulsory (Eurydice, 2015. https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Greece:Organisation_of_the_Education_System_and_of_its_Structure) Finally, higher education is composed of universities and the university level institutions known as "highest educational institutions" followed by non-university level establishments known as "higher education". (Spinthourakis, 2008). Centralized education means rigid state regulations regarding curricula, textbooks and examinations. Therefore, the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs should ensure schooling of equal quality across all regions in all primary and secondary schools. Unfortunately, it is not so, because schools in remote areas for example, have less developed infrastructure leading to reduced quality of education. (Spinthourakis, 2008). Students with migrant backgrounds can, just like any other student enter the educational system by presenting a birth certificate and a proof of residence in a Greek territory at the time of first registration. In some cases teachers have to work with repatriated students, immigrants, foreigners or ethnical and linguistic minorities. As the number of these students increases, their education becomes a growing challenge that has to be dealt with. Therefore, the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs has introduced a law that applies special projects of intercultural education (Spinthourakis et al., 2008). Teachers working in schools should take part in these projects because it helps them to educate students of migrant background. When talking about intercultural education, different terminology is used: minority, intercultural and multicultural education (IPODE, 2004). In essence they are all about the training of teachers on how to educate Muslim minority in Western Thrace,

repatriated Greeks coming from former Soviet Union and Germany, foreigners and immigrants who came to Greece in the 1990s and Roma minority -groups prone to social exclusion. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, many of the Greek policies are EU driven, so projects dealing with intercultural education are funded from EU Community Support Framework funding (Spinthourakis, J.A. et al 2008). Dimitakopoulos, (2014:19) explains that a small number of teachers have received limited and mainly theory focused training in intercultural projects funded by the 2nd Community Support Framework, a development strategy established by agreement between the European Commission and the Greek authorities.

Another approach towards successful integration is that members of these vulnerable groups receive additional education in Greek language in schools. They attend Reception Classes where Greek language is learnt intensively during a maximum period of altogether three years. Another attempt towards integration of vulnerable groups was made within the project called *Odysseas (*Eurydice, 2015

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Greece:Main_Programmes_an d_Provision_in_Adult_Education_and_Training#Programmes_of_Adult_Education_Centers) in which people older than 16 learn about the Greek language, culture and history.

Picture 1: Screenshot of Eurydice web site, section about *Odysseas* project

It is clear that within the Greek centralized educational system changes that would facilitate social inclusion of vulnerable groups have begun to happen. On one hand there are attempts to educate teachers in the field of intercultural education, and on the other hand, there are attempts to teach vulnerable groups about Greek language, culture and history. These are praiseworthy efforts, but it has to be clear that sociodemographic changes occur faster than the educational system manages to reform. In that sense there is a lot of work ahead to be done in order to prevent social exclusion and approach the ideal of inclusion.

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2.3 Choice of schools

2.4. the interview procedure – data gathering

A set of semi-structured interviews were used for gathering data in Diakopto secondary school. One interview was held with the principal and two interviews were held with teachers- one group consisted of five and the other group of six teachers.

Data in 50th Primary school Patras were gathered via semi-structured interview. Altogether four interviews were held, of which one was with schools' principal, one interview was held with five parents of the children that attend the school, and two interviews were done with teachers employed at the school. One group had six participants and the other had seven participants.

Questions administered in the interview with the principal focused on the schools' approach to diversity, schools' multicultural context, history of schools' projects in the field of social psychology, information the school gathers about students' self-perceptions and perspectives of "otherness". Additionally, the principal was asked about the schools' good practices, activities implemented in order to achieve these goals, his view on the effectiveness of the practices. Finally, the biggest emphasis was put on the preparation the school provides to the teachers in order to facilitate their work in multicultural setting. Questions administered in this interview were slightly modified in the second school, due to the specific educational context.

The sequence of the question used in teachers' interviews was similar in both visited schools. They were asked about multicultural context of their school and classrooms, and groups made within school. Similarly as in the interview with the principal, they were asked about schools' good practices. Interviewers asked the teachers to describe activities used to achieve educational goals, about the curricular framework that helps them in their work, whether they are satisfied with the result. Finally, the most important part of the interview was on the question how the teachers are prepared to work in a multicultural context, in terms of additional education and professional preparation.

