newsletter

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ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATION AND DIVERGING PROSPECTS FOR URBAN YOUTH IN AN ENLARGED EUROPE

Welcome to the **last Newsletter** of the research project on *Ethnic Differences in Education and Diverging Prospects for Urban Youth in an Enlarged Europe* (EDUMIGROM). Launched in March 2008 within the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission, EDUMIGROM brought together ten leading universities and institutes from across Europe for a comparative investigation into how ethnic differences in education contribute to diverging prospects for diverse youth in urban settings. EDUMIGROM was run between March 2008 and February 2011.

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SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Ethnic Differences in Education across Europe

Central European University, Budapest
11–12 February, 2011

Central European University hosted the closing conference of the EDUMIGROM research initiative that aimed to investigate how ethnic differences in education contribute to the diverging prospects for minority ethnic youth and their peers in urban settings. The research was conducted in ethnically diverse communities with second-generation migrants and Roma in nine countries of the European Union (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom). The conference gave an account of the major results of the three-year research initiative and provided the platform to discuss the wider contexts of multicultural citizenship, access to education across Europe, and ethnically differentiated educational practices as crucial determinants of social inclusion. Over 100 individuals participated in the conference, including representatives of civil society organisations, ministry officials, as well as members of the international academic community.

Aside from colleagues who participated throughout the EDUMIGROM research undertaking, external experts and scholars were invited to contribute to the discussion and share their views on the matter of ethnicised inequalities in schooling and address steps that could make a difference in education: *Friedrich Heckmann* (University of Bamberg, Germany; Director of the European Forum for Migration Studies), *Jana Huttova* (Education Support Program, Open Society Foundation – London), *Barbara Hobson* (Stockholm University, Sweden), *Yvonne Leeman* (University of Humanistics, Utrecht, the Netherlands), *Barbara Herzog-Punzenberger* (Federal Institute for Research in Education and Development, the Austrian school-system), *Maurice Crul* (Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, University of Amsterdam) and *Lilla Farkas* (President of the Advisory Board, Equal Treatment Authority of Hungary).

In the opening panel of the conference *Júlia Szalai, Principal Investigator of the EDUMIGROM project*, emphasized that the concept of ethnicity is connected to our understanding of society. On the one hand the Gellnerian type of nation-state structures our understanding of the world and on the other, welfare states are founded upon the idea of equal citizenship, however, due to

the weakness of the institutions of participatory democracy and of the representation of interests different from the mainstream, groups can easily be stigmatised as "other". This then legitimises their exclusion and the maintenance of social-ethnic inequalities that set the ground for the notion of differential citizenship. In the second part of her talk Szalai emphasised the need for multiculturalism as a response to diversity and also as a possible way to restructure existing hierarchies in society, promoting the cultural dissolution of the middle class. Multiculturalism is a dialogue oriented concept and is based on the idea that difference shall be accepted and we have to learn how to live together.

Friedrich Heckmann shared sixteen recommendations stemming from the work of NESSE (Network of Experts in Social Sciences of Education and Training), in order to achieve the successful integration of migrant children in European schools and societies, such as (1) install an effective preschool system and child care system which would improve educational opportunities, attainment and school careers of immigrant children; (3) integrate elements and symbols of the cultures of origin into school life, into the curriculum, textbooks and in other school materials; (5) desegregate classes and schools where there is a high concentration of minority students; (15) migrant children should come to a full command of the lingua franca of the immigration country as early as possible.

Jana Huttova introduced the initiative *Integration and Diversity in Education in Europe (IDEE)* which is co-funded by the EU and the Open Society Foundation (OSF) and could be considered as an attempt on behalf of the OSF to shift its exclusive focus on the Roma to migrant communities. It combines two main lines of action: advocacy actions at the European level and support to collaborative projects at the local level. Regarding EU level integration, Huttova emphasised that even if education is not part of the acquis communautaire, integration is one of the key policy areas for the EU and policies on integration shall not exclude education as a particular and primary field of socialisation. Regarding local voices, IDEE is based upon the citizens panel (CP) that is a method of direct participatory democracy, a tool of empowerment, and a method of research. As Huttova summarised, the key recommendations from the CP are: promote inclusive education, combat school segregation, support multilingualism, develop intercultural competences, empower disenfranchised youth and increase the role of media.

