

Educational Policies that Address Social Inequality

Belgium/Flanders case study report 4 Preventing Secondary School Exclusion and Dropping Out

This report was written by the Belgian team:
Bie Lambrechts and Evelien Geurts



Katholieke Hogeschool Zuid-West-Vlaanderen Kortrijk
Department Reno Teacher Training Torhout, Belgium

November 2008

The EPASI project is a programme of analysis of educational programmes in fourteen European countries, designed to address various forms of social inequality. The project analysis was conducted in the period 2007 – 2009. This report is part of the overall project, details of which are at <http://www.epasi.eu>.

The analysis is intended to be used within the overall framework of the EPASI programme.

The project has been funded with support from the European Commission. Each report within the overall project is the responsibility of the named authors.

The EPASI project was conducted by the following institutions:

- The Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University (UK) (Coordinator)
- Katholieke Hogeschool Zuid-West-Vlaanderen (Belgium)
- Univerzita Hradec Králové (Czech Republic)
- Montpellier III - Université Paul Valéry (France)
- Panepistimio Patron ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΠΑΤΡΩΝ (Greece)
- Universitat Autònoma of Barcelona (Spain)
- Malmö Högskola (Sweden)



Preventing secondary school exclusion and dropping out

1. Description

Country	BELGIUM, Flanders
Title	Time-outproject Kortrijk (TOK) – Preventing secondary school exclusion and dropping out
Funded by	City of Kortrijk Flemish Community
Action implemented by	City of Kortrijk
Partners	Cel Onderwijs City of Kortrijk Auro, centrum deeltijdse vorming Ligand Vormingshuis Talent & Co, Centrum deeltijdse vorming Piramide (afd. JAC), Centrum Algemeen Welzijnswerk Stimulans (afd. JAC), Centrum Algemeen Welzijnswerk Stedelijke Jeugddienst Kortrijk Erkende ouderverenigingen
Cost 2006-2007	€177,912.25
Where did it operate? Local, regional, national ...	Local: Kortrijk
Target group (theme, or other)	Pupils from secondary schools
Theme (of 7 strands)	Ethnic minorities, linguistic minorities, religious minorities, indigenous minorities, socio-economic disadvantage, gender, disabilities.
Duration from	2006
to	→

1.1 Rationale for action

Research in the region of Kortrijk showed that the resources for pupils whose academic and relational skills were (temporarily) problematic were inadequate. This leads to drop-out or change of school. This threatening drop-out has a serious impact on the development of pupils and can lead to a sense of de-motivation and reinforcement of problem behaviour such as skipping school, aggression, etc. Extra support and guidance at the level of the pupil and the school offers a possibility of reintegration instead of drop-out.

The aims of the time out project are:

- Prevent social exclusion and more specifically diminish school drop-out
- Reinforce pedagogical action to prevent drop-out from school
- Raise the awareness of diverse institutions and actors towards a contextual approach of social vulnerability by informing and mobilising them through joint actions.

1.2 What is the Time-out project?

The time-out project aims to provide relief resources for those pupils from secondary schools with temporary difficulties. The method that is used ensures that the pupil keeps participating in school. Going back to school is a condition for participating in the project. Depending on the problem and the possibilities of the school four methods were developed.

1.3 How does it work?

The project works according to four methods:

Method 1: Report desk

The aim of the report desk is to help solving the problems together with all those who are involved. The report desk is also responsible for follow-up. The following steps are taken:

- CLB (centre of pupil guidance) and school cannot find a solution for problems occurring. CLB and school decide to report to the report desk for more intensive guidance.
- Assessment (individual) with all those involved:
- Mapping of needs
- Mapping of mutual interests and matters in dispute
- Conference to come to an agreement
- Monitoring if agreements are followed through
- Closure

Method 2: Acute time-out (ATO)

Sometimes, immediate expulsion is necessary. In such crisis, pupils can be referred either by a CLB or by the school to the acute time-out programme. They can benefit from a break and it prevents immediate expulsion from the school. In very acute situations, the report desk can refer the pupil to the acute time-out programme.

Method 3: Time-out as long-term alternative

Agreements are made that fit the pupil, with the consent of all parties involved. An engagement is made that everyone will be fully involved so going back to school is guaranteed. Within this

programme, one can work on different aspects (such as success experience, attitude, remediation, etc.) in various ways.

Method 4: Aftercare

After the time-out the pupil returns to school. The return is guided and well prepared. Extra support and guidance are possible if necessary. The pupil is closely monitored in the school. Extra support for teachers is possible as well.

2. Results

The project was evaluated in different ways:

- Interim evaluation:

- The steering group evaluates monthly. Their task is to monitor the project continuously and to offer different guidelines if necessary.
- At pupil level, evaluation is foreseen at the conferences. All parties involved are evaluated on a regular basis.
- At partnership level: evaluation is permanent with all actors involved. The project has been evaluated on *LOP*-level as well.

- End evaluation: June 07

Different measuring instruments are used to evaluate:

- At pupil level:
 - Action plan
 - Satisfaction measurement
 - Result measurement by CLB, school
- At project level:
 - Result measurement: quantitative and qualitative
- Process measurement
- At partnership level
 - Satisfaction measurement.

Different factors are taken into consideration. The factors are:

- Quantitative:
 - Number of referrals
 - Number of returns
 - Number of successful and unsuccessful school trajectories after time-out
 - Percentage satisfied
 - Financial results
- Qualitative:
 - Sources of satisfaction
 - Aspects of the action plan