Intercultural education policies across Europe as responses to cultural diversity (2006-2016)

Irina Sikorskaya

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to trace the dynamics of the development of the intercultural education within the education policies across Europe. The brief summary of the IE development during previous four decades is presented. The principal part of the paper is dedicated to the content analysis of the EU education policies documents in regards of IE during the last decade 2006-2016. So far there is no agreed definition on this type of education, so I tried to clarify (through research articles and policy documents) the latest approaches (trends, preferences, boundaries, prejudices, etc.) on using the terminology Multicultural and/or Intercultural Education, its interpretation in academic papers and in policy documents. The debates on multiculturalism-interculturalism are referred to with the purpose to learn how these debates influence the European education policies. I indicated that the development of intercultural education continued under the neoliberal agenda in education policies and it was echoed in many documents. I found it was worthy to list the European Commission's initiatives of the recent years in forms of granted projects and subsidized programs to stimulate and compliment the educators' activities in the field of intercultural education. I came to conclusion that the overall rhetoric of the last decade's policies and researches was undoubtedly glorifying and elevating intercultural education, the wording and language of the policy documents were enormously enriched, extended and reflected the current trends and issues. Although in practice it is seen that certain deficiencies occur in translating the EU supranational guidelines at the level of national policies.

KEYWORDS: Multicultural/intercultural education, European education policies, immigrant education, European Commission.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Intercultural education as a subject of education policies in Europe has been undergoing significant change lately. Most scholars and policy makers regard intercultural education (IE) as the key to citizenship and democracy, and individual countries and international institutions tend to base their policies on that assumption. Most European states have launched the corresponding policy steps, and most of them at least proclaim the importance of intercultural competences and skills among citizens. Education at all levels is a key part of the integration process for migrants: starting from a pre-school education and adult learning included, as migrants may require different skills from those that they used in their countries of origin for their new careers. The EU authorities play an important role in initiating or encouraging reforms on intercultural education across national education systems in order to help children, young people and adults become capable of intercultural dialogue. It is obvious that transnational and national education policies are becoming more interdependent, although how this is manifested in the different national and local arenas remains an open question and a subject for research (Wahlstrom 2016).

The purpose of this article is to trace the dynamics of the IE's development within the education policies across Europe, to outline the general direction of the EU approach. The chronological scope of the study covers the last ten-year period, due to the enormous changes occurred in field of education in Europe under such circumstances and factors as globalization, the influence of international organizations, the change national socio-economic situation and last but not the least – the enormously increased immigrants' flow to Europe, and refugee crisis of the last two years.

Namely it is planned to consider, analyze and answer the following questions:

- What educational policies have been developed to foster inclusion of ethnic, religious and other minorities?

- Multicultural or Intercultural Education: does the prefix make change? Has the term been agreed among the scholars and policy-makers?

- Has the language of the official documents reformed under changing social-political conditions through the last decade?

The research was conducted with the help of thematic analysis, namely the content analysis of the relevant publications, and official documents of the last decade. The documents mostly taken from the official websites were filtered by the time frame 2006-2016 and their reference to intercul-

tural education and migrant education. Also the attention was drawn at other related categories like "intercultural competence", "teacher intercultural proficiency", "levels of education" etc.

II. Early developments

Although the early EU intercultural education policy developments were presented in a numerous research papers I find it sensible to pinpoint the major achievements.

The Council of Europe approved the strategy of multicultural pedagogy in the 1970s (Porcher 1979). However the era in the development of multicultural education in Europe started in 1980s, when a larger number of immigrant families decided on permanent residence in the host countries which resulted in increased multiethnicity and multiculturality of the European societies (Puzic 1999) It was clear that education could play a decisive role in determining how immigrants could succeed in life in host country, as they needed special support within cultural and educational aspects as well as under individual social and health circumstances. A so-called 'double track strategy' was established to promote both the integration of these children within host country schools and also maintain cultural and linguistic links to the country of origin, so as to facilitate possible school reintegration (Portera 2008).