Following the opening discussion there were four panels organised around the results of the EDUMIGROM project's comparative surveys and qualitative fieldwork in multiethnic communities. Project team members focused on how children from migrant and Roma backgrounds perform and advance in comparison to their majority peers; how exclusion of students happens in different school systems and against the diverse traditions of interethnic cohabitation; what the causes and practices are of ethnicised selection and segregation among and within schools; how an inclusive and multicultural education could enhance students' school performance, increase their opportunities and shape interethnic relations within and outside the school; and how frequent experiences

CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

"During my work on segments of the EDUMIGROM project I gained extensive knowledge on the situation of minority ethnic groups (especially on Roma), with regards to the specifics of their education as well as to the policy attempts to protect the rights of all citizens equally. But it appeared to me that all the information was constrained to the context of the Slovak Republic. The closing conference of EDUMIGROM provided me a valuable broader and also comparative view to all these aspects. I have to add that I consider the conference as very inspiring for my future research work.

However, at the conference I happened to come across conflicting understandings of some phenomena: on the one hand, on the basis of quotations, the ethic difference of children was interpreted as their source of pride, while on the other hand we also heard about pupils who did not care or even were not aware of the uniqueness of their own ethnic group. That was one of the reasons why after the conference I gained the impression that to improve interethnic relations and to eliminate inequalities by proper, sensitive means one should know the way that is suitable and demanded by the disadvantaged groups themselves – the way to reach the optimal state might be very different for each of the involved countries. Finally I also believe that another key message of the conference was that the solution of such a complex issue urgently needs the cooperation of various levels and areas of the society."

(*Monika Borovanova*, student of the master's program in sociology at Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic)

of discrimination and "othering" influence the self-perception and self-esteem of young people and how such experiences contribute to the widespread feeling of devaluation and misrecognition.

The final session of the Conference addressed three main issues – **segregation/integration, equality/quality and language education** – which would on the one hand draw on as well as evaluate the findings, while on the other suggest strategies pointing toward enhancing social inclusion through education in the different Member States and at the European level. *Lilla Farkas* highlighted that segregation is prohibited EU-wide however there are blurred definitions given by the member states to define the phenomenon. Furthermore there is not just the lack of widely accepted definition of segregation but also there is a discrepancy between the definition of segregation by sociologists and by legal experts since only the segregation of social class could be proved in law cases whereas race as well as ethnicity play a crucial role in a sociological argument. Farkas also provided the legal definition of segregation that is that practices and not the outcome shall be considered as exclusionary. *Viola Zentai*, coordinator of the EDUMIGROM project, said that the language of multiculturalism lacks solid foundation in the CEE region, however, an anti-poverty and anti-racist thinking could be a successful and effective replacement of the discourse since they are similar in their structure to multiculturalism and more familiar to the region. *Yvonne Leeman* claimed that the traditional thinking of teaching and pedagogy might not be a self-reflexive tradition, consequently there is little chance that revolutionary ideas come from pedagogy.

Pedagogy and policy making should move together and enhance each other. *Maurice Crul* highlighted that similarly to the case of the United States, descendants of migrants have become the majority in several European metropolitan areas. The issue of schooling of minorities and educational integration is placed in a novel perspective in such an environment. He shared his view that future debates on ethnic minorities and education will be increasingly shaped by discussions on how education in such multiethnic urban areas should be addressed rather than by the presently prevailing segregation/integration debate. Reflecting on these issues in the United Kingdom, *Ian Law* from the University of Leeds pointed out that racial and ethnic inequalities, racial and ethnic hostilities and patterns of racial and ethnic segregation in education are known, broadly understood and largely they are ineffectively dealt with in political, policy and professional contexts. Yet a post-ethnic, post-racial society is being built as declining racist attitudes, increasing mixed-ethnicity friendship groups amongst young people, increasing ethnic mixing in residential neighbourhoods, and the demand for ethnically mixed schools are evident as positive social trends. These trends are constrained, counteracted and frustrated by the powerful effects of hostile political rhetoric and divisive structural forces, such as the marketisation of education and increasing child poverty. The terms of the political debate about ethnicity and education need to be changed and educational policies and practices need to be built which nurture and facilitate these positive multicultural social trends. Despite the constraints of politics, policy and markets, everyday multiculturalism is a living, powerful social process which will not be denied.

Conference Reflections

"Conferences are supposed to be boring, long and almost everyone is waiting for the food be served in the end of it. At least that is my experience of conferences in general. However, the EDUMIGROM closing conference was a surprise for me, and changed my view. Due to probably two basic elements - international attendance and the interesting focus of the research – this weekend in Budapest was for me as a student very conducive.

Furthermore, it was impressive to have a face-to-face interaction with scientists, researchers and people from practice. For a student it is very inspiring and challenging.   As for me, one of the most important outputs of EDUMIGROM project is the communication with the majority. There is ongoing discussion about the education of minorities but I think we need to talk about the majority too and try to educate them about minorities. The majority's prejudices and stereotypes are huge obstacles in accepting each other and living together. Even though the EDUMIGROM project was concerned about how schools and their environments shape young people's life and their future perspectives in ethnically diverse communities, only few people of minority background visited the conference. I think participation of minority people in the project should have been crucial in every country. The well known slogan: 'nothing about us, without us' needs to be adhered to."

