

# **EMILIE, A European Approach to Multicultural Challenges**

## **The Case Study of Education Policies**

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# EMILIE Project



## 9 Countries – 9 Research Teams



**Belgium** – Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM), University of Liege



**Denmark** – Center for University Studies in Journalism, University of Aarhus



**France** – National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED), Paris



**Germany** – Faculty of Cultural Studies, European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder)



**Greece** – Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Athens



**Latvia** – Latvian Centre for Human Rights, Riga



**Poland** – Centre for International relations (CIR), Warsaw



**Spain** – Department of social sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona



**United Kingdom** – Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship, University of Bristol

# EMILIE Project

- Cultural diversity has long been considered as one of Europe's most valuable **assets**.
- Recognising pluralism as an integral part of European identity has been at the core of the **EU's motto** since 2000 'Unity in Diversity'.
- Over the past decade however, the EU has become more heterogeneous and **migration related diversity** has been perceived as increasingly challenging.
- Many EU member states have identified difficulties for groups with migration backgrounds to integrate into
  - the **labour market**
  - the **education system**
  - the **political processes**
- Persistent marginalisation contravenes basic EU values and undermines efforts to promote **prosperity** and **social cohesion**.

# EMILIE Project

## Old Immigration Countries

Belgium  
Denmark  
France  
Germany  
United Kingdom

## Recent Immigration Countries

Greece  
Spain  
**New EU Member States**  
Latvia  
Poland

## Methodology

- Empirical Research: Fieldwork on Education, the Labour Market, Political Participation (Qualitative Interviews, Literature Review, Press Review)
- Theoretical Reflection: Comparative, Value discourse analysis

# Educating European citizens: different paths, similar challenges

EU member states have different integration philosophies

→ Distinct migration experience particular to each EU member state

- migration history; demographic characteristics of migrant population and their migration pathways

Different ways to measure diversity in school-age population

- Language:
  - Greece 18% different mother tongue
  - Denmark 10%
  - Latvia a minority of 26% Russian speaking pupils
- « Immigrant children »:
  - Spain 13,5%
  - France 8%
- Ethnicity:
  - United Kingdom 4% of school age population belongs to ethnic minorities

## Different approaches to cultural diversity in education : Old Immigration Countries



- **Emphasis on socio-economic disadvantages**
- **Emphasis on integration through host country language**
- Limited efforts to pluralise **the national culture**
- **Approach revised** as inequalities persisted & poor education performance
- Effort to incorporate minority cultures & **pluralise national identity**

**UK:**

- ‘**Britishness**’ pluralised to include minority cultures & groups
- **Introduction of civic education classes**

**Germany/ Denmark:** - **Emphasis on civic education & civic citizenship**

**Belgium/ France:** - **Valorisation migration history as part of national history in order to integrate minority groups**

**Belgium:** - **Religion classes for students of different faiths**

**Britain/ Denmark:** - **Faith – based schooling including Muslim schools**

# Different approaches to cultural diversity in education :

## Recent Immigration Countries



- **Recent migration experiences but longer experience in accommodating minority / regional identities**
- **Significant return migration, migration of co-ethnics, or ‘culturally close’ third country nationals**
- **Intercultural education is essentially perceived as relevant for minority / migrant students only; not for the entire student population**
- **Pressing global and EU context pushing for accommodation and management of difference**

- **Greece**
  - Emphasis on language and **reception classes**
  - Intercultural schools not an intercultural education policy overall
  - Students of other faiths exempt from compulsory religion class but **no alternative class offered**
- **Spain**
  - Emphasis on language and **reception classes**
  - Students of other faiths exempt from religion class & may take **class on history of religions**

# Different approaches to cultural diversity in education : New EU Member States



Since independence and EU accession

- **Very limited and** recent migration experience (**with the exception of migration movements that occurred during Soviet times**)
- **Assimilationist approach (as opposed to efforts to pluralise national identity)**
- **Pressing global and EU context pushing for accommodation & management of difference**
- **[Sensitive to large national minority claims]**

- **Latvia**
  - Bilingual (not inter/multi-cultural education)
  - **Assimilationist** approach to education
- **Poland**
  - **Assimilationist** approach

# Key messages

- **At the policy level – it is useful to understand how cultural groups are differentiated and to recognise how power structures create hierarchies in between those groups**
- **Educating European citizens in a multicultural perspective requires a holistic approach, applicable to the entire curriculum and to entire student population (both majority and minority students)**
- **There are different national contexts and different migrant groups. Migrant based education dilemmas (particularly regarding faith-based education) cannot be tackled in a manner that is valid for all countries and all religions**
- **Migration in today's globalised world is taking place in a complex reality where migrants maintain constant interaction with their culture and society of origin while participating and living in the host society (transnational ties).**
- **Migrants are exposed to and participate in at least 2 communities, identities and languages; this multiplicity is a growing feature and an enriching potential of contemporary diverse global societies**
  - **Language learning** (host and origin)
    - Tools of integration and socio-cultural capital for transnational migrants/ citizens
  - **Citizenship education classes**
    - To create global citizens who are civically engaged and socially responsible

Thank you

Project reports & policy briefs are available:

<http://emilie.eliamep.gr>

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