PIONEERED

Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe

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

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The Concept of Good Schools [6]

Country	Lithuania
Authors of the table	*Siarova, H. & Dunajeva, K.*
Name of the policy / practice	The Concept of Good Schools (*Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministras*, 2015) [6]
Short description and the main characteristics of the policy / practice	The Good School Concept was created in 2013 and approved in 2015. The Concept provided the framework for the development of schools that can better meet the needs of a heterogeneous student body and the demands of the contemporary world. The Concept developed overarching principles to guide the development of education in the country: humanistic values, focus on development of students, inclusivity and student-oriented education approach, individual development through cooperation and collective learning.
Target group of the policy / practice:	Broadly defined: "It is created for all interest groups: pupils, teachers, parents, school leaders, and institutions that execute the rights and duties of a school owner, school owners, education management subjects and the community" (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport Lietuvių, 2015, p. 1) (emphasis ours).
Educational stage or transition phase of the policy / practice	School education: "The purpose of the concept is to be a universal guidance for contemporary school development that would indicate, which properties of a school are deemed valuable and desirable within the country, to encourage the creativity of schools and communities, as well as long-term development initiatives for various school types" (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport Lietuvių, 2015, p. 1) (emphasis ours).
Level of implementation	Micro (institutional)
MILC dimensions	The is no explicit recognition of any MILC dimensions. Considering the Concept's definition of students as individuals and a community who equally contribute to a thriving learning culture" where everyone is encouraged, respected and supported, the Concept thus has the potential for being sensitive to intersectionality.

Key dimensions of the identification procedure			
CONDITIONS: Foundational premise level	*Comprehensive*	The understanding of education is holistic (defining the role of school not only in terms of education, but teaching humanistic values and assisting with personal growth), and equality appears as a value that needs to be taught to all students and must be practices by all teachers.	Medium

	Coherent	The Concept is coherent; in its goal to provide a "conceptual basis and guidance for improving the school's activities", the Concept relates to every aspect of school life.	High
	Continuous	The Concept is continuous, but since it is based on wide consensus about adopting the Concept, there is undefined enforcement mechanism.	Medium
ELEMENTS: Structural level	*Contextual*	Contextual factors are considered because the Concept recognizes that education should not only be concerned with academic achievement, but also with students' level of development and other factors.	High
	Relational	The Concept must be implemented only with "public's approval" and through the commitment of all actors (school staff, students, parents, local community). It should respond to the needs of students. The Concept does not provide a specific roadmap, but rather it describes values and conditions necessary for a good school.	Medium
TOOLS: Action level	*Autonomous*	The Concept gives full autonomy to schools: "The school is provided an opportunity to independently choose which aspects of its activity should be improve first, i.e., pave the road towards school improvement, based on self-reflection and the needs and agreement of the school's community" (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport Lietuvių, 2015, p. 3)	High
	Reflexive	The project states: "The model of a good school should be read as a map that guides towards a better, higher quality school. Each school is given the opportunity to choose which aspects of the school's activities it wants to improve first, that is, to create a school improvement path based on self-evaluation, the needs of the school community…." The Concepts is thus not only collectively implemented, but collectively agreed upon.	High
Evidence backing the policy / practice:	One study evaluating the policy concluded that "The Good School concept is understood and accepted by all experts" and "according to the opinion of school administrations, teachers, pupils, and their parents, the understanding of a good school matches almost all the key traits indicated in the Good School Concept" (Targamadze, 2019a; Česnavičienė, 2018). An evaluation reported "conceptual chaos" within the Concept, leading to limited impact (Targamadzė, 2019b).		
Brief concluding analysis of policy / practice in the context:	The Concept of Good Schools was implemented by one of the schools (urban school) reviewed during fieldwork (T5.3). Our research revealed that by applying the Concept, teachers felt they were better able to		

	meet the needs of a heterogeneous student body, while assuring quality education for all. In line with the principles of the Concept of Good Schools, the interviewed school staff noted that among the most important principles for the school are cooperation with children, development of students and children's responsibility for their own learning. Teachers implement these principles in their daily practices through group work, setting of general goals for students based on abilities and ambitions, and employing positive reinforcement.

References:

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