Parents 4 all

Parents for All

KA2 Strategic Partnership for Innovation in Adult Education

Training material for the development of intercultural skills by parents
Unit 2: Empowering migrant and refugee parents for social inclusion

For migrant and refugee parents in Greece

Contents

Training material for the development
of intercultural skills by parents

INTRODUCTION TO UNIT 2

Unit 2 of the Parents4All training material aims at the empowerment of migrant and refugee parents (MRP)[1] to integrate successfully in the host society. The four chapters of this unit provide parents with practical information that will help them to cultivate positive attitudes towards integration and obtain a better understanding on how to support the integration process of their children.

More specifically, Chapter 1, *Integration: What it means and what it does not mean,* helps parents understand the difference between integration and assimilation, enabling them to support in a positive way their cultural identity while pursuing integration. Parents will learn to discern between the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism, and to analyse their own attitudes and interactions with the host community. This chapter provides parents with resources that will help them to integrate smoothly and contribute to the exchange of cultural richness.

Chapter 2, *Benefits of children experiencing diversity,* introduces parents to the concept of social cohesion. The impact of segregation on the children's identity is explained, as well as the benefits when children grow up in multicultural environments. Parents will be equipped with the necessary skills and resources to teach their children about diversity and facilitate their interactions within a diverse environment.

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[1] Part of this material may be also useful to parents belonging to ethnic and cultural minorities (ECM). Therefore, the abbreviations MRP and MR/ECMP will be used alternatively in this document.

Chapter 3, *Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers,* presents the main characteristics of the local education system, as well as the opportunities and paths it offers. A rough outline of the education framework is provided, explaining the role of non-discrimination and education policies, of teachers and parents. This will enable parents to make informed decisions about the educational paths their children will follow, collaborate effectively with school staff, and resolve issues related to their children's education in constructive and culturally appropriate ways.

Chapter 4, *Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism,* introduces parents to the host country's intercultural agenda and the specific provisions available for MR/ECMP. Parents will understand the purpose of specific school activities promoting interculturalism and become more aware of the need for better intercultural understanding in the educational environment of their children. They will learn about practical ways how to collaborate effectively with school staff and other parents in order to promote an intercultural mind set among children.

The learning activities in Unit 2 are structured in the same way as in Unit 1.

After completing the study of the training material we invite parents to do the post-assessment activities. This will enable them to find out for themselves to what degree they have improved in their intercultural competences. They will be also given the opportunity to provide their feedback and comments on the training material to the developers of the course.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy this training and you find it useful for better supporting your children!

EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

You can distinguish between the different activities in this document looking at the icons next to them:

Theory – information

Think about it

Additional external sources of information

Related video/s

Reflection exercises

Apply what you have learned

Group activities

Self-assessment exercises

CHAPTER 1: INTEGRATION: WHAT IT MEANS AND WHAT IT DOES NOT MEAN

What will I learn?

What is meant by integration and what is not meant by it.

The benefits of cross-cultural exchange and the ways in which it can enrich your and your family's life.

About tools that will help you understand your own attitudes and discover ways of actively involving yourself in the broader society.

Why is it important?

You will learn about rights and responsibilities – you will therefore be well equipped to know what you are entitled to and what is expected of you. Living in a new country does not mean that you need to forget or let go of your own culture and heritage. However, in order to fully prosper in your new surroundings, it is important to think about the ways in which you can be actively involved – and become an active citizen. It is also crucial to be self-aware and to open-mindedly think about your own attitudes and values, and to consider these in comparison to others' (possibly very different!) attitudes and values.

Integration vs assimilation in a society

When a country welcomes new inhabitants – especially migrants – there are different official approaches the state and the government can take towards the new arrivals, and there are different approaches people can take towards migrants in everyday encounters. This section will focus on what is meant by integration and assimilation. Before you read any further, you may want to take a moment and think about what kind of thoughts these words provoke in you:

- Have you heard of assimilation and integration before?
- What do you understand by the terms, or are they completely new to you?
- If you have a sense of what they mean, how does the idea of assimilation and integration make you feel?

The two concepts are often misunderstood and seen as synonymous (meaning the same thing) even when they are not. By the end of this section you should understand the differences between the two.

Assimilation

Assimilation can be described as:

"…the process whereby outsiders, immigrants, or subordinate groups become indistinguishable within the dominant host society, eventually conforming to the existing cultural norms of society."[2]

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[2] Centre for the study of Islam in the UK. http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/islamukcentre/rera/online-teaching-resources/muslims-in-britain-online-course/module-4-contemporary-debates/assimilation-vs-integration/

Therefore, as the picture on the right suggests, everyone is painted with the same brush: the differences between people – be they cultural, linguistic, or related to dress and traditions – are expected to disappear over time.

Assimilation can be felt and experienced by those expected to assimilate as a profound loss of cultural, religious and ethnic identity; that is, a loss of the different things that often have an impact on who we are.

Assimilation is usually seen as a one-way street: the emphasis is on migrants making changes while locals continue on as usual.

Integration

Integration literally means "joining parts (in) to an entity". When considering migrants, unlike assimilation,

"integration involves adding to the existing culture which in turn transforms and enhances society".[3]

Thus, integration is about maintaining identity (and whatever aspects contribute to that identity) while being able to celebrate differences and work with others in the civic society. Integration is perhaps best seen as mutual compromise and a process that requires mutual respect from all parties.

Integration is a two-way street – it involves efforts from both migrants and locals. Integration is seen to affect different areas of life, and thus you

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[3] Centre for the study of Islam in the UK. http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/islamukcentre/rera/online-teaching-resources/muslims-in-britain-online-course/module-4-contemporary-debates/assimilation-vs-integration/

may hear people discussing issues such as social integration and economic integration, for example.

In practice, however, calls for integration may sometimes come to resemble assimilation – that 'they' are expected to integrate into 'our' ways as if 'our' ways (whatever they are!) are somehow 'better'.

Examples

Different destination countries have adopted different approaches and policies to migrants.

Historically, **America** has been described as following a 'melting pot' approach; that is, that the different elements of a society 'melt together' into one single whole.

Canada, in contrast, is usually understood to follow a more integrationist approach: immigrants are encouraged to preserve their cultural heritage and introduce it into the Canadian society.

Different countries have different migration histories and different immigration policies. These histories and policies, in turn, often have an effect on what kind of integration strategies the different countries adopt.

Wikipedia article on the 'melting pot*' idea*

Wikipedia article on social integration

Soup or salad?

Assimilation is rather like the process of making soup, where the ingredients lose their identity as they are blended together. Integration can be likened to a fruit salad where the individual fruits, with their varying colours and sizes contribute to the beauty of the dish.

− Reflecting on the food metaphor above, can you think of other ways to explain the differences between integration and assimilation?
− Think about your country of origin: what kind of approach does the government/broader society take to migrants in terms of assimilation or integration? Why do you think that is?

Main factors and processes of integration

Measuring integration is a tricky thing: it is often difficult to judge the main factors affecting integration. Further, as integration is a two-way street, it involves looking at the migrants on the one hand, and the locals on the other. Integration involves social, cultural and economic and – depending on the national context – political factors. Whether integration is happening and whether it is successful is measured through looking at different areas of life: here, language, social networks, employment and civic engagement will be considered each in turn.

Language

According to research in the Netherlands, basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is important with reference to integration.[4]

Having knowledge of the local language will – quite simply – enable easier communication. From visiting the shop to making friends and being employed, social situations will be easier to navigate with knowledge of the local language. Language skills will also enable a better understanding of the local culture (for example: watching news and TV series, reading books and magazines).

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[4] The Netherlands Institute for Social Research.
http://www.tarki.hu/sites/default/files/villavigoni/Bijl_integration.pdf [Accessed 27/8/2018].

Social networks

Social network refers to the connection that migrants build with others in the host society. This may include the number of friends migrants have, or the frequency ('how often') of interaction with friends. It is often considered that having local friends is important in terms of integration to the society.

Employment

Full and fair access to employment is a key factor in integration. As the chief source of income, employment will help newcomers to participate in the society's life in new ways (such as having access to better housing). People are also likely to make new social connections in the workplace.

Civic engagement

Finally, political integration plays a key role in enabling migrants to feel like they have a stake in the society. By making their voices heard, taking an interest in how society works, and participating in the decisions that

shape its future, migrants show that they are an integral part of their new country – the very objective of integration.

Civic engagement takes different forms: it can involve taking part in different associations, voluntary groups, labour unions or politics, for example. Applying for naturalisation (citizenship) might also be a desirable option for some, and a way to further enhance one's sense of belonging and engaging with the society.

[*European Website on Integration*](#)

Rate the integration factors

Using the table below, rate the four factors – language, social networks, employment, and civic engagement – from the most important to the least important to integration. Once you have done this, consider why you decided on this particular order.

Factors	Reasons for the order
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Multiculturalism vs interculturalism

Multiculturalism and interculturalism are central concepts within the context of diverse societies. Although closely related and often difficult to tell apart, these two approaches are seen to emphasise slightly different aspects of diverse societies. This section will therefore provide you with an overview of the two approaches.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism may mean different things in different places, but it generally refers to the co-existence of diverse cultures within a given society. As a result of different patterns of migration – both historically and presently – societies have become more diverse in terms of different cultural, religious, racial and ethnic groups. That is, they are multicultural societies. According to multicultural approaches, cultural practices, rights and well-being of non-dominant minority groups should be respected and accommodated. Multiculturalism, as a term, is often used to refer to the reality of diversity on the one hand, and to a moral stance that diversity is desirable on the other.

Multiculturalism is important with regard to both political processes and strategies as well as people's everyday lived experiences. Different countries and their decision makers (governments) may advance different policies and agendas in terms of accommodating and respecting the differences that exist between people from various cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. On an everyday level, multiculturalism can be seen in the existence of diverse shops, places of worship, language schools

and cultural celebrations, for example. In a multicultural society you may see a Chinese restaurant, a Caribbean barbershop, a Middle Eastern shop and a Polish nursery existing side by side.

Recently, as European (and other) societies are becoming more and more diverse, criticisms have been made about multiculturalism. Critics argue that multicultural approaches have led to different minority groups living separate lives with little contact with one another, and that multiculturalism has hindered integration. Supporters of multiculturalism argue that multicultural approaches provide a foundation for respectful and accommodating policies which enable people to foster their individual identities.

Interculturalism

Interculturalism, as an idea, places emphasis on communication. Thus, interculturalism aims to facilitate dialogue and reciprocal (two-way) understanding between people from different backgrounds. Although communication is also an important factor in multiculturalism as well, interculturalism is often viewed as involving a pronounced openness between people and different cultures.

Interculturalism also includes deep understanding and respect for all cultures. There is mutual exchange of ideas and the development of deep relationships: no one is left unchanged because everyone learns from one

another and grows together. Intercultural dialogue takes place within the context of human dignity, human rights and the rule of law.

What is interculturalism?

What kind of **activities** involving people from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds can you think of that would **improve intercultural understanding**? Think about examples in relation to the following contexts:

- Schools
- Workplaces
- Neighbourhoods

Benefits of cross-cultural exchange

When people from different religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds come together, a number of beneficial processes take place. Having so far outlined what the key concepts such as integration and interculturalism mean and involve, this section will consider the benefits of cross-cultural exchange – that is, what will people gain from coming in contact with others from different cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds?

Increased self-awareness

When you come across different cultures, faiths or ways of life, you may end up looking at your own values, preconceptions and beliefs through a new lens. You gain a new level of self-awareness, and you may also begin to question some of your own ways of thinking or doing things.

Breaking down barriers

Coming to contact with people from various backgrounds will help break down barriers. Many of us have existing preconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices – and these are often be based on false assumptions or misunderstandings. As we begin to learn about and gain a deeper understanding of other cultures, viewpoints and ways of life, barriers slowly get chipped away and we make room for dialogue and respect.

Building trust

Once the barriers between people are lowered, this results in greater mutual understanding. What happens then is that people begin to build trust between one another. When people trust each other, it is easier to co-operate and work together.

Developing interpersonal skills

Cross-cultural exchange helps people to develop and improve their broader interpersonal skills. As you learn more about others and what is important to them, you will be able to interact with people in a more sensitive manner.

Developing listening skills

Cross-cultural exchange involves actively listening to others and taking in what they are saying. Don't be afraid to ask questions either! A key part of building relationships between people from different backgrounds it truly taking a step back and hearing out what they are sharing with you.

Enrichment

It can be immensely enriching to be involved in cross-cultural exchange. You might come across foods, music, literature or ideas that you would have not otherwise encountered but which add great value to your life.

 [*Cultural competence in a multicultural world*](#)

Identify the benefits!

First, think about the following questions and note down your answers:

- Are there other benefits of cross-cultural exchange that you can think of?

- Which of the benefits seems the most important to you? Why?

- Which of the benefits seems the least important to you? Why?

Now, read the following examples from people who have moved abroad. Which benefits of cross-cultural exchange can you identify in the stories?

There is almost nothing you've learned that is incontestable — everything from table manners to hygiene is culturally relative. Every culture has its clear distinctions on what is acceptable and what's not. However, to the outsider coming in, who brings with him a set of different, but still clearly marked, cultural "dos and don'ts", it can cause quite the clash of viewpoints. From getting used to eating with my hands in India to trying to understand and respect why many men in the Maldives want their wives and daughters to wear a headscarf… Living surrounded by so many different cultures and making friends in all those countries has truly broadened my horizon and has made me question my beliefs.

Source: spendlifetraveling.com

When you live in the comfort of your home country, living around the people you've known all your life, you can sometimes be stuck and never really realize it. Moving away showed me just how stuck in life I was and opened my eyes to a bigger picture. Adapting to a new lifestyle showed me a different side to life. For example, Norwegian life revolves around the cold winters and it was nothing I had ever really experienced before. It took a while to get used to the -20 degree temperatures but experiencing

extremes like that and making them part of my everyday life taught me to adapt to something outside of my comfort zone. I will never complain about the cold again – in fact I've learned to embrace and make the most of it!

Source: lifehack.org

Taking in a new culture adds a different dimension to you, it allows you to be more open and accepting of how other people do things and it lets you see a different side to life. I spent more time in nature than I ever had before, I ate food I'd never heard of and I took on their customs, their manners and their language. It's not until you live in a new country that your ideas, ways of doing things and perspectives can really change.

Source: lifehack.org

Analysing one's own attitudes and interactions with the host community

This section will introduce to the concepts of values, assumptions, attitudes and behaviour, and the ways in which these concepts are connected. In order to be able to live, work, and study alongside people from different cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds, it is important to remain self-aware: that is, it is important to think about and analyse our own attitudes and values, and how these may affect the ways in which we understand and make sense of the world and people around us.

