

CAPWIN

School dropout in Greece and in Regional Directorate of Thessaly

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General Theoretical Framework in Greece

The Greek educational system, traditionally, has been democratic and opened to everyone. Access to the Greek educational system is free and available for everybody at all levels of education (elementary, secondary and tertiary).

From this point of view, undoubtedly, the Greek state and the Greek educational system provide all the means to every person who lives in the country to attend not only compulsory schooling but also in any level of education system.

Like other countries so in Greece, the problem with this kind of education is that not all students achieve, in practice, equally satisfactory results. From a political and a social point of view, this perhaps wouldn't have been a major problem if the students who fail in school didn't have, in big percentages, some common social characteristics, related to poverty, cultural differentiation, and culturally poor family environment.

General Theoretical Framework in Greece

Moreover, there is no need of plenty evidence to prove that these social characteristics co-relate with students that leave school early, dropout rates, low achievement results and school failure.

According to statistical data released on April 11 by Euro stat, an improvement has been recorded in Greece about early dropouts from education and training. Specifically, in 2012 the percentage of early school dropouts in the country declined to 11.4% from 13.1% in 2011, while the average in the EU declined from 13.5% to 12.8%. The target rate set for Greece is 9.7%, while in the EU it is under 10%.

Greek educational structure

First of all it is useful to know that the educational structure in Greece contains the preschool, the Primary and the secondary level.

Different types of schools in secondary education

- Junior High School/Gymnasium (13-15 years old)
- Senior High School/ General Lyceum (16-18 years old)
- Intercultural Gymnasium/Intercultural Lyceum
- Evening Gymnasium /Lyceum(18:45-22:15)
- Model Pilot Gymnasium/Model Pilot Lyceum
- Art Gymnasium/ Lyceum
- Music Gymnasium/ Lyceum
- Technical-Vocational Lyceum

School dropout rate in multi-type Greek Schools

It's worth to see the phenomenon of school dropout in the multiple-type Greek schools:

In Primary School, the school dropout rate is very limited. This rate increases more in Lower Secondary School, while it is located at high level in vocational education. According to research findings, per grade of education, the phenomenon is observed more in secondary education and mainly in Technical Vocational Education.

School dropout rate in multi-type Greek Schools

Rate analysis

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

Gymnasium (general) 4%

Intercultural gymnasium 3,5%

Model pilot gymnasium 0%

Arts gymnasium 0%

Evening gymnasium 47%

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LYCEUM

General high school 3,6%

Model pilot high school 0%

Intercultural high school 1,3%

Evening high school 9,3%

Technical/vocational high school 5,7%

Evening technical /vocational high school
3,8%

- A small percentage of students dropout can be noticed in primary school, even in preschool education.
- Students who derive from ethno cultural minority groups such as Roma, Immigrants and Muslims drop-out of primary school mostly.

Dropouts Rates in Primary Education (6-12 years old)

Nationally: 0,6 %

Regionally: ex. Peripheral Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia, 0,6%

In West Greece –Thrace, where many Muslims live, the primary school dropout is estimated to be 2.3% (the second highest).

Locally: ex. Directorate of Primary Education of Western Thessaloniki, 0,3%

School Dropouts in Thessaly

Thessaly is a medium priority region in terms of trying to reduce the dropout rate. While showing a higher percentage than the national average, however, it is proved that there are (unlike Central Macedonia) very satisfactory reduction numbers.

- 1996 - 30.6% ,
- 2006 -15.1% (national rate -12.8%)
- 2014 - 9.3%

The phenomenon of school dropouts in Thessaly still exists. Therefore it is required to design and implement the appropriate measures so as to combat it.

The main factors are identified in the structure of the regional economy where in the primary sector the increased seasonal demand for unskilled and low-paid labor dominates. Also the phenomenon of unemployment, economic and social crisis, the depreciation of educational beneficiaries and finally the composition of the population affect the rate of school dropout.

(e.g. In the region of Thessaly lives many Roma and immigrants)

School Dropouts in Thessaly

These numbers indicate that there are a lot of children who never finish even the basic education. Unfortunately, it seems that the school dropout in Greece and especially in Thessaly at all educational levels should also be considered (Stamelos, 2002).

Even more, educational inequality, as this is expressed in terms of school dropout, seems to persist in Greek education. It seems, in addition to all other general causes, to be related to the specific characteristics of various regions. Therefore, we could safely argue, that there is a regional dimension in educational inequality in Greece.

The social, economic, and cultural characteristics in the regions where inequality is more obvious has revealed interesting aspects and links.

MEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

The ***Greek Ministry of Education*** has central control over state schools (common curriculum, controlled school staff and funding). At the regional level, the ***Regional Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education*** has the supervisory role of the Ministry. There are also, ***Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education*** in every prefecture.

This means that all the applied measures designed from the Ministry and some of these are the following :

- Special Legislation which facilitates Roma students' school attendance
- Special Preparatory Classes (called reception classes) for children who derive from minority groups in order to learn the greek language and conduce to their social integration
- Research and Intervention Action Programmes in cooperation with Universities
- Educational activities and material which are related and take under consideration the minority groups from different cultural capitals
- Integration Classes for students with special needs
- Open-ended curricula

MEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

There is the need for regional, community or even school based policies rather than common national measures towards reducing school dropout and therefore inequalities.

There is also the need for a more comprehensive approach to educational inequalities, which will take into account the specific characteristics of various regions and communities.

It is well documented that we can not fight educational inequality only in and through the educational systems. As educational inequality is related to other social and cultural aspects, it has to be combated in relation to them.

The participation of Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Thessaly in this European program CAPWIN and other similar programs is made under the assistance and effort of eliminating phenomena of school dropout and failure and to optimize the measures in this direction.

The transfer of experience and the adoption of measures arising through cooperation in such programs is valuable.

On behalf of the Greek Ministry of Education and as Director of Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Thessaly, thank you very much for your cooperation, the sharing and the common European perspective and dimension to basic education and social issues.

Bibliography – Resources

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