

# iDecide



Final conference of iDecide,  
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***Improving the motivation and school results of pupils  
from “Mircea cel Batran” Secondary School (Romania)  
by using the iDecide toolkit – 2 Case studies***



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# “Mircea cel Batran” Secondary School

- Founded in 1975
- Located in Pitesti, Romania
- At 100 km from Bucharest
- 1547 pupils (school year 2017-2018)
- 57 classes
  - 33 Primary school
  - 24 Secondary school
- 90 teachers and auxiliary staff



# “Mircea cel Batran” Secondary School

- The largest school in the county
- Different social backgrounds
- High diversity of personalities
- Special needs
- Very good results
  - ... but also ...
  - Learning issues

DECISIONS





# Implementation of the iDecide Toolkit

## **June 2017, September 2017**

- 2 training sessions at the University of Pitesti
- 6% of the school teachers trained directly, including the school principal and psychologist

## **September 2017 to June 2018**

- Focus groups and workshops at school with parents and teachers
- 14% of the school teachers trained directly
- 172 students (11% of the school) registered in the School Profile
- 12 case studies (7% of the students registered in the School Profile)



# iDecide - School Profile

<b>Intellectual Disabilities</b>	<b>Cognitive Functioning</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Adaptive Behaviour</b>	<b>25</b>
	<b>Syndromes</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Social Development</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Behavioural excesses and challenging behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Learning Difficulties</b>	<b>Dyslexia</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Reading problems (misspelling sounds)</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Written Language Deficits</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>Math Underachievement</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Social Skills Deficits</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Low Ratings of Self-Efficacy</b>	<b>-</b>

# iDecide - School Profile

<b>Autism Spectrum Disorders</b>	<b>Autistic Disorder (Autism)</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Communication and Language Disorders</b>	<b>Communication disorders</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Language disorders</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Speech disorders</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Sensory disabilities</b>	<b>Hearing impairment</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Visual impairment</b>	<b>2</b>

# iDecide - School Profile

<b>Physical disabilities</b>	<b>Congenital malformation of the bones and joints</b>	-
	<b>Scoliosis</b>	-
	<b>Kyphosis</b>	-
	<b>Somatic dysfunction</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Spinal cord injury</b>	-
	<b>Muscular dystrophy</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Rheumatoid polyarthritis</b>	-
	<b>Comorbidity</b>	-
	<b>Paralysis</b>	-
	<b>Cerebral Palsy</b>	-

# iDecide - School Profile

<b>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT)</b>		-
<b>Pupils from deprived backgrounds</b>	<b>Single-parent families</b>	-
	<b>Poor families</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>Families with many children</b>	-
	<b>Homeless families</b>	-
	<b>Violent and dangerous families</b>	-
	<b>Remote areas</b>	-



# iDecide - School Profile

<b>Migrant, Refugee, Asylum Seeker Pupils</b>	<b>Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Unaccompanied Minors</b>	-
	<b>Migrant Pupils</b>	-
<b>Pupils with health issues</b>	<b>Asthma</b>	-
	<b>Obesity</b>	-
	<b>Diabetes</b>	1
	<b>Anaemia</b>	-
	<b>Epilepsy</b>	-
	<b>Myopia</b>	-
	<b>HIV - AIDS</b>	-
	<b>Cancer</b>	-

# Study Case 1: V.K.



- Boy, 7-8 years old
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade (30 students , 17 boys, 13 girls)
- Category of marginalized populations according to the toolkit iDecide:
  - **Autistic Disorder (Autism)**
- In class:
  - lack of motivation
  - learning difficulties
  - sometimes violent with his colleagues
- School decisions:
  - Curricular adaptation in line with the pupil's educational requirements.

# Study Case 1: V.K.



- Class decisions:
  - Formulating rules in a positive way
  - Identifying individual talents and strengths and used them during the lesson
  - Using ICT and visual support for teaching
  - Monitoring student progress
  - Games and class activities aiming to increase the level of acceptance of all members (ex. the *mailbox*, through which students can express their values and personal beliefs to create a sense of belonging
  - Increase supervision during the school break.
  - Organizing trips, school holidays, visits, going to the theater ...

# Study Case 1: V.K.



- Short-term effects:
  - Better communication between all pupils in the class
- Long-term effects:
  - Increased acceptance and support from colleagues
  - Better school results
- Changes in the attitude of other students:
  - Due to changes in the behaviour of student V.K., colleagues want to spend more time with him, help him, play with him and engage with him in various activities

# Study Case 2 : A.C.



- Girl, 11 years old
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade (28 students , 14 boys, 14 girls)
- Category of marginalized populations according to the toolkit iDecide:
  - **Students from deprived backgrounds (Monoparental families; Parents abroad and divorced)**
- In class:
  - lack of motivation
  - learning difficulties
  - she misses her father
  - she feels guilty because the parents divorced



# Study Case 2 : A.C.



- Class decisions:
  - Formulating rules in a positive way
  - Monitoring student progress
  - Providing recognition of her educational achievements
  - organizing work in small groups for social integration of all students
  - Providing students with a condensed form of curriculum that allows them to retrieve basic content at their class level
  - We have identified individual talents and strengths and capitalized on them during the lesson (for example, she is very good at reading and the teacher gave her the responsibility of selecting the texts for the Theater club)



# Study Case 2 : A.C.



- Short-term effects:
  - Increased motivation for study
  - Increase self-esteem
  - Better communication between all pupils in the class
- Long-term effects:
  - Increased acceptance and support from colleagues
  - Better school results
  - Changes in the attitude of other students : “We are your family!”

# Challenges faced (students)

- We focused on more special / difficult cases
- Some very common situations (myopia, scoliosis, anemia) have not been dealt with
- How to find out information without getting involved in family / personal life?
- How to deal with the confidentiality (personal life, medical data) ?
- How to make it look like they are not favoured over other students?
- How to provide help without embarrassing?



# Challenges faced (teachers)

- Most of the teachers were educated in a system based on the result not on the student's comfort
- Teachers are only prepared for teaching
- Lack of time for observation, discussions ...
- Good communication between teachers
- Leadership is very receptive to decisions
- Decisions are well accepted (but not formalized)
- The school community gets involved in supporting students in need (shows, charity matches)



# Conclusions



- Provides training, support for teachers and parents
- Is a good tool for student observation
- It provides a coherent framework for integrating students with various difficulties and needs
- Helps raise awareness of some of the situations we have become accustomed to

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## Thank you!



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