



SWPBS European Conference

«Systemic Approaches to Inclusive Education:
Implementing Positive Behaviour Support Systems in four countries»

Conference proceedings

Saturday, June 4th | 09:00 – 13:00 (EEST)
UNESCO Amphitheatre, University of Nicosia, Cyprus

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Introduction

The conference "Systemic Approaches to Inclusive Education: Implementing Positive Behaviour Support Systems in four countries" was held on the 4th of June 2022 from 9:00am to 13:30pm at the UNESCO Amphitheatre of the University of Nicosia. The conference was co-organized by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth (MoECSY), CARDET and the consulting organisation INNOVADE LI LTD.

The conference was organised in the framework of the project " Building School-Wide Inclusive, Positive and Equitable Learning Environments Through a Systems-Change Approach", which is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme (Key Action 3) of the European Commission. The project completed this year (2021-2022) for the third consecutive school year its implementation in 90 primary schools in Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Cyprus and Romania, aiming to create inclusive school systems to enhance the socio-emotional domain of children.

The primary aim of the conference was to highlight the importance and benefits of creating inclusive school systems for the cultivation of social skills and the promotion of positive behaviour, the exchange of good practices, as well as to strengthen the effort to develop structured policies in the field.

The conference was attended by the project's research managers from each country, experts in the implementation of the Positive Behaviour Support systems, teachers from schools that have implemented the project, educational psychologists, academics, and honorary guests from the Ministry of Education and the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute. The main speakers are presented below.

Main presenters

- **Prodromos Prodromou**
Minister of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus
- **Dr. Athena Michaelidou**
Director of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus

- **Dr. Charalambos Vrasidas**
Professor, University of Nicosia, Cyprus & Executive Director, CARDET
- **Vicky Charalambous**
Senior Researcher, CARDET
- **Victoria Michaelidou**
Senior Researcher, CARDET
- **Dr. Athanasios Gregoriadis**
Associate Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- **Dr Cristina Tabacaru Dumitru**
Lecturer, University of Pitesti, Romania
- **Dr Anne Karhu**
Lecturer, University of Eastern Finland, Finland
- **Dr Mika Paananen**
Senior Lecturer, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
- **Despoina Savvidou**
Teacher, Sia Primary School, Nicosia, Cyprus
- **Eleni Antoniou, Kostas Papapetrou, Ourania Andreou**
Teachers, Alethriko Primary School, Larnaka, Cyprus
- **Dr Militsa Nikiforou**
Lecturer, University of Central Lancashire Cyprus & Senior Researcher, CARDET
- **Dr. Elena Papamichael**
First Educational Planning Officer, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus
- **Constantinos Papageorgiou**
Officer at the Cyprus Observatory on School Violence, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus

Conference proceedings

Welcoming remarks

The conference was opened by the Director of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Dr Athena Michaelidou, who referred to the need of developing structured school policies to support children's social and learning skills, structures to support teaching staff and decision-making procedures based on the data collected in each school. CARDET's Executive Director, Dr. Charalambos Vrasidas, then highlighted the need to develop broader education policies that have been thoroughly proven to make a positive contribution to school environments. Based on this, the SWPBS project is one of the largest research projects implemented in Cyprus in recent years with evidenced positive results. Closing the welcoming remarks, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth, Mr. Prodromos Prodromou, highlighted the usefulness of the project in preventing violence and delinquency in schools, improving school units and increasing the quality of basic education in our country.

Part A: Implementing Positive Behaviour Support Systems in four countries

Beginning with the first part of the presentations, Vicky Charalambous, researcher at CARDET, presented a review of the Positive Behaviour Support system. The purpose of the presentation was to explain the theoretical framework and key concepts of the SWPBS approach. She also highlighted the need for a relative shift in understanding to the management of inappropriate behaviours and the promotion of discipline through the teaching of social skills. The key message of the presentation was that a school structure to promote positive behaviour that is proactive and emphasises expected behaviours is necessary and needs to replace the traditional punitive approach towards inappropriate behaviours.

Four presentations followed regarding the results of the SWPBS project implementation in each of the participating countries. Victoria Michaelidou, researcher at CARDET, started with the presentation on Cyprus schools. The main results were related to the potentiality on implementing the intervention in every school in Cyprus regardless of demographic characteristics, improvement in school climate, reduction in unexpected behaviours, increase in student well-being, and improvement in teachers' collective efficacy. Subsequently, Dr Athanasios Gregoriadis, Associate Professor at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and research coordinator of the SWPBS project in Greece, noted that in Greek schools there was a decrease in student behavior problems, improvement in school and classroom climate, increase in collective efficacy, and increase in teachers' professional well-being. Among the successes of the project's implementation in Greece, Dr. Gregoriadis announced the willingness of 30 new primary schools from five prefectures of the Regional Directorate of Central Macedonia to implement the Positive Behaviour Support system. The relevant Directorate is planning a wider expansion of the system to secondary schools with set trainings to teachers. Completing with the countries that have implemented the primary prevention of the Positive Behaviour Support system, Dr Cristina Tabacaru Dumitru, Lecturer at the University of Pitesti and research coordinator of the SWPBS project in Romania, presented the results of the implementation of the programme in local primary schools. Dr. Dumitru reported that after three years of implementation of the project, the need for relevant training of teachers in preventive behaviour management approaches was observed, and an increase in student well-being and improvement of school climate. She also stressed the need for more emphasis on the long-term outcomes of educational interventions and continuous

improvement of the implemented programmes through systematic evaluation. The system in Finland has already been in place for some years, so the project's implementation was about secondary prevention (Tier 2). Dr Anne Karhu, Lecturer at the University of Eastern Finland, and Dr Mika Paananen, Lecturer at the University of Jyväskylä presented the results from the implementation of secondary prevention in Finland. In summary, the results showed that CICO support was effective and reduced behavioural problems from the participating students. Also, the positive effect was maintained after the end of the intervention period.