Values

Value refers to the importance, usefulness or worth of something. Values are often standards or principles of behaviour that we set for ourselves and others. Values are the judgement about what is important in life. For example, some people may value empathy (the ability to share and understand the feelings of another person), others value respect, and someone might value honesty.

The personal values that we hold are often directly influenced by wider social values. Our values may come from sources such as family, educational institutions, religion, media or significant life events (marriage, death, birth of a child, losing a job etc.).

Values vary from person to person and from place to place – others might hold values that are drastically different from the values you yourself hold. Some values may be affected by cultural or religious factors – though you should never make assumptions of others' values and thus we should avoid stereotypes.

Values can affect:

- What we notice, discourage or encourage
- How we prioritise different issues or information

- What information we choose to give to others

- Decision making – criteria for decisions is often value based

- Relationships

Assumptions

Assumption refers to something that one believes to be true, even if there is no evidence or proof of that thing being true. Assumptions therefore involve guesswork – we assume that something is true without actually knowing what the actual state of affairs is.

In our everyday interactions we frequently make assumptions about other people. These assumptions are often based on quick information we can gather about others – e.g. based on their *assumed* age, job, gender, sexuality, religion or cultural background. The assumptions we make can be based on prejudices and stereotypes we hold. If we, for example, hold negative stereotypes of people doing particular jobs we may assume those people to hold values that are starkly different from ours.

Attitudes

Attitude refers to a settled way of thinking or feeling about something. Values and assumptions affect our attitudes. When we hold certain values and make assumptions about other people, we may develop certain attitudes – both

negative and positive – towards specific people or certain groups of people more generally.

Behaviour

As the image on the left suggests, our perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs – which are not always visible to others – have an impact on how we behave. Naturally, our behaviour is visible to others, but the things that cause us to act in certain ways may not be.

Thus, it is useful to reflect on your own attitudes and values and on how they affect the ways in which you behave in different social situations. By actively listening and seeking to understand the attitudes and values of others, you will be able to better understand why those around you act like they do.

Self-awareness

Therefore, it is important to remain self-aware. Self-awareness means that you know what your personal motivations and preferences are. It also means that you are aware of the values you hold, why you hold them, and how they may affect your attitudes about other people. Self-awareness involves you considering the different factors that affect your worldview and your attitudes to different people and things, and how these different factors influence your judgement, decisions and interactions with other people.

Examples of religious values

Self-awareness – what it is and how to develop it

Values and beliefs

Analyse your attitudes!

Consider the following statements and your views on the issues: do you agree or disagree with the statements?

1. Same-sex couples should be able to get married.
2. Children should be smacked if they do something bad.
3. You should always say *please* and *thank you.*
4. Prisoners should be able to vote.
5. Women should be able to get an abortion.
6. Grandchildren should visit their grandparents as often as possible.
7. The death penalty should be illegal.
8. It is ok to have sex before marriage.
9. It is important to recycle waste and look after the environment.
10. You should make donations to charities.

Now reflect on your answers and consider the following points:

- What are the values guiding your views on these issues?
- How would you communicate and have a dialogue with someone with very different views from yours?
- How might your assumptions or attitudes towards other people affect the ways in which you interact with them?

Belonging and active citizenship

This final section will consider what is meant by belonging and how being an active citizen can increase our sense of belonging. As you may remember, civic engagement was discussed previously in relation to integration. This section will build on the idea of civic engagement and suggest examples of things you can do to become more actively involved in the society around you.

Belonging

Belonging refers to a person's sense of being part of a particular group or a feeling of affinity to a specific place. When you move to a new place, either nationally or internationally, it may take a while (even a long time!) until you develop a sense of belonging to your new home. Belonging can take different forms and it can relate to different contexts: you may feel you belong to a specific nation, country, neighbourhood, or apartment building. Or, perhaps your sense of belonging stems from your workplace or educational institution, or the people – friends and family – around you. Most likely, it is a mixture of these different things.

Having a sense of belonging is often important to people due to the emotional need to be accepted as part of a group. Belonging makes us feel more connected to the people and places around us, and it may help us feel that we have a stake in the broader society.

Active citizenship

Belonging also helps us become active citizens. As this young Australian puts it:

"If I can identify myself as an Australian then I can fully contribute, but if I have to fight for my identity ... why should I contribute if I don't belong?"[5]

At the heart of active citizenship is participation: it is about taking an active role in community life and making a positive contribution to society. Active citizenship involves knowledge of both rights and responsibilities: knowing what we are entitled to but also what is expected of us. Rights are often clearly outlined in the law but there might be different opinions about what citizens' responsibilities involve. For example, in the United Kingdom, citizens have a right to free health care but it is not compulsory to vote in elections. However, many would view voting as a responsibility. In contrast, in Australia voting is compulsory and those who do not vote will be fined.

Barriers to belonging and active citizenship

There may be various barriers to full participation as an active citizen.

Some people may not be engaging due to **social isolation**. The lack of social networks and connections can lead to individuals

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[5]CMY, 'Active citizenship, participation and belonging', http://www.cmy.net.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/CMY%20Active%20Citizenship_0.pdf (p.9)

retreating from social situations which would enable active citizenship.

There may also be a **lack of knowledge** about rights and responsibilities. Therefore, it is important that everyone has a chance to find out about these issues. Human rights education is especially important in terms of promoting awareness of rights and responsibilities.

Some may feel **indifferent** and that the various societal issues do not affect them or that they, as individuals, do not have power to change things. However, it is important to understand that everyone, as a citizen, has rights and responsibilities, and that through organised and cooperative action, it is possible to make a positive impact.

Due to personal responsibilities within the family, at work, or at school, **time constraints** can hinder people's ability to be active citizens.

Racism, prejudice and all forms of social exclusion are likely to leave a person feeling like they do not or should not have a say in matters. Therefore, addressing racism and prejudice through different national, organisational and local approaches is crucial.

Ways of being an active citizen

There are a number of ways in which you can be an active citizen. Here are some examples:

Associations and community groups

You might want to get involved in a local association or a community group. These groups are usually organised around a specific interest: perhaps you feel passionate about helping children be more active in sports; alleviating poverty; addressing gender inequalities; or providing support for the elderly. You can get in touch with local groups and find out ways of getting involved in the work that they do.

Campaigns and petitions

Perhaps you feel that working with a community group is not enough and that there is a specific issue you feel should be addressed more broadly. In that case, you may want to start a petition to affect government policies, for example, or start a parliamentary debate. Running a campaign is often also a good way to raise awareness of different social, economic and political issues.

Labour unions

If you feel strongly about workers' rights and improving workers' terms and conditions. In that case, there are often opportunities to get involved in different labour unions.

Politics

A good way to have a say over decisions that are being made is to run for office in elections. There may be rules and regulations limiting who can run for office so do check these first. You can also become a member of a political party.

Public consultations

Governments often run public consultations where they look for views on various policy issues, or the parliament may seek views on a new law that may be introduced. Taking part in consultations is a great way to affect change on higher level policy and legal issues.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a worthwhile way of giving back to the community, and affecting change on a local level. You also develop new and existing skills – such as interpersonal, listening and decision-making skills – in return.

Voting

Voting in national, local and supranational (European Parliamentary) elections is an excellent way to exercise your rights as an active citizens. By electing members of parliament you decide who represents you and your interests. As with running for office, there may be rules and regulations limiting your ability to vote (especially if you do not have formal citizenship).

Active citizenship skills

There are a number of skills that you will develop and improve when you exercise your active citizenship:

- Inquiry
- Analysis
- Understanding
- Values and attitudes

- Reflection
- Opinion forming
- Debating
- Teamwork
- Communication skills

Example of an [active citizenship education project](#)

[What does it mean to be a citizen?](#)

[How to become an active citizen](#)

[What is citizenship](#)

[What is active citizenship](#)

How active am I as a citizen?

1) There are different levels of active citizenship. Can you think of examples of how you could exercise your rights and responsibilities at **local, regional/national and international** levels?
2) Complete a SWOT analysis of yourself as an active citizen. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Use the table below – which includes guiding questions – to note down your thoughts.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• What are you already doing as an active citizen? • Which rights and responsibilities are you exercising? • What skills do you have?	• What areas require further work, what more could you do to become an active citizen? • What skills do you need to improve?
Opportunities	**Threats**
• What opportunities are you aware of that you could get involved in? (E.g. community groups or volunteering opportunities) • What skills do you have that you could provide?	• What might act as a barrier to your active citizenship? • How would you overcome it?

Review of Chapter 1

Key concepts

Assimilation

Cultural differences between people are expected to disappear over time. This process is a one-way street whereby the migrant is expected to assimilate (conform) to the majority culture.

Integration

Unlike assimilation, integration is a two-way street: it involves efforts from both locals and migrants. Integration is about maintaining your cultural identity and being able to celebrate differences with others in the civic society. In order to encourage integration, issues such as language, social networks, employment and civic engagement are important.

Multiculturalism

Refers to the co-existence of cultures in a given society. Multicultural societies include people from various ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, for example. Multicultural approaches seek to accommodate and respect the cultural practices, rights and well-being of non-dominant minority groups. Multiculturalism is important both in relation to political processes as well as people's everyday experiences of living in diverse neighbourhoods, for example.

Interculturalism

Interculturalism places emphasis on communications – it aims to facilitate dialogue and two-way understanding between people from different backgrounds. Interculturalism is about fostering a deep understanding and respect for all cultures, and there is mutual exchange of ideas and development of deep relationships.

Values and attitudes

Values refer to things that are important to us, and the standards and principles we hold in high regard. Attitude refers to a settled way of thinking or feeling about something. What values we hold will affect our attitudes: for example, if I value honesty, I am likely to have a negative attitude towards a politician who was caught lying about an important matter.

Active citizenship

Citizenship goes beyond having a nationality or holding a specific passport – citizenship is about a person's relationship to the society in which they live. At the heart of active citizenship is participation: it is about taking an active role in community life and making a positive contribution to society. There are different ways of being and becoming active, ranging from volunteering, community groups and campaigning to voting and standing for political office.

Suggested group activities

Activity 1: Values

This activity will get the participants comparing and contrasting the values they hold in high regard. To begin, show/give the participants a copy of the following list of values.

Accountability	Excellence	Perfection
Accuracy	Excitement	Piety
Achievement	Expertise	Positivity
Adventurousness	Exploration	Practicality
Altruism	Expressiveness	Preparedness
Ambition	Fairness	Professionalism
Assertiveness	Faith	Prudence
Balance	Family-	Quality-
Being the best	orientedness	orientation
Belonging	Fidelity	Reliability
Boldness	Fitness	Resourcefulness
Calmness	Fluency	Restraint
Carefulness	Focus	Results-oriented
Challenge	Freedom	Rigour
Cheerfulness	Fun	Security
Clear-mindedness	Generosity	Self-actualization
Commitment	Goodness	Self-control
Community	Grace	Selflessness
Compassion	Growth	Self-reliance
Competitiveness	Happiness	Sensitivity
Consistency	Hard Work	Serenity
Contentment	Health	Service
Continuous	Helping Society	Shrewdness

Improvement	Holiness	Simplicity
Contribution	Honesty	Soundness
Control	Honour	Speed
Cooperation	Humility	Spontaneity
Correctness	Independence	Stability
Courtesy	Ingenuity	Strategic
Creativity	Inner Harmony	Strength
Curiosity	Inquisitiveness	Structure
Decisiveness	Insightfulness	Success
Democratic-ness	Intelligence	Support
Dependability	Intellectual Status	Teamwork
Determination	Intuition	Temperance
Devoutness	Joy	Thankfulness
Diligence	Justice	Thoroughness
Discipline	Leadership	Thoughtfulness
Discretion	Legacy	Timeliness
Diversity	Love	Tolerance
Dynamism	Loyalty	Traditionalism
Economy	Making a	Trustworthiness
Effectiveness	difference	Truth-seeking
Efficiency	Mastery	Understanding
Elegance	Merit	Uniqueness
Empathy	Obedience	Unity
Enjoyment	Openness	Usefulness
Enthusiasm	Order	Vision
Equality	Originality	Vitality
	Patriotism	

Source: mindtools.com

Now, ask each participant to pick 3-5 values they feel are important to them and 2 values that they do not think are that important.

Then, divide the group into smaller groups of 3-5 people, or what works best. Ask the groups to consider the following points/questions – the groups could record their thoughts on flipcharts or post-it notes (especially in terms of the values they chose):

- *Tell the other members of the group which values you chose and why (both ones that are important and not important to you).*
- *Was it an easy or difficult task to decide on the values that you chose? Why do you think that is?*
- *Compare and contrast the different values people in your group chose. Is there a lot of overlap or are the values quite different? Why do you think that is?*
- *When people hold different values, how can we make sure we can work together in successful ways?*

Activity 2: Barriers to active citizenship

Using post-its or flipchart paper, ask the participants to note down their ideas as regards what issues might act as barriers to active citizenship. After this initial brainstorming, ask the participants to think of ways to address these barriers – these measures can be things that 1) individuals 2) government/other state authorities 3) schools/other institutions etc. can do.

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What did I learn?

Assessment 1: Integration vs assimilation in a society

Below you will find different statements which refer to either integration or assimilation. Your task is to work out whether the example is about integration or assimilation. Please circle, underline or otherwise mark the correct answer.

1. **When immigrants come to closely resemble the dominant host society, eventually conforming to the existing cultural norms of society.**

   Integration or Assimilation?

2. **When immigrants add to the existing culture and this transforms and enhances society.**

   Integration or Assimilation?

3. **Having a two-way, meaningful dialogue about issues pertaining to culture.**

   Integration or Assimilation?

4. **Incorporating individuals into society as equals.**

   Integration or Assimilation?

5. **Telling migrants that they need to fully adapt to their surroundings and leave their 'old self' behind.**

   Integration or Assimilation?

Assessment 2: Main factors and processes of integration

This task is about main factors and processes of integration. Below, you will find a text with some important words removed. It is your task to fill in the gaps, and find the right words for the different sections.

1. _____ _____ refers to the connection that migrants build with others in the host society. This may include the number of friends migrants have, or the frequency ('how often') of interaction with friends. It is often considered that having local friends is important in terms of integration to the society.

   a) Social network

   b) Economic network

   c) Political network

2. Political integration plays a key role in enabling migrants to feel like they have a stake in the society. _____ _____ takes different forms: it can involve taking part in different associations, voluntary groups, labour unions or politics, for example.

   a) Language learning

   b) Civic engagement

   c) Economic integration

3. Having knowledge of the local _____ will – quite simply – enable easier communication. From visiting the shop to making friends and being employed, social situations will be easier to navigate with knowledge of the local _____.

   a) Language

   b) Music

   c) Environment

4. Full and fair access to _____ is a key factor in integration. As the chief source of income, _____ will help newcomers to participate in the society's life in new ways (such as having access to better housing). People are also likely to make new social connections in the workplace.

   a) Transport

   b) Media

   c) Employment

Assessment 3: Main factors and processes of integration

You will find a paragraph of text below about multiculturalism and interculturalism. Your task is to spot the mistakes in the text – you can highlight, circle or underline the sections you think are incorrect.