The emphasis at these years was on immigrant education, with a kind of a deficit orientation, i.e. the type of programs addressed the educational insufficiencies of immigrant children such as poor command of the language spoken in school, inadequate prior education received at home countries, lack of socialization experiences etc. The purpose of this type of programs was to fill the gaps and thus smoothing the integration of immigrant children into the educational system of the host country. The second type of programs focused on preservation of their original cultural identity as reproduced in language, traditions and customs of their country of origin. However, these compensation programs soon became a target of criticism. It was argued that those programs acted as a tool for segregation and stigmatization. Instead of compensating for educational deficiencies and preserving the original cultural identities, these programs treated immigrant children as separate groups with special needs (Puzic 2007).

The critiques of the "pedagogy for foreigners" and its "deficit-compensation" orientation allowed for the gradual elaboration of the concept of "intercultural education".

The increasing concerns for intercultural learning began to be incorporated into official discourses and political legislation in Europe only in the 1990s, encouraged by the policies the grand international authorities, like UNESCO, and World Bank Institute, OCSE. In the process of the development of multiculturalism in Europe, the Council of Europe plays an important role. In the field of education, the Council of Europe has drafted and adopted many recommendations aimed at the development and implementation of intercultural education in the member states (Batelaan, Coomans 1995).

At this period the most important aspects of an intercultural pedagogy were instrumentalized by the education authorities in a number of European countries, like Sweden, Netherlands, UK, Belgium, Italy, however the approaches were different as well as the progress in promoting pluralism through education by the central educational authorities. The situation in Eastern and Central Europe was complicated at that time as under the communist regimes in these countries the cultural diversity was always denied, which did not mean that there was no discrimination. Particularly the Roma (Gypsies) have always been victims of discrimination. But from the communist point of view there was no reason to teach about diversity or to bring that perspective into education (Batelaan 1995).

In 1990 the first volume *of European Journal of Intercultural Studies* was issued. Later on the early comparative analysis of intercultural policies and pedagogic practices in different EU countries appeared in professional journals.

A the beginning of the 21st century the IE within education policy context across Europe has experienced the revival as a theoretical discourse prompted by concerns in relation to IE policies and school practices. Numerous documents were issued during this period indicating the need for reforms, new approaches, methods and instruments.

In 2001 the Education, Youth and Culture Council of the Council of the EU proclaimed the role of education by stating that "education and training systems have to lead people to accept that racism and intolerance have no place in our society" (Council of the EU 2001).

In 2002 Council of Europe issued document "The New Challenges of Intercultural Education: Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe" specifying the religious diversity in intercultural education (Council of Europe 2002). The Final Declaration of the 21st session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education was devoted particularly to intercultural education. The Declaration committed the member states to the promotion of effective intercultural education, including the religious dimension, the need to re-launch conceptual research on intercultural education was stated (Athens Declaration 2003).

In 2005, the Commission of the European Communities issued "Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for life-long learning". The intercultural and civic competences were defined as knowledge and skills that equip individuals to participate in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary.

The study of the EU documents of this almost forty year period showed that it was at least theoretically recognized the cultural diversity of many European states and the call for plans of actions in the field of education was highlighted.

III. UNDER THE MULTICULTURALISM/INTERCULTURALISM DEBATES

It is not a purpose of this paper to explore the debates on multiculturalism in Europe, but rather to see if this discourse has an impact on shaping the policy approaches towards education, namely related to intercultural learning.

Although there is a growing volume of literature on the subject, multiculturalism as a concept is still too obvious, yet at the same time elusive (Mahalingam, McCarthy 2000). The general tonality of the academic and political discourse on multiculturalism is colored with emotional wordings like "it failed", "was misconception", "needed rethinking", and "suffered considerable political damage" (Meer, Modood 2012).

Reviewing the international authorities' documents in this regards, it was found that in UNESCO "World Report on Cultural Diversity" and in the Council of Europe "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue", both issued in 2008, it had been declared about the need to shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism. These official approaches were criticized by W. Kymlicka, the world-famous advocate and long-term defender of multiculturalism by the fact that neither document had provided a good argument or evidence for the claim that interculturalism was superior to multiculturalism: «Academic and public debates go through cycles, and one of the current fashions is to defend a (new, innovative, realistic) "interculturalism" against a (tired, discredited, naive) "multiculturalism". But there is very little intellectual substance underlying this fad. It is not based on a careful conceptual analysis of the principles of the two approaches, but it rather rests on misinterpretation, even caricature of multiculturalist theories» (Kymlicka 2012). Another weighty promoter of multiculturalism Wieviorka (2012) argued that concept of multiculturalism should be redefined and certainly not replaced by the extremely vague term of interculturalism.