Interviews with five parents were held only in 50th Primary school Patras. The topics were oriented on their expectations towards schools' practices in the field of multicultural context and their perception of the benefit of these practices.

More details about the topics of the interview can be found in the annex section of the report.

## 3.	Observations name school 1

### 3.1	Context

Diakopto is located in rural part of Greece, in regional unit Achaea and has about 2.500 inhabitants. Diakopto Junior High is attended by around 170 students of which 70 come from

Diakopto and the rest come from smaller villages nearby. About one third of the students are Albanians. According to one teacher that took part in focus groups, Albanians came to this part of Greece about 25 years ago. At first there were differences in mentality, but now when the second generation of Albanians is born and grew up in this area their mentality is the same as the Greeks. Children that attend the school grew up and are raised together so there are no ethnicity based divisions (between Greek and Albanian subgroups), or village vs. countryside divisions. In addition to this, teachers say that Albanians are well integrated supporting it by the fact that there are many interethnic friendships and a mixed social life. Additional explanations in favour of Albanian integration into Greek society are student's reactions when Albanian families decided to return to Albania due to the Greece's economic crises. In that cases children cried and some of them continued schooling in Greek schools in Albania.

When addressing language, information provided by the group of teachers indicate the difference in language acquaintance among Albanians and Greeks. For example, Albanian students don't have problems in speaking and understanding the Greek language when interacting with their classmates, although they speak Albanian at home. Albanian students have problems with writing and reading Greek language. Consequently, schoolbooks are too difficult for them to understand. Regarding Greeks, they don't learn Albanian, and teachers are not prepared for working with Albanian students. They teach the whole class, regardless of its ethnical composition. In addition to this, teachers want to get close to students, and have an open approach, but not all students are susceptive for that. The same is valid for Albanian parents who are not involved in school life because they work a lot and it is difficult for teachers to reach them. Consequently students are in some cases distant from teachers. According to the school principal, some Albanian students from this school came to Greece at about the age of 9. Their behavioural patterns are different from the Greeks, and their culture differs from the Greek students. Their socialisation and character is mostly determined by the time of their arrival, so they want to repeat what they did in schools in Albania. Some of these students did not care about lessons, they were bored, indifferent and unmotivated. Their approach to education was accepted by the school, and although school tried to make the lessons interesting, Albanian students didn't let teachers teach by interrupting them for many reasons.

Picture 2. Entrance to the Diakopto secondary school in Diakopto

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3.2   Activities and results

One of the incidents happened in school year 2014/2015 concerning football. Greek students didn't give the ball to Albanian students so an incident happened. Students divided into Albanian group of students and Greek group. An agreement of having a fight was made so group members took part in a physical conflict, of which some had been hospitalized. Principal and other teachers found out about that the other day.

The principal had undertaken a series of interviews with the group members who participated in the fight. He also talked to parents and teachers. Student's arguments about the fight were very superficial and resembled to their parents arguments. Additionally, the principal asked for the support of the psychologist, but as there is only one psychologist for several schools, he was not able to come. Therefore, the principal was advised by the psychologist to avoid the perception of fight as the fight between the nations. Finally, principal proposed to make a play in which group members that participated in the incident took part. Albanians and Greeks had to cooperate in order to make the play work. During the process of setting up the play they talked about theatre, roles, history of theatre etc. Eventually the relations between Albanians and Greeks got better and by the end of the year there had been no more incidents.

This school, just like any other in Greece can conduct extracurricular activities and making a play was one of them. Generally, extracurricular activities mean that teachers and students have to stay after school, what many of them don't want to do due to the dependence on local transportation, and not being paid for the extra work. A national policy regarding diversity in the classroom is implemented via social and political education and topics of racism and discrimination are dealt with in these subjects. Teachers, as they explained in the focus groups, teach about xenophobia and discrimination in history and/or religion. In classes they pay attention to discussions about culture and cultural traditions.