Multiculturalism always means the same thing everywhere. It refers to the co-existence of diverse cultures within a society. Interculturalism does not place emphasis on communication. Interculturalism facilitates individuals keeping to themselves and only seeking to understand their own ways of life. Interculturalism is often viewed as involving a closedness between people and different cultures. According to multicultural approaches, cultural practices, rights and well-being of minority groups should not be paid attention to. Multiculturalism refers to the reality of diversity and to a moral stance that diversity is undesirable. Interculturalism also includes deep understanding and disrespect for all cultures. There is a one-way exchange of ideas and the development of deep relationships. Intercultural dialogue takes place within the context of human dignity, human rights and the rule of law. Multiculturalism is important with regard to politics and has no bearing on people's everyday lives.

Assessment 4: Benefits of cross-cultural exchange

This assessment seeks to find out how well you know the benefits of cross-cultural exchange. Below, you will find a list of some key benefits with crucial words removed – it is your job to pick the right answer from the multiple choice options given.

1. Cross-cultural exchange helps people to develop and improve their broader _____ skills. As you learn more about others and what is important to them, you will be able to interact with people in a more sensitive manner.

    a) Musical

    b) Interpersonal

    c) Mind-reading

2. It can be very _____ to be involved in cross-cultural exchange. You might come across new foods, music, literature or ideas.

    a) Boring

    b) Enriching

    c) Confusing

3. With greater mutual understanding, people begin to build _____ between one another. When people _____ each other, it is easier to co-operate and work together.

    a) Trust

    b) Hate

    c) Mistrust

4. Coming to contact with people from various backgrounds will help break down _____.

    a) Benefits

    b) Communication

    c) Barriers

5. Cross-cultural exchange involves actively _____ others, and taking in what they are saying. Don't be afraid to ask questions either!

    a) Listening to

    b) Speaking over

    c) Ignoring

Assessment 5: Analysing your own attitudes and interactions with the host community

On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being 'completely disagree' and 5 'completely agree'), how do you feel about the following statements? Please circle the number that most closely reflects your feelings. Be as honest as possible!

1. I am aware of the values I hold, and I understand how they may affect my attitudes and interactions with others.

    1   2   3   4   5

2. When I catch myself making assumptions about others, I consider why this is and why my assumptions may be untrue.

    1   2   3   4   5

3. When there is a clash between my values and attitudes and those of people from the host society, I am convinced that I am completely objective.

    1   2   3   4   5

4. When people from the host society behave in a way I do not understand, I do not ask why they do so – I can assume their attitudes and values.

    1   2   3   4   5

Assessment 6: Belonging and active citizenship

Below you will find a number of statements about belonging and active citizenship, and it is your task to decide whether these statements are true or false. If you think a statement is false, consider what it is that is wrong about the statement and make note of this.

1. **Belonging often refers to a person's sense of being part of a group or feeling of affinity to a specific place.**
    True or False?

2. **Active citizenship means actively disengaging from public life.**
    True or False?

3. **Social isolation, lack of knowledge, indifference, time constraints and racism and prejudice are examples of barriers to active citizenship.**
    True or False?

4. **Voting in elections is compulsory everywhere.**
    True or False?

5. **Volunteering does not provide you with any worthwhile skills.**
    True or False?

6. **Public consultations are ways for the government to find out the views of the people and stakeholders.**
    True or False?

7. **Active citizenship helps you develop skills like debating, understanding, communication, teamwork and analysis skills.**
    True or False?

For the correct answers, click here.

CHAPTER 2: BENEFITS OF CHILDREN EXPERIENCING DIVERSITY

What will I learn?

Why it is good for your child and the society if you integrate successfully

Benefits for your children if they grow up in a diverse environment

How you can teach your children to cope with diversity in a positive way

Why is it important?

"United in diversity" is the motto of the European Union. It signifies how Europeans have come together, in the form of the EU, to work for peace and prosperity, while at the same time being enriched by the continent's many different cultures, traditions and languages. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect.

So in order for you and your children to thrive in a country of the EU, a key to success is to understand and embrace this attitude towards diversity. Children can thrive when they feel part of the society they live in, when they feel accepted and valued. Migrant children can feel that way only when their different characteristics are respected and appreciated. But at the same time they need to learn, too, how to respect diversity in others and how to be tolerant the earliest possible.

Importance of integration in social cohesion

Most people want to feel that they fit in their environment, that they can trust it and be trusted. This is about social cohesion. In simple words, social cohesion explains how the different parts of society work together. It creates a sense of belonging and promotes trust.

The more cohesive a society is, the better it is for the well-being of all its members. There will be less exclusion and marginalisation, a stronger sense of belonging and trustfulness among people and also more equal opportunities to grow up economically for everyone.

But how does integration relate to social cohesion? And what is your role in that?

To 'integrate' means 'to become part of'. To become part of a new country, you need to become familiar with that country's culture so that you are able to contribute and to benefit from its economic and social growth. Each individual plays a very important role in gaining trust and creating relationships with other people. When migrant communities segregate themselves from the host society and refuse to have cultural exchanges, this is bad for social cohesion: there will be mistrust, poor collaboration,

and weak social relationships. Especially migrants will suffer from that, as they will find themselves more marginalised and with less opportunities to prosper.

Integration is then very important to create and sustain a cohesive society. In fact, the host society is likely to make an important economic investment to support immigration, especially at the early phase. Therefore, local institutions and citizens somehow expect this initial investment to be re-paid along the time. This means that host society is interested in an improvement of migrants' living conditions that would level potentially existing differences between you and other citizens, and make social cohesion easier to achieve. But this will be only the case if migrants show themselves willing to belong to and contribute to their host county.

What is social cohesion?

Integration and social cohesion: key elements for reaping the benefits of migration *from the International Organization for Migration (IOM)*

Importance of parents' integration for educational achievement and balanced development of children

Although the number of migrant students in the host countries' schools has greatly increased recently (especially in North America and Europe), studies suggest that migrants could do better at school. It is clear that when they join school, your children are a bit disadvantaged if compared with native children, especially due to a weaker use of language.

However, a lot depends on the parents' degree of integration. You will increase the chances for your children to succeed at school and to feel happy in the host country if you make efforts to become part of your new environment. What could you do?

You could try to become more familiar with the host country's culture and to extend your social relationships beyond your family and people from your own country. Not by chance, scientists found out that students who speak a foreign language at home perform worse than those who speak the host country's language in familiar contexts. On the other hand, a good practice is to make social relations and networks the more stable as possible. If children are encouraged to interact with native peers, avoiding joining only community of co-nationals, it is more likely they

will overcome language difficulties in a shorter time and that this will push them forward in school achievements.

It is, nevertheless, very important that you, as parents, engage with you children's training to strengthen their competencies, skills, knowledge and values. A good strategy could be promoting contact with books, movies, TV shows and cultural activities (e.g. attending theatre) of the host society. Family is very important to build-up a child's cultural capital, especially when it comes to language and literacy.

This does not mean that children have to change their identity and lose contact with their culture of origin. They should, instead, be helped in finding a balance living with two cultures. For instance, it is important that they keep in touch with relatives who continue living in the home country and, to this aim, it is essential that they are able to speak the language of their home country and know their culture.

A good idea would be to help children find spaces and occasions where they can talk about their native cultures to children of the country they live in. This is a useful exercise to foster their familiarity with their parents' culture (your culture) but also an opportunity to stimulate comparison between different cultures.

Migrants and educational achievement gaps

Impact of segregation on children's identity and self-concept

Child identity is not only a matter of psychological concern, but also a topic that caught the attention of social scientists. Identity formation is a complex process that never comes to an end and arises from questions such as 'Who we are', 'Do we choose our identity?', 'Is our identity given to us or we create our own?'

Children begin to answer identity questions at an early age. Such questions include 'Who am I?', 'Who is my family?', 'Where do I belong?', 'Why do my family celebrate some holidays and not others?' Hence, child identity is a complex socio-cultural phenomenon that concerns various representation of the world, it has to do with places and it is subject to change under the influence of the environment. Identity is one of the most important parts of a child's development since it contributes to creating their self-concept. In fact, self-concept is a theory about oneself, what someone thinks of oneself and even self-evaluation.
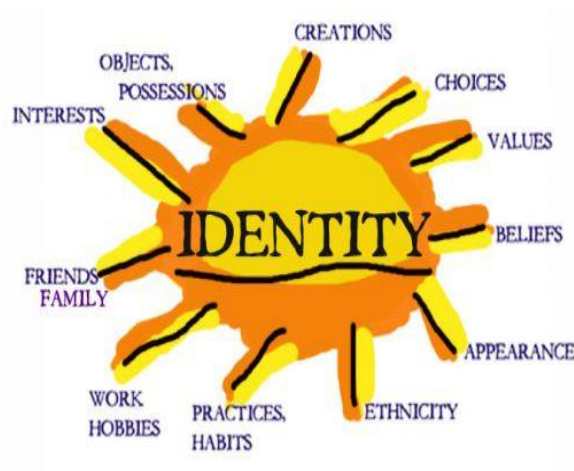
Racial-ethnic identities are part of the self-concept. They influence how individuals make sense of themselves and others. Membership in racial and ethnic groups is associated with beliefs about common experiences (such as shared history, language, and traditions) and also with beliefs about possible future outcomes.

But what happens when members of a special racial or ethnic group are segregated? Segregation is the opposite of integration as it means to keep one group of people apart from another and treat them differently. Segregation can take place either by choice (a groups sets themselves apart from the others) or because others marginalise them. In your case, segregation may be the result if you and your family socialise only with members of your own community and refuse to draw closer to the host community.

Segregation may have a long-lasting and very strong negative effect on a child's self-concept. Specifically, it may cause racial self-hatred, low sense of self-worth and preference for the dominant group. Segregation leads to worse achievements at school. Segregation will never empower your children; on the contrary it will put them in disadvantage – psychologically, academically and socially.

Growing up as a Third-Culture Child (a child who has grown up in a culture that is different from their parents') can be very positive. They may develop strong cross-cultural skills, increased adaptability and flexibility, and maintain confidence when changes take place. Don't deprive your children of these benefits by keeping them away from your host society!

Child Identity

About School Segregation in the U.S.

Building Identity for a Third-Culture Kid

Benefits of diversity for children

Babies and young children learn and develop through their early experiences and relationships. As children get older they begin to develop a sense of who they are and where they belong. This early learning about themselves and others lays the foundation for their future health and wellbeing.

Young children are curious by nature about differences and one of the ways they make sense of their world is to sort things into different categories and focus on one thing at a time (e.g., whether another child has the same or different skin colour to them). Children do this as a way to organise their experiences. Talking with children about differences makes them feel good about who they are and appreciate diversity in themselves and others.

So, is diversity good for your child? Definitely yes! Look at some benefits for your children when they experience cultural diversity:

- Raising multicultural children makes them **more tolerant and eager to socialize;**

- They learn to appreciate the differences and may want to **experiment new things**;
- It triggers children's **willingness to learn** about other countries, giving them an **open and inclusive world view**;
- They feel good when they interact with a diverse groups of friends and are more likely to continue fostering **diverse friendships** later on in life;
- The learn about **equality and equity**;
- It gives emotional benefits, because it helps children **develop empathy** and at the same time **feel more confident** about the world around them;
- Children develop stronger **critical thinking and problem-solving abilities**;
- Their **motivation, general knowledge and intellectual self-confidence** are positively influenced;
- Children are more likely to develop an **open, welcoming, prejudice-free attitude** and **strong communication skills.**

Of course, all these benefits are only possible when diversity is experienced in a welcoming, positive environment. Then benefits extend to all individuals involved. However, when diversity is met with suspicion, hostility, discrimination or even racism, this has a negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of the victimized children or adults, it diminishes social cohesion, conflict is more likely to arise, and there are no benefits for anyone involved.

Does diversity make us more tolerant?

Different Types of Families: Learning Diversity for Children

7 benefits of raising multicultural children

Teaching children about diversity

The challenge for parents is to ensure that their children learn to accept and respect differences, thus making them more conscious adults. But, where do we start? Children don't come with instructions, but they do come with open minds. Much of what they learn about respecting differences comes from their parents. That being said, consider the following suggestions:

- **Children listen to what we say as well as watch what we do.** As parents, we must work on our own diversity deficits, so that we can better serve as examples to them.

- **Get out of our comfort zone!** Teaching our children to welcome differences may require that we make use of the internet to get a better understanding of diversity. We can then look for cultural activities that are present outside our community and explore their strength and value in diversity. We must make a deliberate effort to get out of the familiar and show our children we mean it. Accepting differences should be how we live our lives.

- **Listen and respond.** When children ask about differences, pay attention to their doubts and to the language they use. If they use hurtful or stereotypical language, explore with them why such language is hurtful. Explain in an age-appropriate manner why stereotypes don't tell the whole story and are divisive.

- **Don't be blind to differences.** Parents often tell that they want their children to be 'difference blind'. Children will notice that Jouain has a different sounding name or that Yasmeen always wears a head scarf. These things will raise a natural curiosity about this. As parents, we must help them appreciate and learn about those differences, not pretend that they do not exist. The question is not whether differences exist; it is what message we are sending by teaching children to be "blind" to differences. Unless we as

parents are willing to help explain to children what seems strange or different to them, we will never be successful in teaching children to understand and appreciate differences.

- Parents teach children how to brush their teeth, to comb their hair, to be responsible and to be successful. We do so by introducing and reinforcing behaviour that helps achieve these goals. We should do the same when it comes to appreciating diversity. It is only then that we can move from tolerance to acceptance.

Same Difference (A Children's Book Story by Calida Rawles)

Diversity lesson for kids

3 simple ways to teach children about diversity

8 ways to show children diversity is a strength

10 books to help teach children about diversity

Techniques and activities to help children interact positively within a diverse environment

As a parent, there are several steps to take if you want to raise your child's awareness and acceptance of cultural difference as we have seen. But, what could you do in practice to help them achieve this goal? A very useful practice is to lead them explore other cultures. Here are some suggestions:

- **Get your children to watch documentaries on history of different cultures.**

- **Make them watch also movies that portray cultural integration**, making sure they are age-appropriate.

