



The Science of Sexuality Education and Youth Work

BELGIUM

from Paper to Practice Report



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The Document

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Consortium

P1 CENTRE FOR ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LTD- CARDET - CYPRUS



P2 KYPRIAKOS SYNDESMOS OIKOGENEIAKOU PROGRAMMATISMOU -CFPA- CYPRUS



P3 KENTRO MERIMNAS OIKOGENEIAS KAI PAIDIOU- KMOP- GREECE



P4 EUROPESE CONFEDERATIE VAN ORGANISATIES VOOR JEUGDCENTRA ECYC VERENIGING- BELGIUM



P5 The Rural Hub CLG- IRELAND



P6 Motion Digital s.r.o.- CZECH REPUBLIC



Project Information

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Policy makers

What is the current situation regarding sexuality education in your country?

The majority of the participants, from all three target groups, argued that sexuality education in Greece is quite incomplete. They mentioned that there has been controversy surrounding sexuality education in Greece and the subject is politically contentious and also religion influences strongly this topic. Policy makers, youth workers and young people agreed that sexuality education is only partly taught in the course of “Biology” on high school. Even though sexuality education has been mandatory in Greece since 1995, and schoolteachers, school nurses and the Family Planning Association of Greece are responsible for its provision, it seems that this education is not implemented in the appropriate way in schools and focuses more on the biology of the individual than on human relationships and sexual health.

Policy makers stated that the school year 2021-2022 is considered landmark for sexuality education in Greece. The Greek Ministry of Education decided to introduce Sexuality Education in national compulsory curricula for primary and secondary education within so-called “Skills Workshops”.

What would they like to change in the current situation and if this could be combined with the project?

Few participants consider Greek sexuality education highly insufficient and they stated that ‘there is a need both for intensification of information on sexual contraception, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS, and improvement of the quality and specialization of this information’. Participants on the whole stated that even in the sexuality education of students through the biology courses or few seminars conducted by school nurses, the material is incomplete and does not focus on enquiries and difficulties that young people face today. In fact, even though it is 2022, the discussion of sex education is considered taboo in Greece, young people find it difficult to express their opinion or related issues that concern them, during the 1 hour of biology course. Thus, participants highlighted the need of new and

suitable material and suggested that the use of the material of Safe youth could be extremely helpful. Sex education material developed by Safe Youth will contribute to a healthy and normal psychosexual development and will provide all the necessary skills and knowledge useful in youth lives in order to adopt a healthy and safe sexual behaviour.

Difficulties they face and if there is anything to suggest, maybe good practices?

As aforementioned the Greek Ministry of Education decided to introduce Sexuality Education in national compulsory curricula for primary and secondary education within so-called “Skills Workshops”. However, one of the obstacles Greece is facing is the slow process of the implementation of policy reform and the intense reactions of the religion and few parents. Even though there is a plan for policy reform, it may not apply in schools soon. Participants suggested that policy makers should start the implementation of their plan by investigating students’ opinions for school-based sexuality education that will meet their needs in a more satisfactory way than it does at present. Furthermore, few participants highlighted that policy makers should organize conferences where they will invite parents and teachers with the aim of discussing the need for sexuality education with the guidance of specialist doctors, nurses and psychologists.

Youth workers - Young people

How do they face the current situation regarding sexuality education and if they think there are gaps, if so, what are they?

Youth workers and young people agreed that the sexuality education in Greece is more than insufficient. More specifically few participants commented that sexuality education in Greece is problematic and old- fashioned. Discussions regarding sexuality education in Greece focus on biology and anatomy. Young people argued that teachers and health promoters in schools they don’t receive the appropriate education about sexuality education, and they are not

aware of the issues that concern young people nowadays. Young people mentioned that they use information on internet and they discuss with friends or relatives about their enquiries. Moreover, youth workers highlighted the need for trainings from experts and new educational material.

What do they believe are the most important difficulties regarding sexuality education?

Youth workers reported that it is difficult to reach students' expectations in sexuality education nowadays since they are not sufficiently trained and they don't have appropriate educational material. One participant also mentioned that the time at school is limited for the education of sexuality and they need time to build trust with students. Young people agreed with youth workers and mentioned that few times discussions about sexuality may be traumatic as few teachers they are old-fashioned and they can't follow discussions about sexual orientation or they argue that "abortion is a huge sin".

What would they change about sexuality education and if they know any good practices.

Both groups commented that the sexuality education should be first based on the empowerment of self-awareness and self-love. Furthermore, they agreed that policy makers should start the implementation of a new educational plan with new educational curriculum by investigating students' opinions for school-based sexuality education that will meet their needs in a more satisfactory way than it does at present. One youth workers suggested that healthcare experts should first implement a study to investigate the needs of young people, teachers and parents and then the Ministry to apply a new program of sexuality education in schools.