

Ethnic minorities in education

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- FRA replaced EUMC on 15 February 2007 by Council Regulation 168/2007
- Its objective is to provide Community institutions and MSs with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights
- The scope of the Agency's work will be determined by its Multi-annual Framework, but racism, xenophobia and related intolerances will remain part of its activities

Ethnic minorities in education

- Ethnic <> national – issues of terminology
- Education key for achieving social integration and improving community cohesion
- EUMC collected data on the situation of migrants and minorities in education through its RAXEN network since 2000.
- 2004 comparative report covering EU15
- 2005 comparative report covering “new” EU10
- 2006 Roma in Public Education

Ethnic minorities in education

- Education a key area of the EUMC Annual Report
- Paucity of ethnically differentiated data on enrolment, attendance, performance and attainment
- Trends and developments 2000 - 2006:
 - In comparison to the mainstream population migrants and minorities under-achieve and under-perform on average
 - Debates on diversity and multiculturalism and the reformulation of integration policies (religious symbols)
 - EU enlargement (developing policies targeting the Roma)

Equal access to education

- Access to education is a fundamental human right
- Although legally access to education is secured in all EU MSs regardless of ethnic origin, discriminatory practices, as well as other factors (e.g. distance from schools, family needs for children to work, parental ability to provide support, language problems, etc) often prevent ethnic minorities from enjoying it

Equal access

- In some MSs illegal discriminatory school admission practices and discriminatory activities by local authorities and parents affect enrolment of minority children (Roma, asylum seekers, undocumented migrants)
- Access to higher levels of education is often hampered by insufficient attainment and performance rates (PISA 2000, 2003, 2006), which affect ethnic minorities disproportionately

Segregation in education

- Direct segregation is a gross violation of human rights and is illegal in all EU MS
- Practices of indirect segregation, however, persist concentrating ethnic minority pupils in lower tracks
- This is often the unintended effect of highly differentiated education systems (e.g. Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Netherlands, Slovakia)

Segregation in education

- Indirect segregation practices are also often the result of school or local authorities action to satisfy parental demands
- Special needs schools are another dangerous form of indirect segregation with serious negative effects
- Both direct and indirect forms of segregation have serious negative effects on social integration and community cohesion – community separation

Improving the situation

- During the last decade many MSs have taken measures to combat discriminatory practices and improve the educational situation of migrants and minorities
- The majority of such educational policies rely on selective measures, rather than structural changes in the education system
- Intercultural education rarely mainstreamed

Improving the situation

- Selective support and anti-discrimination measures alone (e.g. support for pupils with linguistic difficulties, for parents and teachers, grant schemes, etc) are often not sustainable resulting in relatively little real impact on the situation
- Less differentiated educational systems, accompanied by selective support measures, have the potential for reducing barriers and promoting educational success

Improving the situation

- Intercultural education mainstreamed into the general educational system improves cultural understanding
- Bilingual tuition is an important tool with the potential to reduce barriers and improve performance
- Involving actively parents and teachers in the design, planning and implementation of measures is key for the impact and sustainability of policies and measures

Examples of “good practice” – raising awareness and involving media

- Finland: “STOP-Campaign” since 2001 mainstreams equality and non-discrimination in teacher training
- Belgium, Germany, Spain, Netherlands and Austria: “School without racism”, since 1988 aim is to combat xenophobic stereotypes and prejudice
- Hungary: internship programme for Roma students for a one-year training programme at the Hungarian Public Television

Examples of “good practice”

– pupil and teacher support

- Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, Poland and Slovenia: assistant teachers tutoring pupils with the same ethnic background
- In several Member States preparatory classes are set up for minority pupils before entering regular school
- In some MSs teacher counselling and training is provided and new teaching material is developed.

Examples of “good practice” – financial aid and incentives

- Germany: “START” provides scholarships to young migrants with good performance
- Hungary: “Roma Academic Scholarships” by the Academy of Sciences supports researchers
- Poland: Scholarships for Roma college students
- Denmark: Scheme rewarding companies setting up additional training places for minority apprentices

Concluding remarks

- Much has been achieved in the last 10 years and much also remains to be done
- EU anti-discrimination legislation in place expected to achieve significant results in the future
- The success of EU strategies for the improvement of the economy (Lisbon process) and social integration (Hague Programme) depend also upon measures improving the education of migrants and minorities