



Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe

Deliverable No. 6.5

Evidence-based co-authored and open-access report of most promising pioneering policies and practices

Call:	H2020-SC6-Transformations-2020
Topic:	TRANSFORMATIONS-22-2020: Enhancing access and uptake of education to reverse inequalities
Funding Scheme:	Research & Innovation Action (RIA)
Grant Agreement no.:	101004392
Project Title:	Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe
Contractual Submission Date:	31/12/2023
Actual Submission Date:	18/12/2023
Responsible partner:	Ireland



City Connects pilot project [17]

Country		Ireland	
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Name of the policy / practice		City Connects Pilot Project [17]	
Short description and the main characteristics of the policy / practice		The City Connects practice provides a system and set of processes that alleviate the burden on principals and teachers. City Connects creates an organized referral process for in-school resources and services to community-based partners. The programme supports students in Irish primary and secondary schools by providing DEIS schools (schools with concentration of disadvantage) with additional classroom teaching posts, home school community liaison coordinator posts, DEIS grant funding and access to the School Completion Programme. City Connects Coordinators also work within schools' existing structures to engage parents and families as an integral partner in student support.	
Target group of the policy / practice:		Children from lower socio-economic backgrounds, migrant children	
Educational stage or transition phase of the policy / practice		Primary level	
Level of implementation		Local (only in schools in the most disadvantaged area in Dublin city)	
MILC dimensions		<p>Multilevel: while currently in place in primary schools, the project has potential to benefit secondary schools.</p> <p>Intersectionalities: low socio-economic background; migrant background</p> <p>Lifecourse: in addition to offering support for students and schools, the project also involves students' families, thus helping to improve child outcomes over the course of their schooling.</p> <p>Nonformal: connections with community initiatives to provide facilities for children based on their interests (swimming, dance, etc.)</p>	
Key dimensions of the identification procedure			
CONDITIONS: Foundational premise level	<i>Comprehensive</i>	City connects represents a comprehensive, holistic, and inclusive understanding of the purposes of education and premises of educational system in question in terms of enhancing educational equality. It may also consider the systemic influences.	high

	<i>Coherent</i>	It supports individual learning and growth, and it contributes to the development of education.	high
	<i>Continuous</i>	It fosters continuity of education, learning and growth on individual and systems level over changing policy makers, stakeholders, and authorities. However, it is a pilot programme, hence the continuation is yet unknown.	low
ELEMENTS: Structural level	<i>Contextual</i>	It targets children most in need of support	high
	<i>Relational</i>	The policy / practice is enacted in a constant dialogue and collaboration with the local actors, stakeholders, and authorities. It is responsive to the characteristics and concrete needs of the target group.	high
TOOLS: Action level	<i>Autonomous</i>	The practice allows autonomy for the individuals involved in the programme to make adjustments in the concrete enactment of the practice in their own contexts.	high
	<i>Reflexive</i>	There is close contact between all project members and schools in reflecting on the progress made and needs to be addressed.	high
Evidence backing the policy / practice:		Evaluations are being done by Mary Immaculate College, to improve how things are done. Principals are meeting regularly with each other to address implementation challenges and share solutions.	
Brief concluding analysis of policy / practice in the context:		The project offers systemic support for the participating schools. The City Connects Coordinator creates a tailored support plan for every student –connecting pupils to a comprehensive range of prevention, intervention, and enrichment services that already exist in the school and surrounding community. Students who are most at risk receive an in-depth review and a broader level of support. At City Connects schools, the City Connects Coordinator becomes the hub of student support — a single point of contact regarding different service providers in the area. The coordinators provide assistance to principals and teachers by creating an organized referral process for community-based partners. City Connects is seen as a high-impact, cost-effective system that addresses the out-of-school factors that limit learning. City Connects project is considered to have a significant positive impact on students.	