The interest towards the issue of multiculturalism as one of the most

controversial social policies is quite broad. The criticism of multiculturalism from the scientific, expert communities, the political establishment and the media only increases, which indicates the vitality of this issue, and the urgent need of modern society for effective mechanisms of cultural integration. However, the disputes on multiculturalism/interculturalism have no major impact on educational policies of different European countries. In contrast to what has been recently publicly debated as a decline of multiculturalism and IE, a multiculturalist approach towards the education and training of immigrants has been enhanced and extended through the EU policies and supplementary initiatives (Faas 2011). Thus, different countries continue to cherish their own traditions in curricula as regards the treatment of the 'others' as minorities.

IV. MULTICULTURAL OR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION?

Speaking about the semantics of the two terms, their etymological, cultural interpretation and definition it was found that the great body of the literature reviewed still does not give the ultimate answer to this question, as there are diversity of ideas, attitudes and readings.

I quote just a few of them. Multicultural education and intercultural education are often used as synonyms (Nieto 2006). Multicultural and intercultural education joined forces in their efforts to promote intercultural understanding, the mail objective of each type of education. They share similar learning objectives such as overcoming ethnocentrism, promoting language learning, emphasizing with other cultures (Hill 2007), Ch. Hadjisoteriou (2015) states that "some prefer the term intercultural education emphasizing dialogue and interaction while others have historically follow the idea of multicultural education".

Often the difference in use seems mostly geographical. In Europe the preferred term is intercultural education while especially the United States but also the rest of North America, Australia and Asia use the term multicultural education (Hill 2007). However, in Europe there are differences between countries as well. For example, in Sweden and the Netherlands intercultural education is used while in Great Britain and Finland multicultural education is the commonly used term. The multicultural and the intercultural seem to be the most widely used notions worldwide. Many researchers and practitioners have attempted to define their specific characteristics by establishing borders and boundaries between them, through which they have often tended to be opposed, namely in geographical terms – the US vs. Europe,

Northern Europe vs. Southern Europe etc. (Dervin, Layne, Tremion 2015).

D. Coulby (2006) explained the terminological shift from multicultural to intercultural education connected with an attack on multicultural education from two directions. First, the familiar nationalist concern that school practices and knowledge should embody those of the state in terms of language (s) religion, culture or values, according to the context. Secondly, from a more pluralistic position, the concern, that multicultural education did not sufficiently directly address issues of racism and that is offered only a tokenistic understanding of non-dominant knowledge denigrating cultural difference to the study of samosas, saris and still bands (Mullard 1980).

The generous critics of multicultural education was presented by M. Levinson (2010) in her work "Mapping Multicultural Education": «Furthermore, "multicultural education" is saddled with so many different conceptions that it is inevitably self-contradictory both in theory and in practice; even in its most well-intentioned, assiduous, and effective implementation, it cannot simultaneously achieve all of the goals it is called upon to serve».

Speaking about the official documents, they echo the scholarship debates on the terms usage and their appropriateness to the integration and social inclusion. UNESCO defines intercultural education as a more dynamic interaction-oriented concept while multicultural education is said to refer to the cultural diversity in the classroom (Zilliacus, Holm 2009). In the official documents of the EU authorities throughout the last ten year period the "intercultural education" is commonly used term. The European Commission's document "Education Policies to Foster Tolerance in Children and Young People in the EU" (2016) states: «[...] in some public discussions the concept of multicultural education has been dismissed as creating division and separation, implying a parallel system. Though most academics do not use the term in that manner (see e.g. Banks 2009), we shall generally use the term Intercultural Education. Interculturalism can be defined as a dynamic process whereby people from different cultures interact to learn about and question their own and each other's cultures. It recognizes the inequalities in society and the need to overcome these. It is a process that requires mutual respect and acknowledges human rights (James 2008). The main features of this concept lie in openness and interaction (Wood, Landry, Bloomfield 2006). Intercultural Education also views cultures as dynamic and evolving, warning against seeing culture as static and deterministic».

