Dissemination

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

A presentation of the iDecide project was made at the LMETB Youthreach Conference 2016. The conference, held on the 16th of November, is an annual forum for sharing best practice and innovative approaches to education.

Expert speakers at this year's conference covered topics ranging from dealing with addiction in adolescence, promoting positive mental health in young people, to assessment and verification techniques. Those in attendance in included LMETB Chairperson, Directors, school managers and education practitioners.

The iDecide presentation outlined what is hoped to be achieved over the 3-year project. Attendees were informed of what has been achieved so far in year one and what work packages are yet to be completed in the remaining 2 years.

Emphasis was given to how the toolkit will benefit the school community, including principals, teachers, students and parents.

Presentation to Youthreach Leaders, Ireland

In October 2016, the project iDecide was presented during the 9th Innovative Learning Environments conference that took place in Nicosia, Cyprus. The presentation described the project, its aims and objectives as well as outputs.

ILE is one of the largest national education conferences for teachers, researchers, technologists and professionals from the educational sector.

The conference was organized by CARDET, INNOVADE, the Yale School of Public Health, the Cyprus Ministry of Health, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute and the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture with the support of the UNESCO chair of the University of Nicosia.

Presentation to 9th Innovative learning

Issue 2, December 2016

iDecide

Hello Friends,

This Newsletter marks our project's first year in existence. In the last 12 months we have begun the process of developing our innovative toolkit that will help support school leaders, school staff, and policymakers to engage in shared and inclusive decision making.

This year we have held two face to face, informative and collaborative, partner meetings in Cyprus and Greece. We have completed our first Work Package on Needs Analysis and begun to develop our toolkit. Contained in this issue is an overview of what we have achieved so far and what is to come.

All partners at iDecide would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and prosperous 2017.
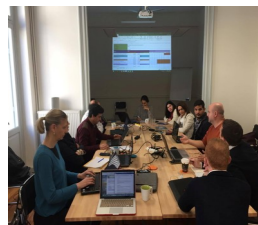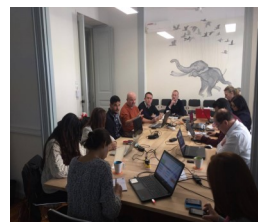
Second Project Meeting: Athens

The second iDecide partners' meeting took place in Athens, Greece. During this 3-day meeting (23rd - 25th November 2016), the consortium made important decisions about the direction of iDecide. Plans for the development of an innovative toolkit and induction course to support evidence-based policy making were finalised. The focus was firmly set on facilitating the reduction of disparities in learning outcomes and marginalisation.

Partners of the project have also identified the stakeholders for whom the toolkit will be relevant to be school leaders, teachers and policy makers. With these stakeholders in mind partners have prepared for the pilot test of the toolkit. Deadlines for next year have been set regarding the implementation of the reviewed toolkit, after acquiring feedback from the pilot test and induction course.

There has been considerable progress so far in relation to the Work Packages of the project. A detailed need analysis has been conducted for all partner countries, providing a detailed review of the existing curriculum. In addition, best practices and approaches for making inclusive decisions at school level have been identified. The views and specific needs of high-level policy makers, school leaders and inspectors were also collected and presented by each country.

Based on these, the consortium is now developing an induction course and a toolkit, which will contribute significantly to the inclusive decision making process of the schools.

2nd Project Meeting, Athens

iDecide

IDecide is a three year Erasmus+ Project which aims to develop an innovative toolkit and induction course to support evidence-based policy making that can lead to the reduction of disparities in learning outcomes and marginalization, by supporting school leaders, school staff, and policymakers to engage in shared and inclusive decision making.

By implementing the toolkit and collecting rich data, iDecide aims to understand the complexities of how decisions at school level influence marginalized groups and develop recommendations for policy and practice on how to engage in shared decision making, giving voice to all stakeholders.

iDecide

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Work Package One: Needs Analysis

The aim of this Work Package, which was completed in June 2016, was to review existing literature and approaches aimed at promoting inclusivity and reducing disparities in learning outcomes. This work focused on trying to identify the key challenges school leaders face in development, implementation, evaluation and promotion of inclusive strategies and the making of shared decisions.

During this WP, the consortium accomplished the following two tasks:

It produced a state of the art report including thick descriptions of the policy environment as far as disadvantaged students are concerned as well as a literature review of relevant studies for all participating countries and Europe as a whole.

It collected data from various stakeholders (teachers, school principals, school advisors, policy makers) in order to identify the specific challenges and needs of target group members. This information will be used to present recommendations for useful guidelines and approaches for subsequent WPs and project outputs. Specifically, in each partner country data was collected through questionnaires distributed to about 100 participants, interviews with about 5 stakeholders as well as a focus group with the staff of one school.

The output of these two tasks is reflected in a synthetic report produced by the WP1 leader (UOP).

Focus Group, LMETB,

Work Package Two: Toolkit

Our starting point of aspiration was to focus on the decision making at school level. How can we support school leaders "not to forget" or "ignore" but to "remember" and take into account marginalized groups and support their learning?

Our aspiration is not about the development of a new programme for some schools. It is rather about empowering school leaders in the decision making process. Scheduling visits and excursions, school projects, parental involvement, the operation of a school canteen, filing and archiving, constitute just a few decisions that schools leaders and staff might face during the school year.

We want to create a tool which aims to intervene at times of decision making which the majority of schools have to deal with on an everyday basis.

WP2 is mainly about creating the content of the "iDecide" toolkit. Through exchanging ideas between the partners we arrived at a template which aims to directly connect categories of decisions concerning school life and marginalized groups.

We want to build a toolkit which can remind school leaders of the important "dates" for a religious minority, to check that a child with asthma has his/her inhaler at a school visit, to have eye contact with a depressed child, to take advantage of the innovative thinking of a dyslexic child etc.

At this point, we are reviewing the literature for each marginalised group and are "translating" it into practical tips for the decision making process.

Soula Ioannou

Project Coordinator (iDecide)