- **Don't laugh at racist jokes or engage in chats that put forward stereotypes.** If your neighbour makes a joke about any kids being the smartest because of their cultural background, other groups of people being illegal immigrants, or again people being criminals, be prepared to say something. You can keep it simple but be direct. "Wow! That's not a very nice thing to say!" or "Stereotyping people isn't something I'm comfortable with."

- **Cook with them!** This might be a very fun way to learn about culture and diversity as well as a great learning activity. You can decide to cook a new food each week and discover what kids in

other countries eat for different meals.

- **Stimulate their interest in learning a new language**. See online resources for suggestions.
- **Create games in which children have to engage with learning about other countries and cultures**.
- **Visit cultural places of other communities in your city**, if you can, and try to get opportunities to learn about their history, art, music, etc. A good way to enter their circles may be talking to people from other communities who stay in your neighbourhood.
- **Take part in other cultural groups' festivals and other cultural celebrations along with your children** and invite people from other backgrounds to your own celebrations.

4 Ways to Help your Child Learn about Cultural Diversity:

5 Fun Activities to Teach Your Kids About Culture and Diversity

6 ways white parents can teach their kids about race and diversity

7 ways to help kids learn a foreign language

Printable country flags to make a memory card game

THE EYES OF A CHILD // Noémi Association

Coping constructively with rejection

Imagine your son comes back from school and tells you that his classmates did not want to play with him because he is a foreigner. Reflect about what you would have told him:

- before studying this topic

- after having studied this topic

You can summarize your reactions in the table below:

Before…	After…

Review of Chapter 2

Integration in a multicultural environment

| **Benefits of diversity for children** | **Benefits of integration** | **Coping positively with diversity** |

Benefits of diversity for children

- ✓ They become more tolerant
- ✓ Eager to socialize
- ✓ Strong communication skills
- ✓ Eager to experiment and explore
- ✓ Emotional benefits
- ✓ Critical thinking and problem-solving abilities
- ✓ Open, prejudice-free attitude

Benefits of integration

- ✓ Sense of inclusion and belonging
- ✓ Increased well-being for the whole society
- ✓ Social cohesion

Coping positively with diversity

- ✓ Learn about different cultures through play and entertainment
- ✓ Visit cultural places of other communities
- ✓ Don't laugh at racist jokes – don't forward stereotypes
- ✓ Stimulate interest in learning a new language
- ✓ Take part in other cultural groups' festivals and celebrations
- ✓ Invite people from

Suggested group activity

Ask all parents to briefly describe what happened during an ordinary day at school in their country of origin.

Then discuss with them the following questions:

- *Are there teachers that talk about integration or social inclusion in the school that your child attends?*
- *Were there teachers that talked about diversity in the schools in your country of origin?*

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What did I learn?

Assessment 1: Importance of integration in social cohesion

Below you will find a number of statements about the importance of integration in social cohesion, and it is your task to decide whether these statements are true or false. If you think a statement is false, consider what it is that is wrong about the statement and make note of this.

1. **Social cohesion explains how the different parts of society work together.**

   True or False?

2. **The more cohesive a society is, the more exclusion and marginalisation there will be.**

   True or False?

3. **When migrant communities segregate themselves from the host society and refuse to have cultural exchanges, this is good for social cohesion.**

   True or False?

4. **Integration is very important to create and sustain a cohesive society.**

   True or False?

5. **Supporting immigration requires economic investments by the host society.**

   True or False?

Assessment 2: Importance of parents' integration for educational achievement and balanced development of children

You will be given a number or statements with important information missing, or questions. Below the statement / question you will find multiple-choice options – it is your task to pick the correct answer.

1. When your children join school, they are a bit disadvantaged if compared with native children, especially due to _____

    a) a weaker use of language

    b) having fewer native friends

    c) their economic situation

2. You will increase the chances for your children to succeed at school and to feel happy in the host country if you make efforts to _____

    a) find your children a hobby

    b) become part of your new environment

    c) help your children find friends from your native country

3. It is very important that you, as parents, _____ your children's training to strengthen their competencies, skills, knowledge and values.

    a) don't force

    b) don't engage with

    c) engage with

4. What useful exercise was mentioned to foster your children's familiarity with their parents' culture (your culture) and an opportunity to stimulate comparison between different cultures?

    a) to help children keep in touch with relatives who continue living in the home country

b) to promote contact with books, movies, TV shows and cultural activities of the host society

c) to help children find spaces and occasions where they can talk about their native cultures to children of the country they live in

Assessment 3: Benefits of diversity and impacts of segregation on children

Below you will find several statements about the benefits for the children when they experience cultural diversity and dangers of segregation. It is your task to decide whether these statements are true or false. If you think a statement is false, consider what it is that is wrong about the statement and make note of this.

1. **Raising multicultural children makes them more tolerant and eager to socialize.**

   True or False?

2. **Children in diversity learn to appreciate the differences and may want to try out new things.**

   True or False?

3. **Diversity triggers children's willingness to learn about their parent's country, giving them a prejudicial world view.**

   True or False?

4. **Children feel good when they interact with diverse groups of friends and are more likely to continue fostering diverse friendships later on in life.**

   True or False?

5. **Diversity gives emotional benefits, because it helps children develop empathy but at the same time, they feel more confined in their own culture.**

   True or False?

6. **Children in diverse environments develop weaker critical thinking skills but stronger problem-solving abilities.**

   True or False?

7. **Children's motivation, general knowledge and intellectual self-confidence are positively influenced by segregation.**

   True or False?

8. **Children in diverse environments are more likely to develop an open, welcoming, prejudice-free attitude and strong communication skills.**

   True or False?

9. **Segregation may have a long-lasting and very strong negative effect on a child's self-concept.**

   True or False?

10. **Segregation may cause racial self-confidence, strong sense of self-worth and preference for other groups.**

    True or False?

11. **Segregation leads to low achievement at school.**

    True or False?

12. **Segregation will never empower your children; on the contrary it will put them at a disadvantage – psychologically, academically and socially.**

    True or False?

Assessment 4: Teaching children about diversity

Please read the following statements and place a tick next to the ones that apply to you.

1) ☐ I teach my children about diversity.
2) ☐ I look for cultural activities that are present outside my community.
3) ☐ If my children use hurtful or stereotypical language, I explore with them why such language is hurtful.
4) ☐ When my children ask me about differences they notice, I teach them to be "difference blind".
5) ☐ When my children ask about differences, I am willing to help explain things that seem strange or different to them.
6) ☐ I introduce and reinforce my children's behaviour that helps appreciate diversity.

Assessment 5: Techniques and activities to help children interact positively within a diverse environment

Please answer the following questions.

Name 3 activities and/or techniques that you can use to raise children's awareness and acceptance of cultural differences.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

For the correct answers, click here.

CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THE OPPORTUNITIES IT OFFERS

What will I learn?

About the educational system in Greece

About the training opportunities in the host society

The role of the teacher in the Greek educational system

Why is it important?

When we talk about integration, we talk about people. Education is a fundamental point for the development of a civil society. Migrant parents have to know the host society educational system in order to guide their children in their chosen training paths.

Unfortunately, the world of education is very different in every country, in Europe, there isn't a common educational system, so migrant parents in the host society are called to put in a greater effort.

Being aware of the educational choices of their children is a starting point for the effective integration of foreign parents. Those who actively participate in school activities have the opportunity to integrate with other parents and build contracts and social networks to fully integrate into the host society.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Educational opportunities and paths within the educational system of Greece

In Greece, education is considered to be one of the basic goods that everyone should have access to. According to the Greek Constitution, education is a basic mission for the State. Therefore, the State is responsible for making public and free education available to all students. However, parents do have the option to choose a private school for their children, if they wish so. All levels of education are overseen by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, which exercises centralised control over public schools by prescribing the curriculum, appointing staff, and controlling funding.

The aim of public education, according to Article 16 of the Constitution is *"the moral, intellectual, professional and physical training of Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness and … their formation as free and responsible citizens."*

Education is compulsory for all children aged 4-15, that is for 11 years. All teachers are university graduates.

Pre-school

Starting from the young age of 2 months and onwards, children under the age of 4 can go to day-care nursery centres and kindergartens *(vrefikos stathmos, vrefonipiakos stathmos, paidikos stathmos)* that operate in every municipality of the country. These centres operate from 7:00 to 16:00, and offer breakfast and lunch to children. Selection for enrolment depends greatly on the family income and other social criteria, such as having a single parent or being an orphan, belonging to big families or families with handicapped members etc. Attendance of children with contagious illnesses is strictly forbidden for as long as they are sick. Municipalities are responsible for organising and supervising the public kindergartens and nursery schools.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Starting from the school year 2018-2019, compulsory education starts at age 4 in kindergartens *(nipiagogeio)*. However, this is a measure that is going to be implemented gradually, as there are no sufficient places yet in all municipalities for children aged 4.

Due to the fact that for many years pre-school was not compulsory, municipal nursery schools and kindergartens were limited in number; as a result there is also a big offer of private pre-school facilities.

Primary education

Primary education *(Dimotiko Scholeio)* lasts 6 years. Pupils are aged 6-12. Lessons are held from 8:00 to 13:30 but usually there is also the option to attend an extended programme that lasts until 16:00.

There are provisions for children with special needs. Depending on the type and the degree of disability, they may attend lessons in the regular classroom, in separate classrooms or in special schools.

> *Attention!*
>
> *Enrolment in pre-school and primary education takes place on specific dates, usually in May. If you miss these dates, you may have serious difficulties in enrolling your child later. In some cases children have to wait until the next school year.*

Lower secondary school

Compulsory secondary education *(Gymnasio)* lasts for 3 years. It provides general education and it covers ages 12-15.

Besides the mainstream *Gymnasio* there are also lower secondary Music Schools, Art Schools, Sport Schools and Religious Schools. Such schools exist only in certain cities and may require some entrance exams. Their certificates are equivalent to that of mainstream lower secondary schools.

For working students over 14 years there is also the provision of evening schools *(Esperino Gymnasio)*.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

For students with special needs there are provisions for special classrooms or schools. In some areas there are also provisions for special vocational training.

Upper secondary education

Upper secondary education *(Lykeio)* lasts for 3 years (ages 15-18) and is not compulsory. There are various paths to follow, according to the orientation and the needs of students.

The *Geniko Lykeio* offers general rounded education and prepares students for university studies. It offers common core subjects and optional subjects of specialisation, which allow students to better prepare for the national entrance exams to university. As of 2019, there are 3 specialisation fields, namely the theoretical (preparing for humanistic studies), the technological, and the science field. These specialisation fields may change from time to time, according to need.

Did you know that in Greece almost all children who want to go to university attend private lessons (frontistirio) in order to prepare for the national entrance exams? Many parents and students consider this to be standard part of secondary education, and some children take private lessons already in primary education. The national exams (panelladikes exetaseis) cause a lot of stress to families and are always a big issue in the media. There is a heated debate about the quality of public education on one side and the contribution of frontistiria *to the economy on the other side.*

In order to counteract this trend, the State provides free support lessons for weaker students after the end of the school day. Be it as it may, the extra private lessons are a common part of school life in Greece.

The Vocational High-School *(Epaggelmatiko Lykeio, EPAL)* consists of two cycles: the 3-year secondary cycle and an optional 1-year apprenticeship cycle. In the 1st year of the secondary cycle, subjects of general education are taught as well as orientation classes. In years 2 and

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

3, vocational classes cover the most time of instruction. The specialisation fields available in each EPAL depend on its infrastructure and on the local economy needs. The EPAL certificate is equivalent to that of the *Geniko Lykeio* and allows students to participate in the national entrance exams.

Music Schools, Art Schools, Sport Schools and Religious Schools are available also at upper secondary level.

For students who are working there are evening schools of both types *(Esperino Lykeio)*, covering the same curriculum as the respective day schools.

Students who have completed the first year of High School, and are between 16 and 23 years old, are entitled to apply to the *Vocational Apprenticeship Schools* (EPAS) of the National Manpower Organisation (OAED). Enrolment is based on the applicants' school grades, as well as on social and economic criteria (income, family circumstances etc.). Studies last for 2 years and students attend theoretical classes as well as workshops. For 4 or 5 days each week they also work as apprentices in a company. Apprentices are paid 75% of the minimum wage of an unskilled worker. EPAS graduates can enter directly the labour market or may re-enter High School.

Post-secondary vocational education and training

Lykeio graduates have the option to pursue vocational training at various institutions, such as Vocational Training Institutes (IEK), Lifelong Learning Centres, Vocational Training Schools (SEK) and Colleges. The Vocational Training Institutes and the Lifelong Learning Centres may be either public or private. Vocational Training Schools are always public, whereas Colleges are always private.

There are also some post-secondary public schools for specific tourism professions, such as the School for Tourist Guides.

Tertiary education

Public universities in Greece do not charge any fees, with the exception of the Hellenic Open University (which offers distance learning). Tertiary education includes the Polytechnics, Higher Technological Institutes, military academies and university courses, as well as the Merchant Marine Academies. Bachelor studies last 4-6 years.

For the time being, the Greek State does not recognize the operation of private universities in the country. The reason for that is that the Constitution does not allow the creation of private universities (Article 16). However, there are many Colleges (registered as post-secondary education institutes) that collaborate with foreign universities and provide graduate degrees in the name of these universities. However, graduates of these colleges are not entitled to post-graduate studies at a Greek university.