Interestingly multicultural and intercultural education are often used as if these terms are universally understood and refer to only one type of education. Although they can take different directions and have different ac-

cents, they both address the culturally diverse classroom, learning about different cultures, furthering democracy and working against discrimination and prejudice. Both concepts thrive for equal opportunities in schooling, that will lead them to academic achievements. Summarizing this part of the research I can argue that multicultural and intercultural education will certainly continue to coexist in academic field and mirror in the political debates. They will upgrade the forms and interconnection to complement each other and to serve the best ideas of democracy.

V. INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY IN 2006-2016. THINKING ANEW?

The last decade in Europe cannot be described as a period of peaceful, harmonious development of multicultural societies where citizens appreciate cultural diversity. Migration has been considered to be historically high in Europe, and the refugee flow of the last years was recognized by EU officials as a crisis. Unfortunately manifestations of prejudice, discrimination and hate speech have become common, and certain political parties advocate extremist ideas. There is an increasing trend of viewing immigration, cultural diversity and multiculturalism through the prism of potential threats and problems. These problems are linked to socio-economic and political inequalities and misunderstandings between people from different cultural backgrounds and affiliations. Thus there is an increased imperative for intercultural education, as a type of education to help live together in culturally diverse societies. Education is most fruitfully seen interacting with structural and cultural realities; there is a dynamic and dialectic relationship between education and society (Daun 2009).

Although IE has been enormously present at the agenda of EU authorities, European Commission through European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) indicate that foreign born and second generation youngsters are at greater risk of poverty, more likely to leave school early and to be out of employment, as well as are less likely to have mastered basic skills (literacy, math) by age 15 (EPRS 2015). There are not many migrant children registered for pre-school and tertiary education. This situation was confirmed by the "Programme for International Students Assessment" (PISA). The PISA results are regularly displayed by OECD (OECD 2010, 2012). In 2008 the Report on strategies for integrating migrant children in European schools indicated that "migrant students are disadvantaged in terms of enrolment in type of school, duration of attending school, indicators of achievement, dropout rates, and type of school diploma attained" (European Commission 2008).

For the period under analysis the concepts multiculturalism/inter-culturalism, multicultural/intercultural education became incorporated not only into political discourse but into daily lives of ordinary Europeans, thus losing their innovative character. However there is a novelty if in the former period it was totally refereed on how to integrate immigrant into host socie-ty, the novelty of the latest period is focused on role of the native actors to how it is understood.

For many scholars who advocate and even glorify this type of education it became obvious that: «[…] if education is not intercultural, it is probably not education, but rather the inculcation of nationalist or religious funda-mentalism. It is important in medicine as in civics, in mathematics, and in language teaching» (Coulby 2006).

K. Bleszynska (2008) considers that intercultural education for the twen-ty-first century is best envisioned as applied social science promoting the dialogue between cultures and civilizations, as well as supporting the de-velopment of democratic multicultural societies.

The last decade is marked as very decisive for IE in connection with the attention to this phenomenon from the side of the world authorities. This is manifested through the production of joint recommendations, declarations and frameworks (e.g., UNESCO), policy briefs, reports and cross-national survey studies (e.g., OECD), or communications, conclusions and resolutions (e.g., the EU).

The year 2006 for IE is was distinguished with the UNESCO's *Guidelines on Intercultural Education* (2006), with a certain number of recurrent principles that can be identified as a guide for international action in the field of inter-cultural education. The guidelines stressed upon active and full participation of all learners for contributing to understanding and solidarity among indi-viduals and ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations.

In 2007 in the Third Annual Report on Migration and Integration issued by European Commission it was explored the developments in the integra-tion of third country nationals at national and European levels until June 2007. Exchanges of good practices between Member States have been pos-sible through the National Contact Points. The European Commission stressed the importance of intercultural and interfaith dialogue in the inte-gration process. It then presented an evaluation of Member States' actions for integration of migrants (European Commission 2007).

The 2008 year was declared the year of Intercultural dialogue. Launched by the Council of Europe the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity* viewed intercultural competence as a crucial

capability which needs to be developed by every individual to enable them to participate in intercultural dialogue. The Platform of Intercultural Dialogue produced the Rainbow Paper which became a benchmark for IE in Europe. Education is first and foremost place to encourage and practice the Intercultural Dialogue. Formal, non-formal and informal education should contribute to Intercultural Dialogue. Intercultural learning should be promoted at every age group (Council of Europe 2008).