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Picture 3. Focus groups with the teachers in Diakopto secondary school

If a new student of migrant descent enters the school, there are no formal rules of how to approach him. It's about informal, personal approach mostly by talking to students. Teachers explain that Greek students don't have prejudice towards Albanian classmates, but Albanian students think that teachers and Greek students don't like them, which is, according to the teachers, not really the case. Another teacher explained the situation in a class where half of the students were Albanians, who wanted to be on the margin of the class. Sometimes racist remarks can be observed but they depend on the attitude of Greek student's family.

Racist incidents and situations such as when the group of Albanian students tended to be on the margin of the class are rare. But when they happen, teachers try to solve the issues through conversations.

3.3   Activities and goals

The school participated in several projects that each had a different goal. One of the projects the school took part in a couple of years ago was called "Odysseas".

Picture 4: Screenshot of *Odysseas* project web site implemented in Diakopto secondary school

It was about helping Albanian children improve their reading skills, and showed good results. Furthermore, the teachers in the school developed a project on anti-racism themselves. The project was developed with students and the goal was to inform students about the concept of anti-racism.

Finally, a third project teachers mentioned had been on xenophobia and prejudice. There were workshops organized where role-play was used, students had to think about their thoughts, feeling and creating empathy for others.

3.5   Professional development

In the school year 2013/2014, the principal attended a seminar on leadership and management in education units. He got a certificate, but this is not taken into consideration for advancement in Greek educational system. The main criterium for advancement is the number of years of teaching in the classroom somebody has. Therefore, in a set of criteria relevant for advancement, the highest weighted criterium is time spent in class. If somebody

has a master's degree and attended some trainings he/she receives the same number of points as somebody with PhD who has taken part in additional educations.

Moreover, teachers lack support and don't have resources to do seminars on topic of diversity. Mostly they cover this topic on their own. Although teachers would like to follow seminars about diversity, it is not possible because they are held in Athens or Thessaloniki. Since the lack of resources, they have to manage on their own.

In line with the lack of finances described above, principal as administrative leader of the school has a budget he can manage on school level but there is no budget foreseen for professional development of teachers, who are not obliged to go to professional development.

Furthermore, academic programme for becoming a teacher who teaches Greek as a second language exists, but only for primary school, not for secondary school. So additional obstacle is that they lack teachers who are trained for teaching Greek language as a second language.

4. Observations 50th Primary School Patras

4.1 Context

50th Public Primary School Patras is placed in Patras, Greece. It is located in a neighborhood whose residents are mostly of high socioeconomic status, and parents of the children that attend the school are highly educated. The school has 187 students in total, 12 students of immigrant background (Morocco, India and Albania), and 15 students with low socioeconomic status. Parents and teachers describe the school to be quiet, without serious problems. Having in mind that most of the children went together to kindergarten and lived in the same neighborhood, according to interviewed parents they live as a big family, feel friends and feel familiar with each other regardless of their background. As there is small number of students in the school, classes are small so teachers can have more personal communication with students.

Teachers that participated in the interviews explained that the main problems when working with students of immigrant descent are age, when they arrived to country, family situation, school openness to acceptance, school climate, and the history of the school. They also explained that support mechanisms play an important role regarding how a teacher can approach and deal with problems. Although said to be a quiet school, certain problems happened with one student of Moroccan descent. The child showed a degree of violence directed towards himself, but as it was later shown, his father was aggressive and showed negative attitudes. When debated about the idea of multicultural school, teachers explained they perceive their school as such. Contrary to previously said, one teacher said that she "defines foreign pupils as they were Greek, and should adjust to dominant culture in Greece".

A discussion in Greek arouse, which ended with the statement of vice-principal saying that they "respect the differences in culture."

Another vulnerable group in this school are students of low SES whose number has increased with the economic crises. School is attended by 15 students of this status and teachers are helping them to become integrated. Problems of low self-esteem, changes in the way students behave can be seen, sometimes being singled out. Nevertheless, due to the crisis people in Greece care much more about each other so teacher talks to the parent and the child in order to learn about that particular family and the child. Regarding the crisis that struck Greece's education system, the principal added that they are constantly searching for solutions to remedy problems that arise.