Post-graduate studies include master studies and doctoral studies.
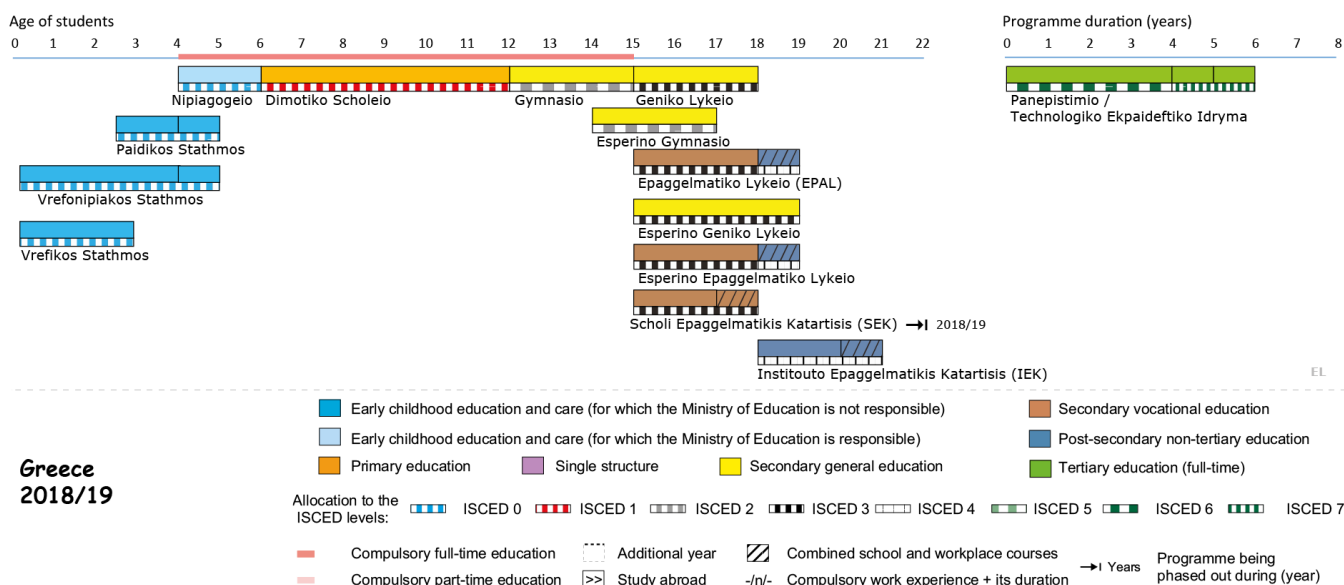
Education system in Greece (Source: Eurydice, 2018)

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

[*Vocational education and training in Europe: Greece*](#)

[*How to study at a Greek university*](#)

[*Study in Greece*](#)

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Administration of the educational system and main curriculum contents

The Greek educational system is highly centralised. This means that the State has exclusive legislative competences on the general organisation of the education system (national educational policy, minimum standards of education, fundamental principles, school staff, quality assurance, financial resources, curriculum etc.).

However, the implementation of the national educational policy is overseen at regional level by the Regional Education Directorates. Locally, the Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education supervise all schools in their area. Municipalities are responsible for the maintenance of school buildings, as well as for pre-school education facilities. At school level, school units make sure they run smoothly.

The curriculum is defined by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. In primary school, the lessons taught per year are:

Subject	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade
Greek	v	v	v	v	v	v
Math	v	v	v	v	v	v
History			v	v	v	v
Religion			v	v	v	v
Environment study	v	v	v	v		
Geography					v	v
Basic Physics					v	v
Social & civic education					v	v
Art education	v	v	v	v	v	v
Gym	v	v	v	v	v	v
English	v	v	v	v	v	v
Flexible zone	v	v	v	v		
2nd foreign language					v	v

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All
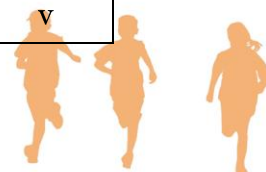
As you may have noticed, English is taught from Grade 1 of primary school. A second foreign language is taught starting from Grade 5, provided there is a sufficient number of pupils. Pupils can choose between French and German. Throughout secondary education, pupils are learning 2 foreign languages, according to the EU strategy for language learning. Besides English, they can choose between French, German, Italian and Spanish, again with the provision that there is a sufficient number of pupils.

Religious instruction is provided throughout primary and secondary education and children are taken to church at specific dates. Parents with a different religion who want their children to be exempted, need to sign an application and give it to the school director right in the beginning of the school year.

> *Did you know?*
>
> *Students have to participate in parades and celebrations for the two National Days, March the 25th and October the 28th.*

The "Flexible Zone" allows the teacher to pursue a variety of activities, including projects, which promote critical and creative thinking, exploration, collaboration, interconnection of knowledge etc.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

In compulsory secondary education *(Gymnasio)*, the subjects taught are as following:

Subject	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade
Greek language	v	v	v
Modern Greek literature	v	v	v
Ancient Greek	v	v	v
Ancient Greek texts in translation	v	v	v
Math	v	v	v
Physics	v	v	v
Chemistry		v	v
Biology	v	v	v
Geology - Geography	v	v	
Domestic economics	v		
Social and civic education			v
Religion	v	v	v
English	v	v	v
2nd foreign language	v	v	v
Gym	v	v	v
Technology	v	v	v
Informatics	v	v	v
Music	v	v	v
Art	v	v	v

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Now think about the following:

− *Are there any similarities with primary and secondary education in your country?*
− *What are the differences?*
− *Which subjects did you find more interesting and useful?*

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Making sense of different educational policies

Education is often thought of as a process that helps individuals to gain knowledge and skills through the content which they must learn. While this is true, education also necessarily promotes certain values that are reflected in the educational policies adopted. These values could cover a variety of areas, such as social, political, cultural or even religious values. Often educational systems are part of a country's cultural and political heritage. The systems have developed over a long period of time.

Some countries have centralised systems of education. Fully centralised systems mean that, for instance, a central ministry of education develops a curriculum. All teachers must strictly follow this curriculum. This may even mean that all schools in a country teach the same content on the same day, according to the central curriculum. Other countries may have very de-centralised systems. In these systems, a federal ministry may define a learning curriculum with learning goals, but it is up to the freedom and expertise of each teacher how to achieve these learning goals.

In a very brief overview, one may describe the different forms of the educational system of a country as:

Centralised ⇔ Decentralised
Collective ⇔ Individualistic
Low autonomy of teachers, learners ⇔ High autonomy of teachers, learners
Learning by heart, collective knowledge ⇔ Critical thinking, individual skills
Low civic responsibility ⇔ High civic responsibility
Low involvement of parents and society ⇔ High involvement of parents and society
Gender-based classes ⇔ Mixed classes (boys and girls together)

The tradition of an educational system also has an impact on the role of parents within the system. In a centralised, collective system, schools supply part of the social education of a child. Parents accept this role of the school and the teachers, and tend not to interfere. Schools and teachers are accepted and respected as educational professionals who know what is best for a child. In de-centralised and more individualistic systems, schools expect a very active involvement of parents in the educational progress of their children. Parents are allowed an active role at school. Parents and teachers are "co-educators" of their children.

For MRP coming from countries with more centralised and collective educational systems, it might be hard to understand that they have to play a new role in their new host country. Some MRP may not address a teacher directly or may not attend parents' meetings because they simply wish to be polite and do not want to interfere with the competence of the teacher.

In general, educational systems are promoting and replicating values through two major ways: a) curriculum choices, the materials chosen within that curriculum, how the material is presented and the range of correct answers etc. and b) cultural, religious, civic or patriotic activities organised by the school. The school environment and extra-curricular activities are also vehicles of promoting certain values.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Now think about the following:

– *Was the educational system in your country more centralized or more decentralized?*
– *Did you have many individual freedoms in learning at school or did you have to follow a strict curriculum?*
– *Where boys and girls in one class or did you have separate classes?*
– *Was religious instruction taught at your school or not?*
– *What particular values were taught at your school?*
– *What role do teachers play in your country's educational system?*
– *What role do parents play in your country's educational system?*

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Main points of the UNCRC Rights of the Child Declaration

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, or UNCRC, is the ground of all of UNICEF's work. It is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history. The UN General Assembly adopted the Convention and opened it for signature on 20 November 1989 while. It came into force on 2 September 1990. Currently, the Convention is ratified by 196 countries, including all the members of United Nation except for the United States, so Greece is involved.

Every human being has, as such, human rights and so do children but many people do not know that there is a treaty that is dedicated just to children. The aim of the UNCRC is to set out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children, whose compliance is monitored by the UN *Committee on the Rights of the Child* (composed of members from countries around the world).

The Convention defines a child as any human being under the age of eighteen, unless the *age of majority* is attained earlier under national legislation, regardless of sex, religion, language, opinions, race, disability or citizenship. It is very important to highlight that it also considers parents have right over their child; meaning that they are entitled to assistance by the State in raising their children and they are entitled to provide their child with advice and guidance. As the convention is an agreement between State parties, individuals as citizens do not have any responsibility to uphold it, unless they work for or act on behalf of their country's government (e.g. if there is an episode of bullying in a school, the school itself has the responsibility to take appropriate actions so that all children can learn in a safe environment. Although the children are not under any obligation, they should surely be guided by the staff not to infringe the rights of the child who is being bullied). The Convention obliges states to allow parents to exercise their parental responsibilities.

It also acknowledges that children have the right to express their opinions and to have those opinions heard and acted upon when appropriate, to be protected from abuse or *exploitation*, and to have their *privacy* protected, and it requires that their lives are not subjected to excessive interference. All judicial systems in the EU countries monitor violations of these UN declarations.

The Convention is made up of 54 articles and three Optional Protocols. The first two Optional Protocols are on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, while the third is related to submission of complaints. However, there are 4 main principles the document is built upon. These general principles are:

1. Non-discrimination
2. The best interest of the child
3. The right to life, survival, and development
4. The right to the children views to be given due weight.

The other rights can be grouped into 5 categories including:

- Civil rights and freedom;
- Family environment and alternative care;
- Health and welfare;
- Education, leisure, and culture; and
- Special measures that cover children in emergency situations, in justice systems, child exploitation and children belonging to minority groups.

The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Convention is assured by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which is made up of independent experts. All States parties are required to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the Convention and rights are

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

being implemented. Violations of child rights may be raised before other committees with the power to consider individual complaints.

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Convention's full text

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Article 12

Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously

Article 15

Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their right

Article 31

Children have the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.

Article 2

The Convention applies to everyone: whatever their race, gender, religion, language or abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Playing, Learning and Living Together

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy.

Article 30

Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

Article 19

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 28

All children have the right to an education

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Main points of the Equalities Act of Greece and implications for education

Discrimination on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, religious or other beliefs, disability or chronic illness, sexual orientation or identity, gender, and family or social status is prohibited in Greece, according to law 4443/2016, in accordance with the EU directive 2000/43/EK. In principle, the law guarantees the right to equal treatment of all individuals in all domains of public and private life[6], such as:

- work, payments, working conditions
- vocational orientation and training
- social care, including social insurance and healthcare
- education
- access to services and goods provided to the public

However, the principle of equal treatment does not overlook the different needs of certain vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Therefore, compensative measures are foreseen for such groups in order to ensure fair treatment. This includes the special provisions made for migrant and

Equality doesn't mean Equity

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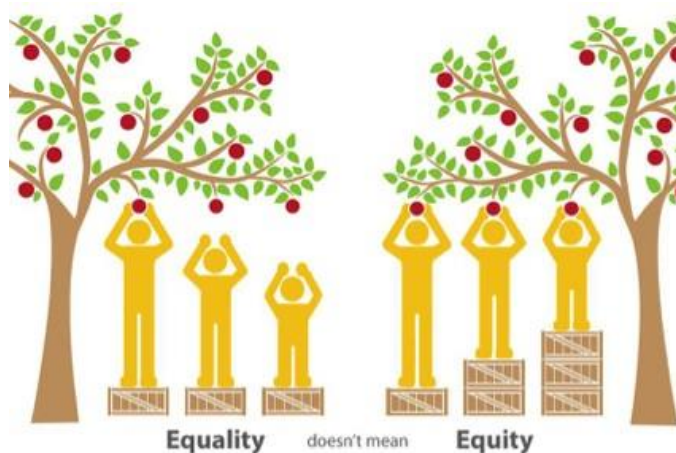
[6] The law states that there may be limitations to equal treatment due to public interest, safety issues, prevention of crime, the protection of the health, rights and freedom of others etc. In addition, Greek and EU citizens may be granted certain privileges not foreseen for Third Country Citizens.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

refugee children, as they will be described below and in other sections of Unit 2.

According to laws 2910/2001 and 4251/2014, all foreign children living in Greece have the same right to and duty for compulsory education as their Greek peers, and they can have access to all public educational activities at any level of education.

For the enrolment of foreign pupils the same documents are required as for the children of Greek citizens. However, enrolment is possible even with incomplete documents for children of recognized refugees, of people coming from unstable areas where there is unrest, of asylum seekers, and of foreigners who reside in Greece but have not settled yet their legal residence.

The Greek Ombudsman is the national equality body with a mandate to combat discrimination and promote the principle of equal treatment.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Expectations and ways of parental engagement in education in the host country

According to the Greek legislation, parents in all public schools (including kindergarten) form a **parent council**. All parents have the right to participate. The directory board of the parent council is elected by the parents; all parent councils have to be legally registered. All parents can take part in the general assembly of the council, even if they are not enrolled in it.

In every public school there is the **school council**, which consists of the teaching staff, the board of the parent council and a representative of the local authorities.

According to law 4415/2016 article 51, parent councils of the same municipality or municipal section or community form a **parent union**. Parent unions of each region or regional section form a **parent federation**. Parent federations across the country form the **Higher Parent Confederation of Parents of Pupils in Greece** (ΑΣΓΜΕ).

Parental representative councils on school, local, regional and national level can be found in many European countries. Such representative institutions of parental rights exist i.e. in Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and many others.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Apart from these official provisions for parent involvement, parents are expected to visit the school and ask the teachers about their children's progress. This can be done not only when grades are given but also at any other time the parents wish. Such an interest is usually very much appreciated by the teaching staff, as they are given the opportunity to discuss directly with the parent any issues related to their children's education, behaviour and needs.

Parents are also expected to check whether their children have done their homework, and, if necessary and possible, support them in doing it. Parents are invited to various events organised by the school and/or the parent council at holidays, end of the school year etc.

At times, Parent Schools are being organised by the local authorities, providing information and training to parents on issues related to behavioural, psychological, social or educational issues. Apart from receiving useful training, attending such schools can help parents to network with each other and better collaborate with school staff.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Role of the teacher in the Greek educational system

In Greece, as in the most parts of the western world, the role of the teacher is going through a profound redefinition due to the changing social, economic and cultural conditions. The teacher has been generally viewed as the depositary of knowledge and the representative of culture of a society and, with particular reference to the Greek context, this role has been often associated with authority and rigour.

Until the 80's the role of the teacher was limited to transferring knowledge and moral values. Traditional teaching methods were used, with the main emphasis on memorizing information and making students conform to the mainstream way of thinking.

Today, however, teachers are required to do much more. They have to help students discern between knowledge and information; help children learn how to learn; organize learning out of school; define the cultural profile of the school.

This implies that the relationship between teachers and students has changed as well. Even though the teacher continues to be the one who opens new ways, his/her role has now become that of a supporter, a

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

counselor, a guide, a collaborator. Teachers are required to be accessible, non-authoritarian, creative and socially sensitized. Their role is to create a welcoming, democratic learning environment that promotes mutual acceptance.

Schools are now required to open up to the community. On the other hand, the success of this new approach to education requires the active engagement of parents in school life and the learning process.

Official support provisions for MRP and students

As it has been described before, migrant and refugee children are entitled to free public education under the same conditions as native children. In order to cater for their special educational needs related to language, there are reception classes that provide intensified language learning and support. The function of these reception classes as well as other measures for intercultural education are described in more detail in Chapter 4.