In 2008 the European Commission opened the debate on how education policies may better address the challenges posed by immigration and internal EU mobility flows by adopting *The Green Paper "Migration and Mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems"* (European Commission 2008). The key issues were formulated in order to prevent the creation of separated school settings, so as to improve equity in education; how to accommodate the increased diversity of mother tongues and diverse cultural outlooks and train intercultural competences; how to adapt teachers' skills and fill the gaps between migrant families and communities.

In the UNESCO World Report *"Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue"* (2009): it was underlined that cultural literacy has become the lifeline for today's world.

In 2009 Council of the EU adopted the *Council Conclusions on the Education of Children with Migrant Background* which requires Member States to offer such children free tuition, including the teaching of the official language or one of the official languages of the host state, as well as teaching of the mother tongue and the culture of the country of origin. The Conclusions documented that education has an important contribution to make to the successful integration of migrants into European societies. Starting with early childhood education and basic schooling, but continuing throughout all levels of lifelong learning, targeted measures and greater flexibility are needed to cater for learners with a migrant background, whatever their age, and to provide them with the support and opportunities they need to become active and successful citizens, and empower them to develop their full potential.

In 2011 *The Report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe* committed a chapter to education of the migrant children however connecting it exclusively with further employment of the newcomers: «Education has an obvious and essential role in preparing people – especially newcomers, and, among them, especially women and children – to find jobs and otherwise participate in society. Beyond that, however, it should equip them with knowledge about the role and working of societal institutions and regulations, as well as the norms and values that form the binding ele-

ment in the functioning of society [...] newly-arrived children of migrants into the education system, by providing them with adequate language skills at a pre-school level, preparing them for a successful transition from school to the labor market». (Living together. Combining diversity and freedom in 21st-century Europe, 2011).

In 2015 the European Commission presented *Schools, VET and Adult education helping newly-arrived refugees in Europe* resulted from the survey on practices and challenges of the organizations dealing with school education, vocational training and adult learning on their support of migrants and refugees. Remarkably that answering the question on European Commission contribution to address the issues related to the refugee crisis, the majority of the answers (69,73%) was to disseminate information about good practices. It only confirms the fact that lack of such kind of information could form this skeptical reality in regards of great ideas of intercultural education (European Commission 2015).

In January 2016, the EU adopted a resolution on *"Intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education"* pointing out the importance of teaching intercultural dialogue which is essential tool of conflict management and to develop a deeper sense of belonging. Teachers, Parents, NGOs and Human Rights Organizations are key players in IE process.

No doubt these policy documents were issued to give more political weight to the intercultural education as a pedagogic approach which is to meet the EU commitment to integrating diversity, fostering multilingualism and promoting intercultural dialogue.

It needs to be emphasized that European Commission initiated numerous granted programs on supplementing and enhancing the schooling practices on minority and migrant students' inclusion. To list a few: European Policy Network SIRIUS aimed at educating people with a migrant background. EURYDICE Network provides education institutions and organizations with the guidance and good practices on how to tailor the provision of education for migrants. The European Network for Intercultural Education Activities (ENIEDA) facilitates the exchange of good practices on the integration of migrants and funds relevant projects across the different levels of education. H2020 has a certain section of projects dedicated to migrant education and their integration. In October 2016 the new Call of Erasmus+ Programme with over Euro2 billion states that there will be a special focus on encouraging projects that support social inclusion, notably of refugees and migrants, as well as projects that prevent radicalization.

VI. THROUGH THE NATIONAL POLICIES

During this almost 50 year period the European Commission has periodically carried out surveys to verify the ways in which the educational systems of the Member States operate with IE, whether and how European policies have changed and developed under changing social environment, whether IE finds resonance in national policies and in daily school realities in each EU country. It has been analyzed national policies which range from specific measures to help migrant children and youth to more comprehensive approaches through curricula and school policies. The Open Method of Coordination was established as an intra-European means of governance through which the EU identifies common challenges across Member States, pinpoints best practices and encourages countries to review their existing national policies (Faas, Hadjisoteriou, Angelides 2014).