(*Jana Sobolicova*, student of the master's program in sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia)

"The role of teachers is instrumental in making school attractive for students and a place of motivation and creativity. Therefore, teachers should not be left to their own devices but should receive special training and assistance to deal with minority issues effectively. European governments must take into consideration the results and findings of research projects (such as EDUMIGROM) and be the driving force for the design and implementation of policies for better quality of education for secondd generation migrant and Roma children. In addition, I believe, the media, as a powerful means, should be encouraged to launch campaigns for the promotion of equality in education and multiculturalism, for information on the educational opportunities all children should have (emphasising minority children) and for combating racism in education.

The attempt of EDUMIGROM to study the two student cases, i.e. second generation migrant and Roma children was difficult but courageous, since, I believe, Roma is a unique minority group around Central and Eastern Europe and should be studied separately. The findings of this project, though, show that this combination revealed similarities in experiences despite the different cultural backgrounds.

Finally, the EDUMIGROM survey reached conclusions that were rather disappointing about the current state of affairs in Europe but one thing was positive and encouraging; the fact that second generation migrant and Roma children performed better in desegregated schools and had better chances for a career. However, it was unanimously agreed by the conference that further research is required on such a complex issue."

(*Smaro Pegiou*, Msc in Public Policy & Human Development, specialised in Migration Studies, University of Maastricht, The Netherlands)

NEW PUBLICATION

Vincze, Eniko and Hajnalka Harbula (2011) **'Strategii identitare si educatie scolara'** ["Identity strategies and school education"] *EDUMIGROM publications*, Cluj Napoca: Editura Fundatiei pentru Studii Europene

This publication is part of the Cultural Analysis Series, edited by EFES and the Institute for Cultural Anthropology, it publishes original works, translations, teaching materials and working papers on domains such as cultural anthropology, European ethnology, gender studies and cultural studies. As such it aims to have a contribution to the institutionalisation of these disciplines in Romania and presents the results of the cultural and social researches pursued in the post-socialist Eastern Europe.

The volume "Identity strategies and school education" is a compilation of the reports resulted from the research accomplished in Romania. It explores the access of ethnic minorities to school education and the related educational policies in a post-socialist and European context, but as well as Roma student's experiences from an urban context. At the same time, the book describes the way in which schools are contributing to the reduction, maintenance or strengthening of inequalities between youth regarding access to education, jobs, and different forms of social and cultural participation. The central issue of the analysis – identity strategies of Roma school pupils – is addressed as a set of everyday practices based on cultural conceptions, by which these children are positioning themselves both towards the world of school and their home environment and, at the same time, they self-define themselves as belonging to ethnic Roma, or to a social category, or to a peer group. Furthermore, the volume offers a view on strategies of integration and/ or separation, tendencies of acceptance and/ or rejection from the adults' (teachers' and parents') perspective, and as well as from the point of view educational policies and that of the school, which desires/ succeeds or not to offer a space for cultural differences without transforming ethnic differentiation into inequality.
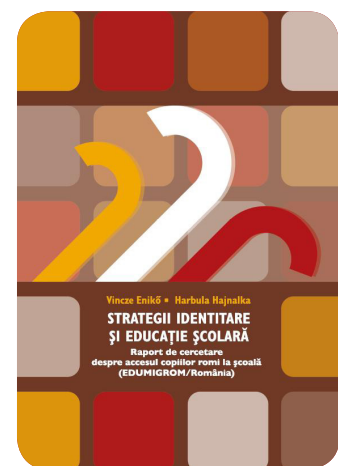
Access to education for all children

- Assure that all children on European soil have access to education, and that expectations on educational outcomes for children with an ethnic background are not lowered.
- Reach out to children of illegal migrants, unsettled groups, and undocumented Roma families who currently face the greatest risk of being "forgotten" by education.

Reducing risk of dropping out

- As children of poor immigrant families are at greatest risk of dropping out of school, promote measures that decrease that risk. These measures should include:

  - welfare to assist families in which children are under pressure to contribute to family income
  - out-of-school teaching and training programmes

Comprehensive early language programmes

- Promote comprehensive early language programmes among children from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Establish early language programmes in kindergartens and pre-schools.
- Assure that children from minority ethnic backgrounds take part in early language programmes long enough to attain proficiency in the dominant language of their country of residence prior to school enrolment.

Extracurricular activities

- Encourage community-run extracurricular activities to address needs for specialisation during early phases of education.

