



Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe

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Magnet Program [20]

Country	Spain
Authors of the table	<i>Susana Vázquez-Cupeiro, Carlos Alonso, Alejandro Montes</i>
Name of the policy / practice	Magnet Program [20]
Short description and the main characteristics of the policy / practice	The 'Magnet Program' was born in Spain in 2012 (pilot test). This program has been promoted by a third sector organization (Jaume Bofill Foundation) and is inspired by Magnet Schools Programs in the United States, in operation since the 1970s. Its adaptation takes as its starting point the establishment of strategic alliances between disadvantaged (and segregated) schools and local institutions of excellence, which aim to accompany schools in the development of innovative and attractive educational projects that become a benchmark in their territory. This transformation process – accompanied by an endowment of additional resources and intensive teacher training of almost 2 years – seeks to turn these schools into 'magnets' for families with different social backgrounds and, therefore, rebalance the social composition of these schools. The main objective of the program is to fight against school segregation based on focal action on schools with an unbalanced social composition with respect to their territory of reference but, on the other hand, have a cohesive teaching team, committed and motivated to initiate a profound process of school change.
Target group of the policy / practice:	Currently there are 37 primary and secondary schools that participate or have participated in the Magnet Program in Catalonia and 3 schools that have started a pilot program in the Basque Country. This implies that there are hundreds of teachers who have been trained under the Magnet Program plan, thousands of students who have completed their schooling in an alliance school and, to date, 41 collaborating entities (museums, research institutes, corporations or universities, among others). In addition, Madrid has shown its interest in trying to establish its first Magnet schools with the same objective of fighting against school segregation with an eye toward equity.
Educational stage or transition phase of the policy / practice	The Magnet program is focused on primary and secondary schools in a context of school segregation (imbalance of social composition between the school and the territory where it is located). However, most of the participating schools are primary schools since they have a greater margin for pedagogical and curricular innovation. In any case, it is a program focused only on the formal education sector.
Level of implementation	The level of implementation of the Magnet Program is regional. However, it is the municipalities (meso) and the schools (micro) that take all the initiative for the implementation of the program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the micro level, the program supposes a deep modification of the functioning and the culture of the schools in which the program operates: temporary, pedagogical, organizational changes, etc. Magnet

		<p>schools start to develop highly innovative methodologies, articulated based on a 'point of interest' that derives directly from the alliance (for example: marine sciences, arts or robotics, depending on the partner entity). This also implies changes in leadership models.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the meso level, the alliance between the school and a prestigious institution in the territory brings the transformation process beyond the walls of the school and allows establishing links between the formal and non-formal dimension of education. Nevertheless, not all alliances develop change processes at the same pace or with the same depth. Moreover, the enactment of balanced schooling measures (municipal level) is probably the 'most important' piece of the puzzle. Its importance lies in guaranteeing a scenario where Magnet can flourish and where territorial, political and social dynamics do not invalidate or inhibit socio-educational transformations. 	
MILC dimensions		<p>There is a good fit of the program with the MILC perspective defined by the PIONEERED project. Specifically, the Magnet Program addresses educational inequality from a multilevel approach, combining the school dimension and the 'territorial/community' dimension, prioritising actions that are born in the school but intend to go beyond these limits. In addition, the approach to attention to socio-educational vulnerability that permeates the program is based on a 'life course perspective', since it does not focus—or at least not only—on improving the current school experience, but rather seeks to create new windows of future opportunity that improve the medium and long-term educational opportunities of these vulnerable young people. Finally, the program presents a conception of educational inequality that is born from intersectionality: it includes aspects of social and cultural differences (social class, gender and, above all, ethnicity) in its design and proposals.</p>	
Key dimensions of the identification procedure			
CONDITIONS: Foundational premise level	<i>Comprehensive</i>	<p>Although the program contemplates a holistic understanding of the principles of education and actively seeks to improve educational equity at multiple levels, it is fundamentally focused on a specific dimension of inequality: school segregation. Considering the detrimental effects that this phenomenon implies in the Spanish educational system, the fight against school segregation is a key pillar in the comprehensive improvement of the school system. However, the Magnet program is a 'targeted' measure that improves the situation of the most vulnerable centres and not all centres simultaneously.</p>	Medium/High