Picture 5. 50th Primary school in Patras, Greece

4.2   Activities

In general, teachers use different activities when working with students, including migrant background students. They all try to incorporate migrant background students into activities they do in school, include them in activities where they have to exchange their opinions etc. While teaching Greek language, teacher use various pictures which are also utilized to facilitate the communication among migrant students and them. A somewhat different perspective was given by a teacher who previously worked in a school specialized for members of minorities. Most of the student body was comprised of minority members, so she

was one of the few Greeks in that institution. It forced her to change the methodology of teaching and still applies it in Patras where she is working now. Essentially, these methods were developed for teaching non dominant groups and are now used on members of dominant group. These can be applied for low socioeconomic status students, student with low self-esteem, obesity etc. More specifically, she uses changing roles and power positions what children like very much.

From the parents point of view, teachers often start diverse projects and activities most of which are concerning diversity. Also, discussions on diversity and discrimination are regularly initiated. School is proactive in collaboration with parents – school psychologist or social worker talks about how to enhance self-respect of their children in everyday life, talks about safe browsing, bullying etc. The principal added that school organizes education about interpersonal relations based on Gordon method used in transactional analysis. Although parents are not obliged to participate in these seminars majority of parents including migrant parents take part in it.

Picture 6. Classroom in 50th Primary school in Patras, Greece

Parents feel that teachers are really open to new teaching methods and they do their best although not having appropriate equipment (technological equipment for example). Despite lack of equipment school organizes many educational excursions and afternoon activities such as playing chess, drama etc. Finally, teachers agreed that a lot of work can be done by their individual efforts using poetry, literature, intercultural groups etc.

4.3   Goals

Teachers are focused on process and progress rather than a certain product when educating their children. Teachers described it more thoroughly by saying "Every child is different and needs to be treated as such".

4.4   Results

Results of the school's efforts were clearly described by the parents. They consider all projects the school does very successful because teachers have good communication and teaching skills. Also, many parents, regardless of their background participate in school festivals, seminars and meetings. Additionally, parents see that talking with teachers, attending seminars helps them to understand their children better and become better parents. Ultimately, parents have not noticed racist behavior in the school, neither from the teachers, nor from the students. It has to be noted that there were no migrant background parents in the interview, only Greek parents.

Similarly, teachers expressed their satisfaction with the practices they have at school. Discussions and cooperation between the teachers, between the leadership and the teachers makes them feel they achieve good results.

4.5   Professional development

Teachers are mostly self-educated in the field of intercultural education and left on their own regarding professional development in this field. Most of the knowledge they gain is the result of self-study via internet seminars, and has to do with self-guidance. When the influx of immigrants was high, more training happened, but now when second generation has emerged other problems such as questions about others' culture, respecting others' culture arise. In some cases in service training seminars are organized outside school hours, in the afternoon about 3-5 times a year. They are organized on volunteer basis by the school and about 90% of teachers attend it. Apart from that, teachers never had any formal or special training for dealing with multicultural issues in school.

Overall, the Ministry of Education provides basic infrastructure, such as tutorial classes, teachers for every school etc. Teachers indicate that they would like a colleague who would help them with immigrants. Of course, they would need different textbooks, curricula, opened classrooms that exist in formal documents but not in practice. Teachers are not able to speak the language of minority which makes their work difficult. Transforming the curricula, hiring teachers that are members of minority groups that would teach foreigners Greek would help a lot.

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Picture 7: Interview with school management, 50th Primary school Patras, Greece

5. Summary and remarkable observations

Greek education today is a reflection of both distant and recent Greek history. It combines the reminiscence of military junta that had fallen in 1974, political and financial influence as promoted by the European Union and the status of obligatory transit and immigration country from the perspective of many coming from the Near and Middle East.

In a centralized educational system that has difficulties in keeping track with the demographic, economical and other changes it is hard to find flexibility needed for facilitating teachers work. For instance, the secondary school in Diakopto and the 50th Primary school in Patras, both located in region of Achaea, have difficulties with students' language acquisition, whether it is writing, speaking or reading Greek. Schoolbooks in Greek are not adapted for migrant background students so they have difficulties in comprehension of its content. Additionally, schools lack teachers that know the language of minority, which makes it clear that the centralized system accounts for the obstacles teachers face.