The ongoing refugee flows during the recent years have created the need for more support provisions. Refugee children are often out of school for several years and need to gradually adapt again to school life. Therefore,

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

there is the provision of the so called Refugee Training Host Structures, operating within the refugee camps and reception centres or in public schools in the afternoons. In these preparatory classes that last 4 hours a day, children are taught Greek, English, math, and computers. They also engage in art and sport activities. The purpose of these classes is to help children gradually re-integrate in school life and regain the sense of safety and stability.

According to migrant and refugee flows, the Greek State organizes from time to time free language courses for adults as well.

Free online training course for beginners:

Filoglossia: Learning Greek as a Foreign Language

Other resources for learning Greek:

Modern Greek Language Teaching Centre

Modern Greek as a Second/Foreign Language

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Suggestions for effective collaboration with school staff and other parents

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication with their children, school staff and other parents.

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school and they play an integral role in assisting their child's learning. Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making.

Here are some suggestions on what you could do to build a good relationship with your children's teachers and other parents:

- Visit frequently your children's school. Try to meet as many teachers as possible and ask them about your children's progress.
- When you receive information sheets from the school don't ignore them just because you don't know Greek well. Try to find a friend or another parent who can explain to you what the paper is about.
- Try to get to know the parents of your children's classmates. A smile can be the best start!
- Do your best to attend parent meetings and events organized by school. This is appreciated.
- Avoid being distant or "invisible". This would create only mistrust or even suspicion in the worst case.

You will find many more ideas on how to collaborate with school staff and other parents in Chapter 4.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Culturally appropriate ways of communicating complaints or disagreements in educational settings

"I do not agree." This short and simple sentence has the effect of stiffening and making anyone uncomfortable. In fact, most people feel annoyance when they hear it.

If you do not know how to express disagreement, it is better to think twice before you say something that might offend others.

Expressing the disagreement with somebody else can be a source of problems:

– How will your interlocutor react?
– Will he/she thank you?
– Will he/she make a fake smile?

When you express the disagreement you may be too direct – or even rude, aggressive or pedantic, and your personal relationships may be affected. There are few people who accept to be contradicted. It is necessary to learn to use some diplomatic and courteous ways to say "no".

When you disagree with someone, remember that it is crucial to address the issue and not the person. So you need a bit of strategy and a bit more diplomacy:

1. Express the disagreement only partially
"I agree with you up to a certain point, but ..."
"I understand what you say, but ..."
"I see what you say, however ..."

2. Use words or phrases to soften your disagreement
"I'm sorry, but I do not agree ..."
"Yes, but don't you think ...?"

3. Avoid negative expressions such as…
"It's a bad idea!"

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

"I do not think it's a good idea."

"I do not agree with you!"

"I do not share your proposal."

"This is the worst idea!"

"I'm not sure it's the best idea."

4. Pay attention to your non-verbal language

Our bodies have their own "language". Body language is just as important as the words you use. So when you express disagreement, pay attention to your non-verbal signs:

− Avoid facial expressions of amazement or disagreement, do not shake your head, or roll your eyes, and do not fidget restlessly or nervously when someone is speaking.

− Avoid whispering (like a conspirator) with another person.

− Do not intimidate the person who is speaking.

And a last note on culture: Greek people are used to expressing openly their opinions. Therefore, you don't need to feel that you have to suppress your opinion. Saying what you think in a tactful but assertive way will gain you the respect of others and will make them listen more carefully to what you say.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

How can the school of my children be improved?

Analyse the situation in your children's school according to the table below. Based on the contents of this topic, try to come up with realistic suggestions for improvement.

	1	2	3	4
Needs				
Causes				
Consequences				
Difficulty to correct (low-medium-high)				
Suggestions for Improvement				

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

What do you think of the Greek school system?

Each educational systems has its strengths and weaknesses. Although education in Greece differs from that provided in your country, your children are certainly provided with some unique opportunities. So try to view the facts in a critical, realistic and balanced way. The table below can help you in that.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Did the results surprise you? In any case, try to make the most out of the strengths and opportunities! Think of ways to counteract, if possible, the weaknesses of the Greek education system and the "threats" it may pose to your children.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Review of Chapter 3

centralised
public
free

compulsory
education: 4-15
years, preschool
to lower
secondary

Greek
education
system

equal access
of foreign
pupils

parent councils
school-home
communication

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Suggested group activities

Activity 1

All MRP in the group are invited to share their personal experience related to:

1. First entry into the Greek educational system;

2. How they faced the critical issues encountered during the educational process of their children;

3. How they manage the relationships with teachers and school staff.

Activity 2

Invite all MRP, after sharing their experiences, to reinterpret another parent's story, in order to underline the strengths and the weaknesses of the experience narrated.

At the end of the discussion the trainer will provide feedback on the main points that emerged from the group's activity.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

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Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

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What did I learn?

Assessment 1: Educational opportunities and paths within the Greek educational system

Below you will find a number of statements about the Greek education system, and it is your task to decide whether these statements are true or false. If you think a statement is false, consider what is wrong about the statement and make note of this.

1. **All public education in Greece is free of charge.**

   True or False?

2. **Compulsory education is for 9 years and starts with primary education at the age of 6.**

   True or False?

3. **Parents can enrol their children in school at any time of the year.**

   True or False?

4. **Social and economic factors are taken into account for enrolment in certain educational provisions with limited places, such as nursery schools and Apprenticeship Vocational Schools.**

   True or False?

5. **Music, art and sport schools are available only in certain cities.**

   True or False?

6. **The Apprenticeship Vocational Schools give a certificate that is equivalent to that of High School (Lykeio).**

   True or False?

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

7. Successful participation in national entrance exams are required to be admitted to university.

    True or False?

8. There are officially recognised private universities in Greece.

    True or False?

Assessment 2: Administration of the educational system, main curriculum contents and educational policies

Below you will find unfinished statements about the administration and main curriculum contents of the Greek educational system, as well as about educational policies. Choose the right ending to each statement.

1. The Greek education system is:
   a) decentralised
   b) centralised
   c) semi-centralised

2. The curriculum is defined by:
   a) the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs
   b) the Regions
   c) the schools

3. A second foreign language is taught starting from:
   a) Grade 1 of primary school
   b) Grade 5 of primary school
   c) Grade 1 of secondary school

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

4. **Parents who do not belong to the Christian Orthodox religion:**
   a) have to send their children to religion lessons and to church
   b) have to send their children to religion lessons but not to church
   c) can ask for their children to be exempted from the religion lesson and from church-going

5. **Educational policies reflect:**
   a) social and cultural values
   b) political values
   c) all of the above

6. **Educational systems may promote different values in terms of:**
   a) critical thinking and independence
   b) civic responsibility
   c) all of the above

Assessment 3: Main points of the UNCRC Rights of the Child Declaration – main points of the Equalities Act in Greece and implications for education

Below you will find a number of open questions about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Equalities Act in Greece. Please briefly answer these questions.

1. What is the aim of UNCRC?
2. What does the UNCRC say about the rights of parents?
3. What are the 4 principles the UNCRC is built on?
4. Does the principle of equal treatment in the Greek legislation overlook the special needs of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups?
5. If you want to appeal to an authority because of discrimination incidents or unfair treatment, where would you go?

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

Assessment 4: Parental engagement and teacher role

Below you will find a number of statements about the role of parents and teachers in the Greek education system, and it is your task to decide whether these statements are true or false. If you think a statement is false, consider what it is that is wrong about the statement and make note of this.

1. **Only Greek parents can participate in parent councils.**
   True or False?

2. **All parents can take part in the general assembly of the parent council, even if they are not enrolled in it.**
   True or False?

3. **Parents are expected to come to school only when grades are handed out.**
   True or False?

4. **Parents are not expected to interfere with the homework of their children.**
   True or False?

5. **The role of teachers has changed in the Greek education system during the last decades.**
   True or False?

6. **Teachers are required to be accessible, non-authoritarian, and socially sensitised.**
   True or False?

7. **It is the responsibility of schools to open to the community; parents cannot support this process.**
   True or False?

Assessment 5: Official support provisions for MRP and students

Below you will find a number of open questions about the official support provisions for MRP and students in Greece.

1. What happens with foreign students who have no proficiency in the Greek language?

2. What is the purpose of the Refugee Training Host Structures and what training is provided there?

3. Are there standard language courses for migrant and refugee adults?

Assessment 6: Suggestions for effective collaboration with school staff and other parents

Below you will find statements about parent and school collaboration. Please complete the statements by choosing one of the options.

1. **When parents visit frequently their children's school in order to ask about the progress of the children, teachers:**

   a) are annoyed and avoid contact

   b) appreciate this interest

   c) are not affected by this

2. **When you receive information sheets from school but they are in Greek:**

   a) you can ignore them, as important information is always translated into parent's languages

   b) ask your children what this is about

   c) try to find a friend or another parent who can precisely explain to you what the paper is about

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

3. **When there are parent meetings and school events:**

   a) you do not need to attend, because the presence of foreign parents is not desired

   b) do your best to attend as this will help you to build good relationships with school staff and other parents

   c) it doesn't make any difference whether you attend or not

4. **Being distant or "invisible":**

   a) will help you to be more tolerated and accepted by other parents

   b) will help you to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings

   c) can be misunderstood and create mistrust

Assessment 7: Culturally appropriate ways of communicating complaints or disagreements in educational settings

1. Below you will find a number of diplomatic phrases to use in certain situations, as well as phrases that should better be avoided. Put these expressions in appropriate categories.

1. "It's a bad idea!"
2. "I understand what you say, but ..."
3. "I'm sorry, but I do not agree ..."
4. "I'm not sure it's the best idea."
5. "Yes, but don't you think ...?"
6. "I do not think it's a good idea."
7. "I agree with you up to a certain point, but ..."
8. "I do not agree with you!"
9. "I see what you say, however ..."
10. "I do not share your proposal."
11. "This is the worst idea!"

Partial disagreement	Words or phrases to soften your disagreement	Phrases that should be avoided

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers

Parents for All

2. *Which statement is correct?*

    a) Greek people like it when you express your opinion openly, in an assertive yet tactful way

    b) Greek people prefer to express their opinions indirectly

    c) Suppressing your opinion will gain you the respect of Greek people

For the correct answers, click [here](#).

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

CHAPTER 4: SUPPORT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURALISM

What will I learn?

How the educational system promotes interculturalism

How to better collaborate with your children's school for the promotion of interculturalism

How to recognise acute needs of better intercultural understanding in the educational environment of your children

Why is it important?

The educational systems of European countries have adopted agendas for intercultural education. This means that the school system, activities and curriculum are organised in such a way as to promote intercultural understanding. Diversity is accepted and valued.

As a parent you can do a lot to collaborate with your children's school in order to develop their intercultural skills. By better understanding the purpose of certain school activities you can engage in more meaningful communication with your children, school staff and other parents. Your active engagement can lead to more satisfaction for the whole school community.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Key points in the national agenda for intercultural education

At its core, intercultural education has two focal points:

1) It celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity in all areas of human life. It sensitises the learner to the idea that humans have naturally developed a range of different ways of life, customs and worldviews, and that this breadth of human life enriches all of us.

2) It promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination, and promotes the values upon which equality is built.

Intercultural education is embedded in knowledge and understanding, skills and capacities, attitudes and values. Intercultural education is integrated with all subjects and with the general life of the school.

The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) addresses the cultural rights issue and stresses the role of education in that "all persons should be entitled to quality education and training that fully respects their cultural identity".

The curriculum notes that language has a vital role to play in children's development. Whatever the child's first language and whatever the language of instruction in the school, children clarify ideas and acquire new concepts through the interaction of language and experience. In doing so they learn to make sense of their world.

Greece – Intercultural agenda

As described in the previous chapter, the Greek education system is centralized. This means that the same provisions for migrant and refugee children apply throughout the country. **The purpose of intercultural education is the elimination of inequalities and social exclusion.**

According to the Greek law, all migrant and refugee children under 18 years have the right to receive education under the same conditions as

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Greek children, which means free primary and secondary education. In addition, there are certain provisions to favour the faster integration of refugee and migrant children in the school system. So called *reception classes* provide intensified classes of Greek and support for all lessons. Schools have to evaluate the need for the creation of reception classes and proceed accordingly. The minimum number for the creation of reception classes are 9 MR/ECM children.

Children who speak very little or no Greek can attend certain subjects in the regular classroom, where language skills in Greek are not crucial. These subjects are usually Foreign Language, Music Education, Art and gym. The other subjects are taught in the reception class, in addition to Greek for beginners. A pupil can attend this type of reception class (type 1) for one year or more, if necessary.

Children who know Greek at medium level attend lessons with their classmates but they are provided assistance in language and other subjects as needed by a second teacher, either during the class or afterwards. A pupil can benefit from this assistance (reception class type 2) for up to three years.

Children are given evaluation tests in order to assess their level of Greek and determine the support they need. **Parents are required to fill out an application that they want their child to attend a reception class.**

During the last years, school books have been revised in order to reflect the increasingly multicultural nature of the Greek society and to promote intercultural understanding.

Another provision are the Experimental Schools for Intercultural Education, which collaborate closely with universities. Such schools pilot innovative pedagogical methods and training materials, with the purpose to later mainstream the most effective approaches in all public schools.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Think of the following:

Having your children in school has made it easier for you to understand the system?

How do you see cultural diversity being addressed in your children's school?

What aspects could be included that would improve children's integration?

UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

School activities promoting interculturalism

In the belief that intercultural learning cannot be separated from the rest of the curriculum or from school-life, an intercultural curriculum for primary schools should be based on the social pillar of learning – learning to live together (Delors 1996).

This would:

- stimulate students' interest in the lives of others based on shared experience, interaction, reciprocity and respect between different cultural groups;

- help students not shy away from controversy or conflict, recognising that working with cultural diversity is likely to be "difficult and challenging" as well as "exciting and fascinating" (Byram 2006, p. 5); and

- support students to develop the skills, knowledge, dispositions and capabilities to get to know and get along with people they see as different from themselves in learning to live together in a culturally diverse and interconnected world.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Involving external visitors from different cultural backgrounds in primary school students' activities in the classroom does indeed help to reduce those students' cultural stereotypes and prejudices and enhance their cultural knowledge (Christou & Puigvert, 2011).

Role plays and simulations: these help students to experience at first-hand what it is like to be different, to be criticized, or to be marginalized or excluded.

Analysing texts, films, and plays: depending on the choice of text, film, or play, and the teacher's framing of the exercise, which could involve asking students to explain their own judgments or to take the perspective of characters that have been depicted, this type of activity can be used to build knowledge and understanding of people from diverse cultural backgrounds, to stimulate critical reflection on cultural issues, and to enhance openness, empathy, respect, critical thinking skills, and the valuing of human dignity, human rights, and cultural diversity.