Part B: Implications for Policy and Practice

After the twenty-minute break, two presentations were given by schools that participated in the project, which shared their experiences and views on the SWPBS approach. In conclusion, Sia Primary School reported that they noticed a change in school culture and developed social skills in students. It was also noted that the school will continue to implement the programme and that promoting positive behaviour is now the new school's policy on discipline. Teachers from Alethriko Primary School reported that the teaching staff were convinced that social skills are taught and that it should not be taken for granted that positive behaviours are known. They also added that the project strengthened teachers' role because teaching social skills was done in an experiential way and with continuous positive feedback which contributed to the development of themselves by improving their teaching approach. Finally, positive feedback from the school children was shared with the participants.

The conference concluded with a round table discussion on policy recommendations for the Positive Behaviour Promotion system. The panel included Dr Hannu Savolainen, Dr Athanasios Gregoriadis, Dr Cristina Tabacaru Dumitru, Dr Elena Papamichael, Konstantinos Papageorgiou, and Dr Charalambos Vrasidas. In general, they suggested ways in which the system can be sustained in the schools that have already implemented it, and ways in which it could be extended to more schools. Because of the systemic nature of the approach, there was a unanimous view that the programme has potential for positive results in schools at other levels of education as well, if the necessary support structures for expansion are put in place.



Διοργανωτές:



Erasmus+

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Annexes

Annex 1: Promotional poster



Εφαρμογή του σχολικού Συστήματος Προώθησης Θετικής Συμπεριφοράς:

Οπτικές και πρακτικές σε Φινλανδία, Κύπρο, Ελλάδα και Ρουμανία

Σάββατο, 4 Ιουνίου 2022 | 9:00-13:30
Πανεπιστήμιο Λευκωσίας, Αίθουσα UNESCO






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Annex 2: Conference agenda



08:30 – 09:00	Registrations
09:00 – 09:15	<p>Welcoming remarks</p> <p>Dr. Athena Michaelidou <i>Director of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus</i></p> <p>Dr. Charalambos Vrasidas <i>Professor, University of Nicosia, Cyprus</i> <i>Executive Director, CARDET</i></p> <p>Opening remarks</p> <p>Prodromos Prodromou <i>Minister of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus</i></p>
Part A: Implementing Positive Behaviour Support Systems in four countries	
09:15 – 09:30	<p>School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support systems: An Overview</p> <p>Vicky Charalambous, Ph.D. cand. <i>Senior Researcher, CARDET</i></p>
09:30 – 11:00	<p>3 years of SPWBS project implementation of Tier 1 & 2: Key findings from Cyprus, Greece, Romania and Finland</p> <p>The implementation of the primary prevention in Cyprus, Greece, and Romania</p> <p>Victoria Michaelidou, PhD cand. <i>Researcher, CARDET</i></p> <p>Dr. Athanasios Gregoriadis <i>Associate Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece</i></p> <p>Dr. Cristina Tabacaru Dumitru <i>Lecturer, University of Pitesti, Romania</i></p> <p>Preliminary results of the Check in Check out support in Finnish schools</p> <p>Dr. Anne Karhu <i>Lecturer, University of Eastern Finland, Finland</i></p> <p>Dr. Mika Paananen <i>Senior Lecturer, University of Jyväskylä, Finland</i></p>
11:00 – 11:20	Coffee Break - Block Restaurant



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AGENDA
 Saturday, June 4th | 09:00 – 13:00 (EEST)
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 Implementing Positive Behaviour Support Systems in four countries

Part B: Implications for Policy and Practice

<p>11:20 – 12:00</p>	<p>School case studies</p> <p>Despoina Savvidou <i>Teacher, Sia Primary School, Nicosia, Cyprus</i></p> <p>Eleni Antoniou, Kostas Papapetrou, Ourania Andreou <i>Teachers, Alethriko Primary School, Larnaka, Cyprus</i></p> <p>Discussant: Dr. Militsa Nikiforou <i>Lecturer, University of Central Lancashire Cyprus Senior Researcher, CARDET</i></p>
<p>12:00 – 13:30</p>	<p>Panel discussion: Policy and Practice Recommendations</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Michalinos Zembylas <i>Professor, Open University of Cyprus</i></p> <p>Panel:</p> <p>Dr. Hannu Savolainen <i>Professor, University of Eastern Finland, Finland</i></p> <p>Dr. Athanasios Gregoriadis <i>Associate Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece</i></p> <p>Dr. Cristina Tabacaru Dumitru <i>Lecturer, University of Pitesti, Romania</i></p> <p>Dr. Elena Papamichael <i>First Educational Planning Officer, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus</i></p> <p>Constantinos Papageorgiou <i>Officer at the Cyprus Observatory on School Violence, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, Cyprus</i></p> <p>Dr. Charalambos Vrasidas <i>Professor, University of Nicosia, Cyprus Executive Director, CARDET</i></p>
<p>13:30</p>	<p>Lunch - Block Restaurant</p>



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