As Faas (2011) mentioned that despite unifying calls for intercultural dimension in education (e.g. Council of Europe 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007; European Commission 2008), all EU countries have considerable autonomy in the field of education. While Western and Northern European countries react towards the neoliberal policies, increasing employability of the graduates, introducing European dimension to their education systems, the CEE countries are enormously marked by the legacies of the transition process, authoritarian central command, and integration with EU structures.

The dynamics and evolution of the European national policies in regards of the evidence of multiculturalism in school curriculum was provided in the project performed by the Queens University (Canada) and presented in the Multiculturalism Policy Index (www.queensu.ca/mcp). According to the research made across 12 European countries and presented 1980, 1990 and 2010s. The ways of dealing with multicultural classroom differs largely among European countries. It was found that by 2010 intercultural pedagogy was employed to a great extent in Sweden, Finland, Belgium and Portugal. A certain progress has been performed by the Italian education authority. France, UK and Germany displayed pessimism in incorporating multiculturalism/interculturalism in schooling. In the Netherlands has been witness the decline in adoption intercultural learning, while Austria and Denmark do not make emphasis on teaching multicultural education programs.

The latest period has been marked by an undisputable change in political rhetoric, and criticism of multiculturalism, however despite of that the intercultural teaching and learning has in fact strengthened its implementation in almost all countries. The latest data on how different countries in the world

including the EU Member States targeted intercultural integration policies are presented in the Migrant Integration Policy Index (www.mipex.eu).

This chart shows how countries respond to large numbers and poor outcomes of immigrant pupils with many new, but weak targeted education policies, which are not always well implemented or effective in practice

Ranking 2014	Score	Ranking 2014	Score	Ranking 2014	Score
1 Sweden	77	14 Denmark	49	27 Slovakia	24
2 Australia	76	15 Luxembourg	48	28 Iceland	23
3 New Zealand	66	16 Austria	47	29 Japan	21
4 Norway	65	16 Germany	47	30 Romania	20
4 Canada	65	18 Switzerland	42	30 Poland	20
6 Portugal	62	19 Czech Republic	38	32 Malta	19
7 Belgium	61	20 Spain	37	33 Latvia	17
8 Finland	60	21 Greece	36	33 Lithuania	17
8 USA	60	21 France	36	35 Croatia	15
10 Estonia	58	23 Italy	34	35 Hungary	15
11 United Kingdom	57	24 Ireland	30	37 Turkey	5
11 South Korea	57	25 Cyprus	27	38 Bulgaria	3
13 Netherlands	50	26 Slovenia	26		

Source: The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) http://www.mipex.eu/education

As it is seen intercultural education has become a call for actions in most European countries. The countries at the forefront – Nordic countries, Portugal, Belgium, Estonia. Most attention is paid to Finland recently which, in addition to the cultural rights of immigrants, is officially bilingual, has two legally recognized churches, has granted the Sami cultural autonomy, and has also recognized other historical minorities (Saukkonen 2013). Education policy in Germany is still characterized as more exclusive educational approach. The Netherlands abandoned its former multiculturalist course which was reflected in intercultural policies of the last years. France and UK changed their policies for the last ten years in that IE has disappeared from the general education discourse. In France the linguistic and cultural assimilation – officially called integration – of pupils with a migration background is the main goal. In the UK are mentioned in official documents in relation to their academic achievement, but not in the sense of multicultural education (European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education 2008). The

countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Malta, Latvia**,** Lithuania, and Bulgaria take lowest positions in the chart, which could be explained by the definite vector of national policies and discourse towards integration of minorities, migrants and refugies into local societies.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

Summarizing the period it should be said that during the last decade the EU education policy specified greater emphasis of the importance role of intercultural education in enhancing social cohesion, challenging social exclusion and inequality, and developing human and social capital. Within the analysis there were found the indicators for development of critical policy analysis and appreciation of the roles of various types of stakeholders and actors involved in policy formation and implementation; calls for a stronger alliance between different educational sectors and policy-making bodies. The international organizations have become more relevant in national policy-making processes, which entailed more grounded support for IE. The numerous researches indicate various reforms in preschool, secondary school, higher education and adult learning have been outlined, as these are policy areas that receive more attention in IE discussions. The increased amount of researches were published in the field through a range of lenses and disciplines, a great amount of projects were initiated and launched with the focus on intercultural teaching and learning.

It was pointed out that education at all levels is a key part of the integration process for migrants: starting from a preschool education and adult learning included.

