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The implementation in Greek primary schools

Dr. Christos Georgiou

Babis Akritidis

Virginia Arvanitidou

Kostas Vasileiou

Voula Chatziantoniadou

Michalis Karayiannis

Moysis Tsiridis

1 refugee and 3 Primary schools of the Directorate of Western Thessaloniki took part in the project:

- The 5th Primary School of Ampelokipi
- The 1st Primary School of Sindos
- The Primary School of Neochorouda
- & the Refugees School in Apollonia.

The schools are located in the western part of the city, where the economical and social status of the inhabitants is quite low. A large amount of pupils in this area are immigrants, expatriated Greeks and refugees.

Promoting EU Values in Primary Education is the main Target of the project and one of the main goals of the Greek Educational system as well. The project has been implemented in Greek schools adjusted to the Curriculum, which defines both the content and the goals of the educational process based on specific textbooks.

During the project, additionally to the textbooks, the teachers used other resources, such as multimodal texts.

The case of 5th Primary school of Ampelokipi

A 6-week project was implemented by the teachers and the 6th graders of the 5th Primary school of Ampelokipi. Drama, Art, Music and dancing were the tools in order to achieve cognitive and pedagogical goals in many subjects: Greek language, History, Citizenship and Geography.

As it is well known, European values are linked to the European Enlightenment and Independence Movements of European countries during the 18th and 19th centuries. These elements are an important part of the 6th grade History curriculum.

Based on the above, pupils and teachers decided to travel back in time, in order to show the European values and ideas, as they emerged from the liberation struggle of the Greeks that led to the creation of the modern Greek State.

In this journey they were accompanied by multimodal texts, works of art, songs, music, dances, and their own authentic texts which were the main part of their performance at the school celebration for the 25th of March National Holiday.

The methodology followed was based in the use of interactive exploratory learning, collaborative method, ideograms, conceptual charts, internet research, cross-thematic approach.

In particular, the pupils studied the text, carried out their own research, evaluated the information, made decisions, took on roles, wrote their own texts - working individually and sometimes in groups - and presented the results of their work in the whole class. This approach was enriched by targeted worksheets.

Some of the implemented activities will be presented shortly.

At the beginning of the project pupils identified the literary aspect of Greek traditional songs, and especially "Tou Vasili", a song which refers to the grade desire for freedom from the Ottoman Empire. Particular emphasis was given to relevant objectives of each subject in Language and History enriched by drama practices and Music activities.

Later on pupils studied Greek Enlightenment and Rigas Fereos - a very important Greek Enlightener – emphasizing on its connection to the European Enlightenment.

Basic human rights such as freedom, equality, freedom of religion, freedom of thought and expression, justice, security and education, have been explored in Rigas' writings, enabling pupils to formulate their own laws. These laws formed primary material for the creation of comics in Art classes.

They also created a conceptual map and dealt with values through a variety of tasks such as word-search, comprehension questions, targeted worksheets and even an "interview" by the author himself. Among other things, pupils learned how to read a map & how to combine historical events and geographical data.

In Citizenship the concept of state and the different systems of governance were examined, with emphasis on the basic principles of the democratic system.

Pupils also worked out a variety of activities in foreign Languages (English and French or German).

The final product of the project was a theatrical performance based mainly on pupils' authentic texts, songs and acting. It was presented in March as an event for the celebration for the national anniversary of the Greek Revolution in 1821.

The case of 1st Primary School of Sindos

A mixed group of pupils (Greeks and refugees) have participated to the project. Learning through Art (Drama) has reinforced their self-esteem and helped them to work effectively with mutual understanding as a team.

They realized that they could overcome language barriers and expressed themselves freely by dancing, moving and acting.

They have, also, understood the importance of Values such as: freedom, education, justice, equality etc.

Their performance was a great example for a world without prejudices for a better future among all races, religions and gender.

The case of Primary School of Neochorouda

Primary 5 and 6 pupils worked on this project during English classes. P6 They dealt with human rights and during this journey they discovered that all people , no matter their race, religion or political beliefs have a right to these values. Finally they prepared posters presenting the values they stand for and at the same time to think of what you value worthy of standing for.

P5 focused on refugees since it is a crucial issue in Greece nowadays. They saw videos, they read texts and they stated that their engagement to this project has changed their attitude towards discrimination, xenophobia and racism. They felt that Values such as: respect, peace, education, freedom, equality and justice should dominate human life, especially children's.

Learning through Art (Music) was enjoyable and interesting. They expressed their feelings by writing the lyrics of the song "the sun of peace" and dedicated it to all refugees, especially children.

«They came from afar with sorrow and loneliness

With fear in their eyes and hope in [O Hlios tis eirinis 1.wav](#) their hearts

They got through here without any help

For a better that will heal their souls

War and loneliness never to encounter again

A bright future to come to live in peace

I want the war to stop, the the sun of peace to shine

*In this world I live in I'll never stop trying
we will defeat the sorrow and we 'll bring the world together
Families will be reunite and love each other again
I will bring peace to all the wounded people
To make a fresh start for a new life
War and loneliness never to encounter again
A bright future to come to live in peace
I want the war to stop, the the sun of peace to shine
In this world I live in I'll never stop trying».*

Project Evaluation

Finally, both teachers and pupils involved have stated the positive impact of the project. Pupils' attitude to school routine and getting knowledge has impressively improved. Among others: co-operation, group effort, active participation, different ways of learning and satisfactory outcomes is the results of their work...

Changing their attitude towards others, being tolerant to diversity, reinforcing self confidence and self esteem, realizing the significance of values, promoting them to their life as future citizens of the world.

Some of the authentic words pupils used to define the project :

«PERFECT, GREAT, UNIQUE, TEAMWORK, UNIQUE EXPERIENCE, TRUE, CREATIVE, 2019 BESTSELLER, DREAM TEAM!».

Although skeptical at the beginning of the project, teachers stated the following: Even though their participation required a lot of additional working time, they enjoyed teaching through Art and they feel ready enough to do it again, because the cognitive, pedagogical and emotional goals have been achieved and pupils' hidden talents and skills have been revealed.

Refugee School of Apolonia

For refugee children, education is not only vital for their own future but for the communities in which they live. Quality education boosts life chances, facilitates

integration, and it is a win-win for both, the students and the society. Investing in education for all is one of the best investments a government can make.

The effort of the Greek government to include as many as possible refugee and migrant children to formal education has been successful due to the establishment of reception classes. Numbers prove the positive results: 12867 students have been enrolled in Greek schools by the end of the school year 2018/19 showing a 44% increase from the previous years.

Despite the progress there is still a gap in the education of children who spend extended periods of time in reception centers on the Greek islands, with the majority of them remaining out of school compared to their peers on the mainland.

Eliminating gaps in refugee and migrant children's education is crucial to their development and well-being and this can have a positive knock-on effect for society in general. Education also has the cohesive power to help refugee and migrant children and their families to build links with the local communities. Investing in inclusive and quality education will help us to meet our responsibility to ensure that no generation is left behind.



When a child of the 21st century is still drawing pictures like this, promotion of values is more than necessary.