

The local dimension of children integration in educational system in Poland

Jakub Kościółek, PhD jakub.kosciolek@interkulturalni.pl
Jagiellonian University, Krakow

Adam Bulandra, PhD adam.bulandra@interkulturalni.pl
Regional Chamber of Attorneys-At-Law in Krakow

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Abstract

The presentation will show how over the past ten years, despite the centralization of the education policy in Poland, local governments and communities developed certain strategies to develop their own dimensions of educational patterns and approaches. The system of education in Poland is very complex. The structure of the system and curriculum is decided on the level of the Ministry of Education and is generally centralized. Each school is however run by local government (on the level of the county) that is responsible directly on providing all school services. We will discuss if there is any integration policies in Polish schools, how migrant children are approached, how most of their problems are solved within the framework of school, or school curriculum and how local governments use their autonomy in order to introduce specific tools and services, sometimes against the official governmental policy. We will put emphasis on recent changes in such policies in Poland on the local level, grass-root initiatives of NGOs and migrant associations and initiatives. The special attention will be given to school staff and teacher training programs and workshop materials on intercultural education that are becoming common nowadays. We will present the key results from the interviews that were conducted with experts in Poland within the Migrate projects. We will also take a look on phenomenon very characteristic to Poland that concern the lack of integration of Polish returnee's children in the new school environment. This is one of the most important and widely discussed problems in Polish school realities, as those children, officially Polish citizens, are not offered with integration programs, despite certain need, lack of Polish language skills and visible cultural differences. We will point out whether implemented solutions are either child centric or paternalistic in nature.

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