Differences in the conditions and quality of schooling

- Prioritise desegregation as a focus of European educational policy (mixing by ethnic background and social standing).
- Postpone formalised streaming and tracking until a later phase of compulsory education, and make sure that children from minority ethnic backgrounds represent a fair share in all specialised formations.
- Develop more effective mechanisms to attain social and ethnic mixing among students at all levels and in all classes.
- Intensify efforts to reduce differences in the conditions and quality of schooling for children from migrant and Roma backgrounds.

A multicultural approach to teaching

- Promote multicultural contents and forms of teaching and socialisation in order to encourage equal recognition, mutual respect and friendly interethnic relations.
- Extend the notion of multiculturalism toward the school personnel and provide incentives to schools management, teachers and support staff to cope with the ethnic diversity in their schools and classes.
- Promote ethnic mixing as an aspect of the employment policy of the educational institutions.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Comparative Papers

Szalai, Júlia (ed.); Contributors: Margit Feischmidt, Jenny Kallstenius, David Kostlan, Ian Law, Sabine Mannitz, Radim Marada, Vera Messing, Bolette Moldenhawer, Michal Nekorjak, Mária Neményi, Claire Schiff, Gaby Strassburger, Sarah Swann, Róza Vajda and Eniko Vincze (2010) 'Being 'Visibly Different': Experiences of Second-generation Migrant and Roma Youths at School. A comparative study of communities in nine member-states of the European Union'. *EDUMIGROM Comparative Papers*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Szalai, Júlia, Vera Messing and Mária Neményi (2010) 'Ethnic and Social Differences in Education in a Comparative Perspective'. *EDUMIGROM Comparative Papers*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Community Studies

Feischmidt, Margit, Vera Messing and Mária Neményi (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in Hungary' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Kallstenius Jenny, and Kristina Sonmark (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in Sweden' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Kusá, Zuzana, David Kostlán and Jurina Rusnáková (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in Slovakia' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Marada, Radim, Michal Nekorjak, Adéla Souralová and Klára Vomastková (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in the Czech Republic.' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Moldenhawer, Bolette, Tina Kallehave and Sune Jon Hansen (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in Denmark' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE FIELD

Personal Reflections from the Czech Republic

"Similarly to other Basic Practical Schools, the number of pupils in classes is very low – 10-15 pupils. According to the teachers' statements many of them are often absent. The deputy headmaster told us that that day there were 8 pupils in one class, 7 and 5 in other ones. 'That's the way it is, non-attendance of pupils is a serious problem here. Eleven pupils come in the morning, two in the afternoon, they just don't make it to stay at school for a long time.'"

"The school is attended above all by children from socially deprived Roma families. The teachers consider drug abuse as a serious problem here. 'Well, this Emil, that's terrible. He comes to school, with white stains from toluene. I either send him home if he disturbs or I let him sleep. He once underwent detoxication treatment, now he has dropped into it again. And it's over and over, it's kind of a vicious circle.' According to the estimates of the school psychologist, there is one fifth of pupils abusing drugs, even at very young age (9-13 years)."

"Schools in large cities are often research objects of students of psychology, social work, students from the faculties of education, pedagogical research centres, researches organised by the Ministry of Education etc. This fact brings down the willingness of schools to participate. For example pupils at one class reacted to our presence saying 'That's again some psychologist survey?'"

(*Michal Nekorjak*, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic)

Schiff, Claire with the contributions of Evelyne Barthou, Joelle Perroton and Jessica Pouyau (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in France' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Strassburger, Gaby, Meryem Ucan and Sabine Mannitz (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: Germany' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Swann, Sarah and Ian Law (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in England' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Vincze, Eniko (2010) 'Ethnic Differences in Education: in Romania' *EDUMIGROM Community Studies*. Budapest: Central European University, Center for Policy Studies.

Snapshots from the Field: Personal Reflections from Denmark

"A general response in the interviews is that there is no signs of discriminating attitudes amongst the group of students inside the local context of study. Minority ethnic students living in Fraser area form an ethnic solidarity group on the basis of being a 'Fraser', and not because of common religion, language, culture, or psychical appearance. In this less divisive and non racialised school environment, most students from Fraser school frequently draw upon discourses of "us" inside school and the Fraser area, and upon discourses of "us" and "them" outside the Fraser area, and appear to find safety in their local area. This is different from the other more mixed school of investigation where most ethnic minority students also draw upon discourses of "us" inside school, but when it comes to discourses of "us" and "them" outside school, they do not make up the same boundaries between the local area where they live and the wider society. This could be explained, in part, by the differing social composition of the students and a more middle-class representation and style that is linked with pronounced inclination for becoming "Danish proper", and also explained by the fact that ethnic minority and majority students are more socially divided outside school than inside school. "

(*Bolette Moldenhawer*, University of Copenhagen, Denmark)

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