Although students in these two schools differ regarding their ethnicity, age and place of birth, teachers give their best to provide them support. When certain issues occurred, teachers and principals stayed extra hours after work to help students overcome their problems, or to mediate the conflict resolution process. In classes teachers try to include migrant background students in all activities and initiate different projects concerning diversity. It has to be noted that most of this work is done voluntarily by teachers, which indicates that teachers mostly use their own devices in solving problems and finding the best educational solutions. Content of the projects implemented depend upon the school and its needs. For instance, Secondary

school in Diakopto has conducted projects on the topic of xenophobia, prejudice, or anti-racism, while the 50th Elementary school in Patras organizes many educational excursions and afternoon activities, such as drama, playing chess or others. Most of them are done voluntarily, but it is worth noting that students coming from the Diakopto secondary school, have participated in the Odysseas project that helped them to learn Greek language. Funded partly by the EU and partly by the Greek state, it supports the observation about the influence of EU structures on the Greek education system.

Teachers are mostly educated about diversity and multiculturality by themselves. The centralized system inherited from the past means that majority of seminars for teachers are held in big cities such as Thessaloniki and Athens. Teachers coming from distant Achaea prefecture can hardly afford themselves to attend them, being left to struggle on their own. Criteria for teacher advancement are very straightforward, non-sensitive to interindividual differences in formal education. The most relevant criterion is time spent teaching in the class. Additionally, teachers get points for attending seminars, but the awarding system is not sensitive to teachers' different levels of formal education. It means that teachers with a certain constellation of advancement criteria can be promoted, although somebody else may have more capacities for a hierarchically superior position, but these capacities are not salient on the relevant criteria.

Nevertheless, Greek state and the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs have invested efforts in teacher education in the field of intercultural education. These educations have been based on EU funded projects, whose scope was limited so not many teachers have participated in them. Additionally, projects dealing with broader content of diversity are held within health promotion programs. They are directed towards teachers to help them meet students' needs within various socio-economic, cultural and natural environment. Health promotion topics include mental health (social emotional development), health, civics (active citizenship, human rights, democracy) and quality of life. More specifically, civics aspect of health promotion includes democratic rights and citizenship, social exclusion, equal opportunities, gender equality, racism, xenophobia and volunteerism. Such program consist of seminars and workshops for teachers, it lasts from two to six months, is implemented with students within regular school day, inside and outside of school. Although these programs have clear educational purpose, the state does not cover expenses for supplies and educational overtimes. Moreover, schools can collaborate with different academic institutions, hospitals, municipalities, local administrative authorities and volunteer organizations, but an approval from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is obligatory prior to implementation of these projects.

It is clear that remains from the recent past, burden the Greek educational present. Centralization, dependence upon EU funds make it difficult to adapt to never ending demographic, social and other changes. Such context can be demotivating for some and burdensome for the ones who decided to work on voluntary basis. Nevertheless, there is humble but enthusiastic educational current consisting of teachers working by themselves on the improvement of the migrant background students education.

Professional capacity on diversity

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Appendices

Patras Questionnaire

Social Psychology

	TEACHERS	PRINCIPAL	PARENTS/ PUPILS
CONTEXT	-What is the context of your school/classroom? - What kind of group formation is made within school? (intercultural, homogeneous, etc)	-What is the history of the school concerning (projects in the area of) social psychology? -Does school keep data of students' perspectives/attitudes about "otherness" (racism, acceptance, tolerance, diversity)? -Does school keep data of students' perception of self- identity? -What is the general school approach to diversity?	
GOALS	-What are the goals of these practices? -Focus on process or progress?	-What are the goals of these practices?	-What do you expect from these practices?
ACTIVITIES	-How do you reach these goals? -What are the main activities? -Specific methods of developing self-identity to students? - Are there any curricular topics/tools/methods addressing the topics about racism, acceptance, tolerance, diversity?	-How do you reach these goals? -What are the main activities? - How do they detect and minimize the reasons of social inequalities?	
RESULTS	-Do you feel satisfied with these practices?(teacher's perceptions). -Why/Why not?	-Do you feel satisfied with these practices?(principal's perceptions) -Why/Why not?	-Do you feel that you gain benefits from these practices? - Why/Why not?
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION	-How do you get prepared for these practices?	-What kind of preparation does the school offer to the teachers?	