

iDecide

Main Goals:

To develop an innovative toolkit and an induction course - (face-to-face & on-line) for school leaders and school staff, based on effective principles and processes to promote shared decision making regarding the development, implementation, evaluation and improvement of inclusive policies.

Support evidence-based policy-making which can lead to the reduction of disparities in learning outcomes and marginalisation in schools.

Support the EU in reducing disparities in learning outcomes affecting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Strengthen cooperation & exchange of information and good practices between different areas of Europe.

The Ministry of Education and Culture Cyprus, with the collaboration of CARDET and INNOVADE, has conducted the piloting of the Induction Course in Ayios Antonios Primary School in Nicosia, Cyprus.



On the 6th September 2017, the iDecide team from Cyprus conducted the Induction Course with 16 people of the school staff. The teachers, educational psychologist and Head Teacher had the opportunity to learn about the key components of the toolkit, the functions of the toolkit and experiment on using it themselves.

“...the categories of decisions are well developed...”

Throughout the Induction Course, the school staff engaged in constructive discussions regarding the importance of inclusion within the school setting and how decisions at the classroom or school level influence pupils' learning opportunities and their school social life.



Teachers mentioned that “...It is indeed extremely easy to marginalise a student... even without you knowing you actually do it...” and that “...the toolkit will be a very helpful tool for us. Because we don't have the time to read about everything... and sometimes we don't even recognise a condition... and the categories of decisions are well developed... it will save us a lot of time and effort”.



An overview of the general functions of the toolkit was also provided and school staff experimented in using the toolkit to acquire data for their classes. The teachers also played a game, in which they were successful in connecting the conditions with the relevant practical tips.

Following the completion of an action plan for the implementation of the toolkit during the next year, the Cyprus team visited the school again in late September in order to revise everything and experiment with the forums and polls. All teachers expressed their enthusiasm for the implementation of the iDecide project in their school and started organising dissemination activities for all other stakeholders!

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Hello Friends,

Welcome to issue number 4 of the iDecide Project Newsletter. In this issue you will see details of the progress of the iDecide Project so far and what is currently happening.

The main focus in this issue is the Implementation Phase of the project and explaining what that involves.

We also have details of some of the schools who will be implementing the iDecide Toolkit and resources for next year. These schools will get the opportunity to be the first to benefit from the project but also give their expert feedback on how we can make further improvements.

We hope that you find the articles of interest. If you would like to keep up-to-date with the projects progress and benefit from regular articles on inclusive education initiatives, then follow us on Facebook.

The iDecide Team.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Implementation Phase Explained

Schools Implementing iDecide:

Ireland— Youthreach Drogheda

Cyprus— Ayios Antonios Primary School

Greece— 24th Elementary school, Peristeri

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iDecide Project - Implementation



With the project just over half-way through its 3-year timeline, partners are now ready to start the Implementation Phase of the iDecide Project. It is during this phase that pilot schools will have a chance to “test-drive” the Toolkit and give invaluable feedback to partners. Lasting for the duration of the academic year, it will give partners and schools an opportunity to integrate the Toolkit and its many functions into everyday school life.

As part of the agreed action plan with each school, teachers and school leaders will keep a log of when and why they have consulted the Toolkit and document all decisions and actions informed by it.

Over the course of the year, each country partner will collect and evaluate data in order to provide practices and recommendations on how school leaders and policy makers can engage in inclusive

decision making in their schools. The data collected will be through:

- Observations of Teachers and School Leaders
- Focus Group Sessions with parents, teachers, school leaders and policy makers
- Interviews with target group members
- Questionnaires from teachers
- Learning Outcomes Benchmarks
- Data and File Logs from online platform and mobile app

At the end of the Implementation Phase, a detailed report will be published which will compile the findings of each partner country. Alongside this report case studies, policy and practice recommendations and videos summarising project findings and impacts will be made available and disseminated to relevant stakeholders.

24th Elementary School, Peristeri, Greece.



The school in Greece implementing the iDecide Toolkit is the 24th Elementary school, Peristeri, Greece. The primary school has 180 students and 27 staff and is situated in a lower to middle class area of Athens with a high unemployment rate. Of these 180, 10% of students are of Roma origin, but there are also a lot of students of foreign origin and/or mixed marriages.



The staff induction course took place on the 25th of September from 17.00 pm to 21.00. It was held on school premises and included 7 participants. Seven participants participated in the induction course for the iDecide toolkit. Five participants were teachers and the remaining two participants were the school's principal and vice-principal.

All teachers shared their experiences of meeting with their new classes this academic year and mentioned the challenges they expected to face with some of the students. Among others were: migrant and refugee children and students with special requirements (disabilities, learning difficulties, etc).

All participants felt that the iDecide program truly is of great value to educators be it teachers or school leaders. More specifically, they intend to use it and are glad their school is participating in such an initiative. Participants mentioned that within the first three weeks of the school year, they have already had a few cases of children at risk of marginalization. Participants engaged in the induction process (following the presentation, conducting group-work, offering opinions and asking questions) successfully under the guidance of the facilitator Prof. Dimopoulos.

Youthreach Drogheda, Ireland



In Ireland the iDecide Toolkit will be implemented in Youthreach Drogheda. Youthreach Drogheda is an alternative pathway to completing second-level education. Youthreach is the Department of Education and Skills preventative response to early school leaving and delivers education programmes equivalent to those of the Irish second-level system.



Youthreach Drogheda was chosen for the year-long implementation as it is a specialised education provision working with the students who are the most at risk of exclusion. The school's student profile illustrates the high support requirements of the young people attending and the diverse approaches and considerations required to deliver a high quality education programme.

The reasons for not completing school can be varied, including poor mental health, bullying, discipline issues, non-attendance and the needs of the students not being met in the mainstream setting. The curriculum of Youthreach focuses on the needs of the students attending, with particular attention

given to literacy, numeracy, personal development and practical skill-based learning. The school delivers certification at levels 2-4 on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications.

The teachers and school management have already completed the iDecide Induction Course and are looking forward to the opportunity to implement the iDecide Toolkit in their school. There has been some very positive feedback already with staff highlighting potential benefits for students, staff, management and parents.

Teachers gave the following feedback on the Induction Course.

“The process of meaningfully contemplating potential issues is incredibly valuable and makes a huge difference to individual

“I found the information and advice very helpful.”

students.”

“I can think of some occasions where I would have approached specific situations differently with the information provided by the iDecide Toolkit.”

“The toolkit and the tips for teachers helps you to realise that you often have expectations of how students should view things. This is not always accurate and that teachers should ask students for their opinions more.”

iDecide Facebook Page & Website



If you haven't already, we encourage you to like and share the iDecide Project Facebook page. The page is regularly updated with details of the iDecide Project and how its progressing.

There are also useful links to articles, reports, websites and videos for teachers and school leaders looking to do more to promote inclusive education. From a range of expert sources, we hope that they will become a valuable resource to others in education.

Remember to visit our website if you haven't yet. On it you will find more detail about the innovative toolkit for schools and the other supports and resources the project team are developing. Go to www.idecide-project.eu.