Short film: **Gobblynne**. *Can you discern how this film is related to interculturalism?*

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Collaboration of parents with school staff and other parents

It is important that all the members of the school community, that is children, parents, teachers, support staff, and management, are included in the process of creating a school that values cultural diversity, and are involved in the collective responsibility of developing and maintaining an inclusive and intercultural school.
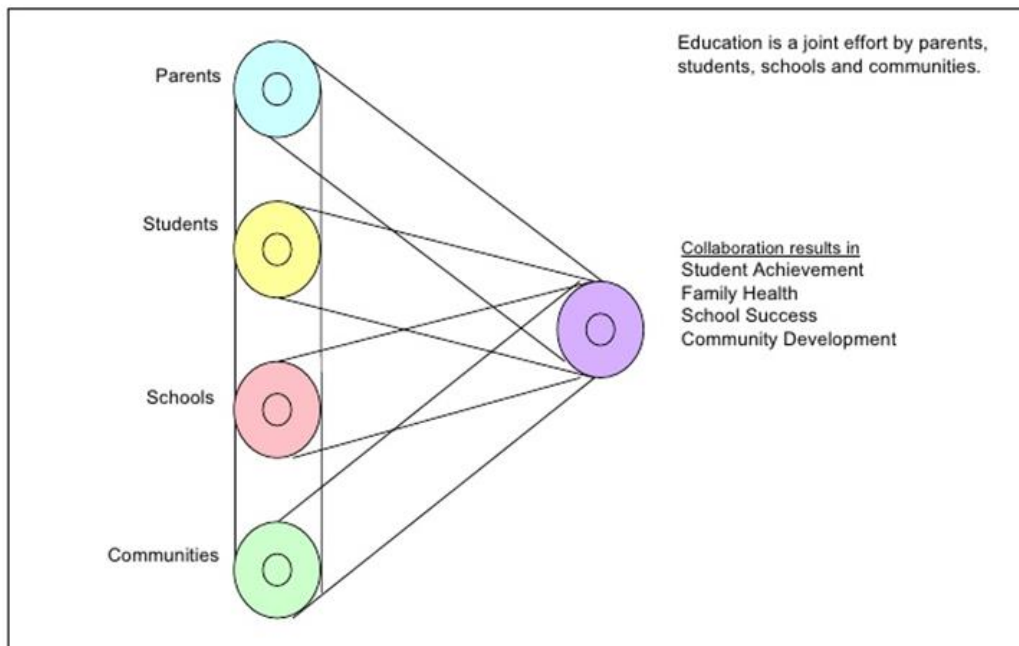
According to the Australian Government, there are a number of **key elements** for the development of effective family-school partnership:

- Communication, which includes: being clear, honest, and listening actively.

- Commitment: being flexible, encouraging the child and family, being accessible, including empathy.

- For an equal family-school relationship: willingness to explore options and valuing others; positive action, being willing to learn and meeting individual needs.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

- Trust and respect, which includes: being discreet, non-judgemental, valuing the child.

Schools also have a role in building relationships with parents to get them involved in school life and in their children's learning and development. Letting families know that they are welcome in the school building, greeting them when they arrive, and posting signs in their native language are just a few ways to communicate to parents that they are valued members of the school community.

Providing a Family Resource Centre, as will be discussed in the following section, is another way to demonstrate that families are welcome at school. Parents and other family members are also more likely to trust that the school values their involvement when they see people who share their cultural and linguistic background among the school staff.

- *Describe any challenges your child faces at school.*

- *How do parents and community members participate in school activities? How can the school build parental engagement in activities that are focused on student learning?*

- *Does the school celebrate events that matter to the school community, such as significant cultural days?*

 What does parent involvement mean to you?

What do you wish you had known before about your child's education?

What ideas do you have to share with other parents?

Parent involvement matters!

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Strengthening Collaboration Between Schools and Families

Family - School Partnerships Framework: A guide for schools and families

Working with Culturally Diverse Families

The role of parents in recognising the need for better intercultural understanding at school

Think of the following scenarios:

- *Your son had a fight with a classmate of migrant origin. He returns home infuriated and makes some derogatory comments about the ethnicity of his classmate.*

- *Your daughter cannot understand why a classmate from a different religion doesn't celebrate her birthday.*

What will you do to help your children develop an open-minded, tolerant and respectful attitude? How will you discuss about your own values, without ridiculing the values of others?

Such incidents are very common in today's schools. Sometimes teachers do something to cope with such issues. But what if they don't?

Be quick to discern the need for better intercultural understanding between your children and their classmates. Be attentive to their feelings about school – if they want to go to school, if they feel good with their classmates. Discuss with them everything that concerns them about diversity. Take the initiative to help your children to develop skills, behaviours and attitudes that enable them to appreciate and respect others from different communities and cultures at school. Help them appreciate and value their own and others' cultural perspectives and

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

practices, and find out about the similar and different ways people communicate in family and cultural groups.

Parents can help their child develop intercultural understanding by:
- understanding the influence of your own cultural values, attitudes and beliefs
- showing interest in and learning about other cultures
- interacting positively with people from diverse backgrounds
- talking about the ways that different cultural groups are presented in the media.

Mutual understanding and accepting different cultures is a prerequisite for successful parental involvement in schools. Your attentiveness to your children's needs in this issue can be of great importance not only for their personal development, but also for helping them to enjoy more school. You could even speak with the teachers about the needs you have noticed and exchange ideas how these needs could be met through school activities.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All
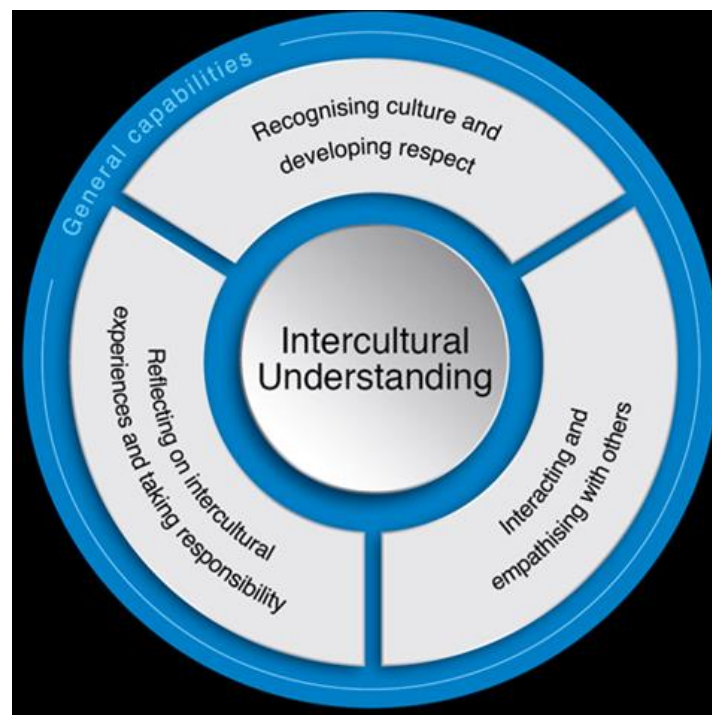
Identify the need for intercultural understanding

Read the following document about the degrees of intercultural understanding. The document analyses the 3 dimensions presented in the previous graph. You will find that for each of these dimensions different fields of intercultural understanding are described and different levels that can be achieved according to the student's age:

Intercultural Understanding learning continuum

Now think:

1) What concrete actions can you take as a parent to support the objectives of this document in the fields a) *Recognising culture and developing respect?* and b) *Challenge stereotypes and prejudices?*

2) Please select three more objectives or elements from the whole table and indicate how you could pursue them in your daily life.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Potential for initiatives by parent organisations to promote interculturalism in school

Schools encourage parents to become involved in their children's schooling in a number of ways, from participation in fund-raising and grounds activities to Parent and Citizens Associations, to school boards, to inclusion in classroom activities.

Some good practices and actions from parent organizations can be:

• courses and classes for parents • parenting courses • parental involvement in school, including classroom literacy and numeracy activities • parents celebrating diversity • parent-to-parent activities/support – including interpretation/translation • developing an inclusive school ethos through ongoing provision of appropriate school-community programmes • intercultural days/weeks/events • provision of language classes for parents • policy formation – parents, teachers, pupils, community • newsletters in a variety of languages • promoting good attendance

Actions to promote engagement

➢ Create a multicultural welcoming committee at school made up of parents, staff and community members.
➢ Prepare material about the education system, the school area, educational resources and the possibility of parent involvement or asking questions in the school.
➢ Celebrate informal recreational, leisure and cultural events where you can improve relationships with parents and teachers.

Thinking about cultural diversity

Building community connections

Intercultural responsiveness

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

### Establishing parent-school communication

Read the following experience:

"We decided to arrange an informal meeting one Saturday at twelve in the morning. We informed parents that this was not a "formal talk or meeting" but rather an informal event where we could enjoy the opportunity of talking to everyone over an aperitif. We also arranged child care facilities for anyone who required it. However we did not harbour great expectations with regard to the number of parents who would attend and at the outset we were quite disillusioned. On the Saturday in question, teachers and the SMT were waiting hopefully in the library the arrival of parents (we had ordered a catering service which we thought might go to waste.) Slowly but surely the parents began to arrive and within 30 minutes the library had filled up and the meeting spilled out into other rooms. Conversations between parents and teachers sprung up spontaneously as did conversations between parents themselves... One mother who was completely alone asked us to introduce her to other mothers from her home country. We did this and the group of mothers suggested setting up a network where they could contact people from the same country as themselves. The newly arrived mother in question is now an active member of the school community and has fond memories of this first meeting" (INDIE Head Teacher, Madrid, Spain). (Rashid and Tickñy, 2010, p. 37).

Now think about the following questions:

– What can help in the establishment of such networks?

– What can help to bring about conversations between teachers and parents?

– What aspects are important in your experience to be able to discuss with your children's teachers?

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

– Do you have any experience about relationships with teachers when you first arrived in the host country? Was it positive or negative? How did it affect your collaboration with school afterwards?
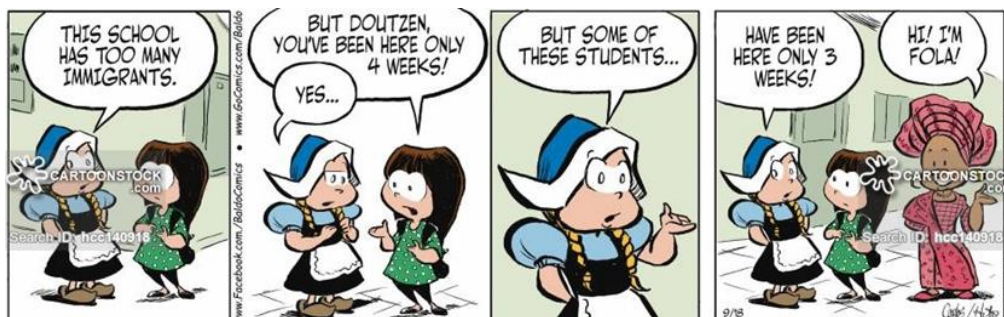
Case study: Parent mentors create bridge between schools and bilingual families

Read the following real case and then consider the questions:

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District has a diverse student body — 60 languages are spoken in 33 schools. Almost 10 percent of the borough's population is Alaska Native; 8 percent of students are English language learners.

The Parent Mentor Program provides new parents with a parent mentor who speaks their language and orients them to the school building and staff. One of the main functions of the parent mentor is to check in with new families on a weekly basis and see how things are going. When families cannot be reached by phone, the mentors visit their homes. If there is an attendance problem, for example, parent mentors tell families that they miss the child and ask if there is anything they can do to help.

Parent mentors provide positive, welcoming outreach services in many other ways, as well: they are on hand to welcome families as they drop off and pick up their children from school; they meet children as they get off the bus; they send out greeting cards, invitations to meetings, and other

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

communications to bilingual families; they call absentee children; and they participate in meetings and conferences as interpreters. The duties and function of mentors vary depending on the school and the structure the principal creates. One principal has created a structure for the mentor and specific tasks like keeping a journal and keeping track of parent contacts. A parent resource specialist coordinates the program and helps the mentors with any concerns and questions.

Nancy Castillo, a parent resource specialist at James B. Ryan Middle School, emphasizes to mentors the importance of taking the time to build trust. "When I oriented the parent mentors to the role, I told them that the most important thing they can do is to treat families like I treat you — with respect." A simple thing Castillo and all the mentors do is make communications personal — either by handwriting notes on printed flyers, making phone calls, or paying home visits. "The children love to see us in their own communities," Castillo says.

Fernandez, a Spanish-speaking parent mentor, discusses one of the breakthroughs she had with a parent on one of her home visits. "The first two times we visited her home, we talked through the door, because the mother was ashamed that she didn't have furniture. A third time, she invited us in for coffee and we talked about how important it is for her son to be in school. From that day on, she has come to school every day to make sure her son is there. She also makes sure his homework is in on time."

Fernandez said this incident really made her realize the impact that talking directly with a family can have. Yelena Linse, a parent mentor who speaks Russian, talks about how thankful a Russian parent was when Linse contacted her and started speaking her native language. She had many questions and Linse was able to provide her with a list of helpful agencies. Linse even offered to go with the parent to help.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Family communication always begins as positive and welcoming, so that if there is a problem down the road that needs to be communicated, a positive relationship between the mentor and family has already been established. Parents are encouraged to contact mentors if they have questions or concerns throughout the year. Mentors also encourage other parents to volunteer at the school. Sometimes mentors watch other parents' children in the parent resource room while those parents volunteer.

Lucy Glora, who was a Spanish-speaking parent mentor, was recently hired to be the bilingual secretary for the district's Title III office. She explains that she was motivated to become a parent mentor because she remembers how it felt to be new to the district and to be frustrated that the teachers could not speak her language. "Now I want to help other families who don't speak English — I understand how they feel."

Mary Mathis, another Spanish-speaking parent mentor, explains that her most important role is to put families at ease and orient them to the school. One of the first things she does for new families is to introduce them to the teachers and principal. "I say to the families, I am here to help you, interpret for you, and if I can't help you, I will find another staff person who can." Mathis also makes phone calls home to families on teachers' behalf, to invite them to a school function, for example. "This works better that just sending a flyer home, which could get lost." Mathis also encourages families to help their children as much as they can with learning. She offers some suggestions to school staff members on how they can be more welcoming to families who don't speak English:

–   Make sure that families can visit the school at times that are convenient for them.
–   Be aware that your body language and facial expressions are important to parents' first impressions of the school.

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

- Your smile as they come through the door will put them more at ease in a potentially intimidating environment.
- Introduce new families to the principal.