The study of the EU official documents demonstrated the vital progress in developing the EU intercultural education within general education policies although it would be early to say about a shift towards emerging a separate intercultural education domain.

 The main findings:

- European Commission through its policies and initiatives make an accent that education plays a crucial role in helping migrants and refugees settle in new countries and environments.

- Learning language of the host country has remained the major component of IE and there is strong policy of multilingualism, which reads in most documents.

- In general the IE policies are about encouraging (in some countries – ini-

tiating) schools, colleges and universities to consider IE programmes as a part of their activities. It is rarely mainstreamed within comprehensive development frameworks.

- The manifestation-like and declarative character of the most of the official documents is explained by the appliance of soft law strategy mostly. EU education policy belongs to the soft area of European policy-making (Hantrais 2000).

- Intercultural education has been understood differently over time. While initially at 1970s-1980s, it was linked mostly to the questions of language proficiency - today it is linked to securing social cohesion in a culturally pluralistic society by the fact that it has added a new element to social and education policies.

- There is a definite change in language of the official papers from "smoothing the integration of immigrant children" to "providing them with the support and opportunities they need to become active and successful citizens, and empower them to develop their full potential".

- The most vital shift is in the statement that culturally diverse society, and intercultural and multicultural education is for all students, not only for minority and immigrant students.

- It is obvious that the way to integrate multiculturalism into national cultural policies has been full of problems, pressures and difficulties. The EU education policies are qualitatively distinct from Member States' national education systems , in terms of their scope, mandate, capacity, and governance (Dale 2009).

- Within the last decade period the EU officials state that the terminology of IE is not shared by all member states, it has been given diverse meanings, which lead that some pedagogic practices are found to be counterproductive. Each country has its own traditions, legislative bodies and cultures, and policy-making structures. In some countries there are certain gaps between legislation, policy and implementation, with weak relationships between theory, official policy-making and practice, realization of this policy at institutional levels. Numerous researchers report about significant gap in the national level what government expect regarding intercultural education and how intercultural education is implemented (Tsaliki 2013, 220).

- There is a little mentioning in official papers about curricular content and school textbooks.

- Schools in most countries are neither obliged nor funded to introduce and develop intercultural teaching and learning. The construction of

multicultural environment as well as provision of multicultural activities is not yet imperatives for most schools across Europe.

• However the initiatives in regards of IE teaching and learning are highly appreciated. The general growth of intercultural courses in teacher training can be viewed as a positive development, but a comprehensive and binding integration of intercultural issues is still lacking. There should be elaborated legal incentives for teacher trainings.

• Need for intercultural competence has been articulated in the official documents but in practice it largely remains to be seen applied, and apprehended in business education contexts.

• Due to the dominance of neoliberal agenda within the education policies in general the objectives of IE reads as very pragmatic - the accent is to help migrants to integrate into society of hosting countries, not to educate the 'intercultural person' with a certain intercultural knowledge skills and competences.

• It is clear that despite of the achievements on supranational policies mentioned above more action is required at the national level.

• The potential foundation for disparities in regards of IE observed for tertiary and adult educational settings.

• Schools remain the central place to nurture such skills and abilities to live together within cultural diversity. Nevertheless, given their relevance for social and political life, the scope of intercultural competences is much wider than formal education. Intercultural education should not be limited to school and curricula. It should also concern all society.

At the level of educational and cultural institutions, the Council of Europe underlines the importance of cooperation between all stakeholders in the educational process (school, family, local communities, media, etc.) and suggests a coherent politics with economic, political and social agents jointly promoting the equal opportunities for individuals and cultural communities as well.

VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

By present study I demonstrated the vital progress in developing the EU intercultural education within general education policies, although it would be early to say about a shift towards emerging a separate intercultural education domain.

The evidence-based EU policies in regards of intercultural education has

a great potential to improve the quality, mechanisms of implementation, investment in development and dissemination of best practices and efficient policies across Europe.

For further research it will be functional to keep analyzing national education documents in all the EU countries with the purpose of understanding how and to what extent they are intertwined transnational policy guidelines. It is crucial to keep tracing the evolution of the European policies related to intercultural learning as well as monitoring if they are advantageous to integrating migrants and building cohesive societies in a particular country.

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