	<i>Coherent</i>	The program presents a highly coherent design and goes beyond isolated compensatory measures: it contributes to rebalancing the school ecosystem and offers greater educational and social opportunities for all students from vulnerable groups enrolled in schools that apply the program. In addition, as has already been pointed out, it does not turn its back on territorial reality but rather tries to generate synergies with it. The program, with its limitations, is positioned as an important piece in the systemic whole in which it is promulgated	Medium/High
	<i>Continuous</i>	A key element is that the program remains stable once the four years of training and accompaniment are over. The coordination team promotes the continuity of the alliances and the projects developed, a fact that in turn causes the continuity of its benefits in the medium and long term. The changes it causes, as existing evaluations point out, are persistent and stable, firmly improving the social composition of schools. In addition, these initiatives tend to persist despite changes in the organizational structure of both schools and municipalities, preserving the continuity of the program. Currently no municipality, responsible for local educational policies or management team of a school has stopped the continuity of the magnet program. However, it is important to point out that once the four years are over, some of the projects carried out see their intensity reduced and there is a risk that they become residual programs that coexist with other initiatives of a diverse nature.	Medium/High
ELEMENTS: Structural level	<i>Contextual</i>	The program is born from the territorial, social and cultural context of each school. The alliance (with a local entity) proposes a collaboration based on the strengths of the territory and is unique in each particular case. In addition, the measures of balanced schooling (meso level) are different for each municipality, adapting to the needs of the context. Thus, the program is very fluid and flexible, constituting an umbrella of actions and adopting different forms and offering different tools for each situation/scenario.	High
	<i>Relational</i>	The program is defined precisely by being in constant dialogue and collaboration with local actors, stakeholders and local authorities. One of its	High

		main strengths is, fundamentally, the relational dimension of its design, avoiding falling into isolated responses that make schools self-responsible, leaving them alone in the face of the problem.	
TOOLS: Action level	<i>Autonomous</i>	The program is completely autonomous, especially once the training stage is over (second year). Under the guidance and advice of the partner institution and the training team, the centres themselves design their 'singular project' (Magnet project) as well as the progressive implementation plan. This is malleable and can be modified according to the observed results. Thus, although there are frameworks for action, the autonomy of each of the schools (and of the alliances) is very high.	High
	<i>Reflexive</i>	One of the crucial parts of the project (and one of the best valued in the evaluation) is training and support. Especially during the first two years, where training occupies the central part of the program time. Before starting the implementation of projects and activities, possible strengths, limitations, opportunities and threats are discussed and worked out. Always accompanied by the training staff. In addition, during the later phases, spaces for reflection on the program and its practices are created, as well as orientation and accompaniment sessions, especially if new teaching staff are incorporated into the school.	High
Evidence backing the policy / practice:		Each year the program prepares an individual report for each of the participating schools. This report includes both indicators of internal development of the program and indicators of results and impacts. In addition, the degree of commitment of the municipalities is measured based on the volume of measures deployed to accompany the program. In addition, an external program evaluation is conducted every four years. Mixed-methods and multilevel data are used to collect the impact of the program in the different scenarios and evaluate its effectiveness. Here you can find the last evaluation report: https://fundaciobofill.cat/uploads/docs/i/v/m/2/z/k/d/b/e/ib_68_magnet_2019_070619.pdf	
Brief concluding analysis of policy / practice in the context:		The main aspects of the program are the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Magnet Program has been consolidated as an effective program in the fight against school segregation (one of the most relevant expressions of educational inequality in the country). • The cross-sectoral and collaborative nature: the program generates an alliance between the public 	

	<p>administration and entities from the third sector, the academic world, the business world and the non-formal and formal education system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The multilevel approach. The Magnet Program is unique in terms of public-educational policy in Spain because it proposes and carries out the articulation of the program at multiple levels of intervention and implies the collaboration of different actors simultaneously: public administration, school and teachers and territory (institution and environment).• The relational dimension: The action of the Magnet Program requires an understanding of its transformative capacity based on the articulation of coordinated actions and interventions - the levers of change - with the aim of generating changes in schooling trends in segregated territories. The depth and scope of these impacts depends on the articulation of the program with other local measures to combat school segregation.
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