Although the program was at first funded by Title I money, now it is funded primarily from Title III (limited English proficient) dollars and a Development and Implementation Grant, so parent mentors work at both Title I and non–Title I schools. Because of budget cuts, parent mentors this year work fewer than 20 hours a week. Although the parent mentors provide orientations to all new families in the district, there are only some schools that have mentors, so they are very busy. In previous years, parent mentors were trained to be certified translators and regularly translated enrolment forms and family communications into several languages.

Because No Child Left Behind stipulates that districts implement an effective means of outreach to parents of limited English proficient children and provide information such as individual achievement on state assessments in an "understandable format," these parent mentors serve a very important purpose. Now, the state is attempting to have uniform statewide forms translated into at least 15 languages, so mentors can spend their time doing more outreach activities.

"One challenge to this program," says Sipe, "has been finding parents who are bilingual, willing to work less than 15 hours a week, and feel comfortable with the school environment themselves, and who are able to take a leadership role to be able to help others who feel less comfortable and intimidated."

Source: Adolescent Literacy - http://www.adlit.org/article/21522/

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Questions:

– Comment on the positive aspects of this experience

– Point out aspects that may be more complicated or may be weaknesses

– Can you describe any similar good intercultural experience at your children's school or at another school?

– Would you welcome such a parent mentor programme in your community?

– Would you like to become a parent mentor? Why yes or why not?

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Look at the following table and think about the following:

– In which of these activities do you actively take part?

– Are there any activities you do not want to take part in? Why is that?

– Do you feel that you could do more to support your children at school?

Table 1. Parental Practices According to Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement (2001)

Dimensions	Practices of Parents
Obligations toward and support for the child	• Ensure the child's well-being: physical health, nutrition, clothing, hygiene • Talk with the child • Take part in education groups
Home–school communication	• Meet with the teacher • Attend information sessions • Obtain support for parents from the school
Family involvement in school life	• Attend training sessions • Attend school activities • Attend extracurricular activities • Visit the classroom • Volunteer
Parental involvement in the child's schoolwork at home	• Supervise homework • Support the work of the teachers
Parental participation in decision-making, managing and defending the child's interests (advocacy)	• Support school programs • Sit on decision-making committees, organizational boards, parents' committees at the school commission • Engage in advocacy for children's interests
Partnership with the school, businesses, or other local organizations	• Meet with businesses, social clubs, community organizations

Source: Quinones & Kiyama (2014).

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Review of Chapter 4

 Try to find out what school activities are designed for the promotion of interculturalism

 Be attentive to signs that your children resent classmates with a different religion, culture etc.

 Talk about and explore diversity with your children

 Collaborate with teachers and other parents to promote intercultural understanding

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Suggested group activity

Intercultural message of a photo

Objectives/Competencies

- To read the intercultural message of a photo
- To formulate intercultural messages
- To describe feelings related with people from other cultures

Time

- 50 minutes

Resources

- A photo (in digital form) with intercultural messages
- Laptop, projector

Steps of the activity:

- The trainer projects the photo, parents have to write down the message of the presented photo
- Each parent reads the message

Reflection and evaluation

- The trainer starts a discussion about comparing the messages written by different parents
- The trainer asks parents about the similarities between the messages written by different parents and their cultural implications

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

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Page 111: http://www.asiapacificmle.net/?p=169
Page 113: https://www.slideshare.net/joelknitzberg/school-family-community-partnerships

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

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Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

What did I learn?

Assessment 1: Key points in the national agenda for intercultural education

Please answer the below questions about the Greek agenda for intercultural education.

1. Are migrant and refugee children entitled to free primary and secondary education? Do any special conditions apply?

2. Which two types of reception classes exist currently?

3. What are parents required to do in order for their children to attend a reception class? On what does the formation of such a class depend?

Assessment 2: School activities promoting interculturalism

Below you will find a number of statements about school activities promoting interculturalism, and it is your task to decide whether these statements are true or false. If you think a statement is false, consider what it is wrong about the statement and make note of this.

1. **Intercultural learning stimulates students' interest in the lives of others based on shared experience, interaction, cooperation and respect between different cultural groups.**

   True or False?

2. **Intercultural learning helps students avoid conflict.**

   True or False?

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

3. Intercultural learning supports students to develop the skills, knowledge, and capabilities to avoid people they see as different from themselves.

   True or False?

4. Involving outside visitors from different cultural backgrounds in primary school students' activities in the classroom helps to reduce those students' cultural stereotypes and prejudices.

   True or False?

5. Role plays and simulations help students to experience what it is like to be different, to be criticized, or excluded.

   True or False?

6. Analysing texts, films, and plays cannot effectively be used to build knowledge and understanding of people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

   True or False?

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

Assessment 3: The role of parents in recognising the need for better intercultural understanding at school – Collaboration of parents with school staff and other parents

On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being 'completely disagree' and 5 'completely agree'), how do you feel about the following statements? Please circle the number that most closely reflects your feelings.

1. Parents need to be quick to recognise the need for better intercultural understanding between their children and their children's classmates.

   1   2   3   4   5

2. Parents shouldn't pay too much attention to their children's feelings about school – whether they want to go to school, whether they feel good about their classmates depends largely on their age.

   1   2   3   4   5

3. Parents should let their children independently develop skills, behaviours and attitudes that would enable them to appreciate and respect others from different communities and cultures at school.

   1   2   3   4   5

4. Parents can help their child develop intercultural understanding by:

   a) understanding the influence of their own cultural values, attitudes and beliefs

   1   2   3   4   5

   b) showing interest in and learning about other cultures

   1   2   3   4   5

   c) interacting positively with people from diverse backgrounds

   1   2   3   4   5

   d) adopting a critical or cautious attitude towards the ways that different cultural groups are presented in the media

Unit 2: Empowering MRP for social inclusion
Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Parents for All

<div align="center">1   2   3   4   5</div>

6. It is important that all the members of the school community are included in the process of creating a school that values cultural diversity and maintains an inclusive and intercultural environment.

<div align="center">1   2   3   4   5</div>

7. It is not the role of schools, but of parents to build relationships with schools and get involved in school life and in their children's learning and development.

<div align="center">1   2   3   4   5</div>

8. Parents and other family members are more likely to trust that the school values their involvement when they see people who share their cultural and linguistic background among the school staff.

<div align="center">1   2   3   4   5</div>

Assessment 4: Potential for initiatives by parent organisations to promote interculturalism in school

List 5–10 good practices and actions from parent organizations that can promote interculturalism in school.

For the correct answers, click here.

LINK TO POST-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Congratulations! You have just completed both training units of the *Parents for All* training course. Would you like to see whether this training did any difference to your attitudes? Then go to the Post-Training Attitude Assessment. The questions will be familiar; you did that test before you started. The point is: do the test again and compare the results to that of the first time!

If you would like to evaluate this training material and provide us with some feedback, then please complete the Evaluation Questionnaire.

APPENDIX

Answer sheets to assessment activities

Chapter 1

Assessment 1

1. Assimilation

2. Integration

3. Integration

4. Integration

5. Assimilation

Assessment 2

1. a) Social network

2. b) Civic engagement

3. a) Language

4. c) Employment

Assessment 3

See the paragraph with mistakes corrected below – the corrected sections are *emphasised in red*.

Multiculturalism *may mean different things in different places*. It refers to the co-existence of diverse cultures within a society. Interculturalism, *places* emphasis on communication. Interculturalism facilitates *dialogue* and *two-way understanding between people from different backgrounds*. Interculturalism is often viewed as involving an *openness* between people and different cultures. According to multicultural approaches, cultural practices,

rights and well-being of minority groups should be *respected and accommodated*. Multiculturalism refers to the reality of diversity and to a moral stance that diversity is *desirable*. Interculturalism also includes deep understanding and *respect* for all cultures. There is *two-way* exchange of ideas and the development of deep relationships. Intercultural dialogue takes place within the context of human dignity, human rights and the rule of law. Multiculturalism *is important with regard to both politics and people's everyday lives.*

Assessment 4

1. b) Interpersonal
2. b) Enriching
3. a) Trust
4. c) Barriers
5. b) Listening to

Assessment 5

If you circled 4 or 5 ('agree' or 'strongly agree') for questions 1 and 2, and 1 or 2 ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree') for questions 3 and 4, that means you are highly self-aware and analyse your own attitudes, values and preconceived ideas actively. If you circled 3 ('don't know') or something else, you may want to think about these themes a little bit more – it may be helpful to return to training materials.

Assessment 6

1. True
2. False - it means quite the opposite: active citizenship is about actively participating in public life on local, national and/or global levels.
3. True
4. False - while voting is compulsory in some places - e.g. Australia where you will be fined if you don't vote - in most places it is up to you to decide if you want to vote.
5. False - volunteering provides you with a number of transferrable skills such as interpersonal, listening and decision making skills.
6. True
7. True

Back to the assessment activities of Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Assessment 1

1. True

2. False

3. False

4. True

5. True

Assessment 2

1. a; 2. b; 3. c; 4. c.

Assessment 3

1. True	7. False
2. True	8. True
3. False	9. True
4. True	10. False
5. False	11. True
6. False	12. True

Assessment 4

In order to teach children about diversity, all statements except 4 should be ticked.

Assessment 5

Possible answers:
- watch documentaries on history of different cultures
- watch movies that portray cultural integration
- don't laugh at racist jokes or engage in chats that put forward stereotypes
- cook with your children
- stimulate children's interest in learning a new language
- create games in which children have to engage with learning about other countries and cultures
- visit cultural places of other communities in your city
- take part in other cultural groups' festivals and other cultural celebrations along with your children

Chapter 3

Assessment 1

1. True

2. False. Compulsory education is for 11 years and starts with kindergarten at the age of 4.

3. False. Enrolment takes place at specific periods of the year, usually in May.

4. True.

5. True.

6. False. The High School certificate is superior.

7. True.

8. False. The operation of private universities is forbidden by the Constitution. There are, however, colleges that collaborate with foreign universities and offer undergraduate and graduate course.

Assessment 2

1. b; 2. a; 3. b; 4. c; 5. c; 6. c.

Assessment 3

1. The aim of the UNCRC is to set out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children.

2. The UNCRC considers parents to have right over their child; meaning that they are entitled to assistance by the State in raising their children and they are entitled to provide their child with advice and guidance. The Convention obliges states to allow parents to exercise their parental responsibilities.

3. The 4 principles are:

a) Non-discrimination

b) The best interest of the child

c) The right to life, survival, and development

d) The right to the children views to be given due weight

4. The principle of equal treatment does not overlook the different needs of certain vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Therefore, compensative measures are foreseen for such groups in order to ensure fair treatment. This includes the special provisions made for migrant and refugee children.

5. To the Greek Ombudsman. It is the national equality body with a mandate to combat discrimination and promote the principle of equal treatment.

Assessment 4

1. False. All parents can participate in parent councils.

2. True.

3. False. It is very much appreciated when parents visit regularly the school and ask the teachers about their children's progress.

4. False. Parents are expected to check whether their children have done their homework and if necessary help them.

5. True.

6. True.

7. False. For schools to open up successfully to the community, the active engagement of parents in school life and the learning process is required.

Assessment 5

1. There are reception classes that provide intensified language learning and support.

2. The purpose of Refugee Training Host Structures is to help children gradually re-integrate in school life and regain the sense of safety and stability. Lessons last 4 hours a day, including Greek, English, math, and computers, as well as art and sport activities.

3. No, there are no standard provisions of language training. Language courses are occasionally organised by the Greek State according to migrant and refugee flows.

Assessment 6

1. b; 2. c; 3. b; 4. c.

Assessment 7

1. Express the disagreement only partially

"I agree with you up to a certain point, but ..."

"I understand what you say, but ..."

"I see what you say, however ..."

Use words or phrases to soften your disagreement

"I'm sorry, but I do not agree ..."

"Yes, but don't you think ...?"

Phrases that should be avoided

"It's a bad idea!"

"I do not think it's a good idea."

"I do not agree with you!"

"I do not share your proposal."

"This is the worst idea!"

"I'm not sure it's the best idea."

2. a) is the correct answer.

Back to the assessment activities of Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Assessment 1

1. Migrant and refugee children have the same right to free primary and secondary education as Greek children and under the same conditions.

2. Type 1 reception classes are for children who speak very little or no Greek. They can attend certain subjects in the regular classroom, where language skills in Greek are not crucial, such as Foreign Language, Music Education, Art and gym. The other subjects are taught in the reception class, in addition to Greek for beginners.

    Type 2 reception classes are for children who know Greek at medium level. They attend lessons with their classmates but they are provided assistance in language and other subjects as needed by a second teacher, either during the class or afterwards.

3. Parents are required to fill out an application that they want their child to attend a reception class. Children are given evaluation tests in order to assess their level of Greek and determine the support they need. Reception classes are formed according to the number of children that need support and the availability of staff.

Assessment 2

1. True; 2. False; 3. False; 4. True; 5. True; 6. False

Assessment 3

If you have chosen:

　　4 or 5 in statements 1, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5, 7,

　　1 or 2 in statements 2, 3, 4d, 6

then you are able to recognise acute needs of better intercultural understanding in the educational environment of your children and you know how to collaborate effectively with school staff and other parents in activities promoting an intercultural mind set.

Assessment 4

1. Courses and classes for parents

2. Parenting courses

3. Parental involvement in school, including classroom literacy and numeracy activities

4. Parents celebrating diversity

5. Parent-to-parent activities/support – including interpretation/ translation

6. Developing an inclusive school ethos through ongoing provision of appropriate school-community programmes

7. Intercultural days/weeks/events

8. Provision of language classes for parents

9. Policy formation – parents, teachers, pupils, community

10. Newsletters in a variety of languages

11. Promoting good attendance

12. Create a multicultural welcoming committee at school made up of parents, staff and community members

13. Preparing material about the education system, the school area, educational resources and the possibility of parent involvement or asking questions in the school

14. Celebrating informal recreational, leisure and cultural events where you can improve relationships with parents and teachers.

Back to the assessment activities of Chapter 4

Credits for activity icons

1. Theory - information

https://www.iconfinder.com/icons/103411/book_information_text_icon

2. Think about it

https://www.iconfinder.com/icons/2588764/idea_research_seo_think_icon

3. Additional external sources of information

https://www.iconfinder.com/icons/1608686/external_link_icon

4. Reflection exercises

https://www.iconfinder.com/icons/3993860/brain_generator_idea_mind_power_youtube_icon

5. Group activities

https://www.iconfinder.com/icons/3790071/activity_community_group_recreation_social_society_icon

6. Self-assessment exercises

https://www.clipartmax.com/middle/m2i8i8m2i8d3m2i8_512-x-512-do-list-icon-png/