

## Educational Policies that Address Social Inequality

# Greece case study report 3 Keys and Pass-keys: A website to aid the integration of Muslim pupils

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## **Keys and Pass-keys: A website to aid the integration of Muslim pupils**

The pedagogical and educator training website *Keys and pass-keys* was created by Alexandra Androusou, today Assistant Professor in the Pedagogical Pre-school Teacher Training Section of the University of Athens, in the frame of the EPEAEK programme “Educating Muslim Students”. The program has three phases. The main aims of the first phase were: 1. the effective integration of Muslim students in the Greek Educational System; 2. the reduction of the functional illiteracy phenomenon; and 3. sensitisation of the educational community and society towards the recognition and acceptance of the Muslim students’ characteristics. The basic actions undertaken to accomplish the previous goals were: 1. teacher training; 2. production of educational material concerning teaching of Greek as a second language; and 3. production of educational material for all the courses included in the Greek language programme. In this framework the *Keys and pass-keys* website came into being.

At the end of the first phase of the EPEAEK “Educating Muslim Students” programme and during the evaluation process it was determined that two central pedagogic-political questions had not been adequately addressed. As a response to this finding *Keys and pass-keys* website was developed. These questions were about the cross - curriculum approach of knowledge and the acceptance of diversity and “otherness”. These two points are important elements in teacher’s effective functioning in any pedagogic environment and, much more, in an environment with the particularities of minority education in the Thrace.

Analytically, *Keys and pass-keys* is a series of 34 short, comprehensive and simple scholarly texts aiming to answer some basic questions posed in various educational frameworks, but particularly on the difficult field of Minority education.

The 34 texts, written by academic and field educators from all levels and from different scientific backgrounds, try to answer, in a comprehensive and simple way, practical questions or problems occurring in a classroom setting, each time from one specific scientific approach (cognitive psychology, sociology, etc.). The texts follow a standard structure: First they present an event occurring in a classroom setting, they analyse what has happened and provide answers based on the findings of a specific scientific field. In other words, they begin with an event from educational practice, they then move through a process of analysis and synthesis where theory is employed, and end up as ‘keys’ that may help the teacher’s practice. Thus, the texts do not build new theories, but attempt to combine some already developed ones with everyday teaching practice.

*Keys and Pass-keys* do not attempt to answer questions which concern teachers and are connected immediately with their daily instructive action. They aim to offer tools that will allow the readers/users to compose their own solutions that correspond in their own reality. This is based on the belief that the school reality is complicated, dynamic, unanticipated and mainly unique. This leads to the conclusion that a magic recipe that resolves all the problems does not exist. Each educational frame has its own parameters that should first be located, in order to seek for suitable solutions.

The texts are functionally connected, because each one of them shows a different part of educational action. This interdisciplinary approach of daily educational action uses as spark a wide variety of reports in school realities: classes in the city, in the mountain, one-class schools, minority schools of Thrace, schools with many students who speaks a different language, current schools, in Greece and in other countries, previously and now. It is a common conviction that *Keys and pass-keys* help the teachers to realise their own educational reality by seeing something proportional that

happens in other classes and in other frames. Thus, through the analysis and comprehension they transport the experience of this knowledge in their own reality, in their own frame.

*Keys and pass-keys* give the readers two choices. Either to enter the text and to view the references on other texts of keys and pass-keys or to download and print the book in PDF forms. Moreover, the reader can find some proposal for further reading and a forum to write their own views.

Three thematic units, the Instructive Methodology, the social - cultural frame of education and the question of Identity and Diversity, constitute the canvas on which, through different scientific approaches, *Keys and pass-keys* try to answer the questions of daily educational practice (Alexandra Androutsou 2000).

Analytically, the themes of the booklets are:

1. Cross-curricular approach of knowledge
2. The project method
3. Animating a classroom
4. Motivation in education
5. Image analysis in the classroom
6. Culture and school
7. Home language and school language
8. Speech skill and language instruction
9. Mistake as a learning and a teaching tool
10. Identities and literature at school
11. Non-speech communication at school
12. Reading and otherness
13. Language diversity in Greece
14. Music at school
15. Physical sciences: Teaching and education
16. Minority education in Thrace
17. Teaching history
18. The communicational approach in language teaching
19. Identity and education
20. Creative activities and learning processes
21. Social inequalities at school
22. The feed-back of students' written texts
23. Families and school
24. "We" and the "others": teachers' experiences
25. Social context and the act of teaching
26. Differential pedagogy
27. National identity, nation and patriotism
28. Teaching groups
29. Communication and identities in a multilingual family
30. Teaching and evaluating student's school performance
31. Learning and teaching mathematics
32. Stereotype and prejudice
33. Otherness and school
34. Developing bridges

To provide a more definitive and practical orientation, we outline two examples; texts 6 “Culture and school” and 21 “Social inequalities at school”. These two themes have the following structures:

## 21. Social inequalities at school

Contents:

- Scene from a pre-school classroom
- (description of two little girls, one from a family with a good socio-economic level and a rich cultural capital and one from a family with a low socio-economic status and a poor cultural capital)
- Social inequalities in education
- How social differences become expressed at school?
- Language and culture at school
- Teachers and inequalities
- Cultural deficit or different culture?
- The culture of different social classes and school
- The role of the teacher: contradictions and possibilities
- Bibliography

## 6. Culture and school

Contents:

- An event from a classroom
- What does the teacher describe?
- What does culture means?
- The two faces of cultural otherness
- What is cultural distance?
- How do students feel it?
- National orientation and cultural ‘self-evidences’
- Methodological tools
- A new role for the teacher
- Bibliography

For more details about *Keys and Pass–Keys* one can visit the following websites:

1) <http://www.museduc.gr> and 2) <http://www.kleidiakaiantikleidia.net>

This website is considered an excellent example of good practice. Each text/booklet starts with a specific educational problem, usually encountered in the difficult setting of a minority class of the region of Thrace (with many students who do not speak Greek and have a different cultural, religious as well as low socio-economic background). Then the text/booklet introduces analytical tools in the context of cross-curriculum approach that they enable teachers to construct their personal strategies in order to improve their everyday school practice.