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# HETEROGENEITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY AS A CHALLENGE FOR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

# STRUCTURE

- Trends
- The current situation
- Explanations and empirical results
- Risk groups - a comparative perspective
- Consequences for the educational field
- Interventions and measures
- Prospects for educational research
- Scientific guiding idea

# TRENDS

- Social-structural changes in the societies of central Europe
- Reversed age pyramid
- Declining number of students
- Growing population of children with immigrant backgrounds
- Increased share of children from socially underprivileged classes

# THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Rising number of migrants through the last decades
- Migration becomes increasingly diversified - implications for the heterogeneity and variety of cultures and ways of life
- Big European cities are becoming increasingly divers -visible in primary and secondary schools
- Challenge to integrate big numbers of migrant children in the educational systems of European countries

# THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Whether in respect of nationality and cultural origin nor in respect of vocational qualification, of social rooting and social positions it is possible to describe migrants as a homogeneous group
- ... a number of reasons for non-integration
- reasons for the **non-integration** of these groups of children - ??
- several explanations

# NON-INTEGRATION?

- ⊙ Educational decline ('Bildungsabstieg')
- ⊙ Educational poverty ('Bildungsarmut').

# RISK GROUPS

- ⊙ Immigration is not a general risk
- ⊙ Identifying specific risk groups ('children at risk') ....
- ⊙ ... with fundamental educational and qualification deficits
- ⊙ Mixed results across countries

# EXPLANATIONS

- ⦿ Risk groups: Starting conditions which obviously cannot be made up for in the course of their educational biographies
- ⦿ One factor: the socio-economic situation of their families -
- ⦿ **Lack of resources**



# EMPIRICAL RESULTS

- Research on the outcome of different conditions of starting a school career
- Researched in the empirical longitudinal study (SOKKE) on German primary schools
- Migrant children have to bear the severe consequences of deficits which are already visible at the end of the first grade

# LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Sufficient **language skills** of children and youths are an important precondition for success at school
- The complex language situation particularly in the school system, is definitely even more challenging for the various groups of migrants

# INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

- ◉ There are **institutional mechanisms** resulting in discrimination and exclusion and being an obstacle for successful educational careers
- ◉ **Discrimination and exclusion from educational careers against migrant youths** are problems in all European countries

# EDUCATIONAL FIELD

- ⦿ Communicating cultural competence
- ⦿ Dealing with heterogeneity in the context of teaching
- ⦿ Reducing migration-related educational disadvantages

# EDUCATIONAL FIELD

- Parent education and intercultural parent programs
- Reducing prejudices and stereotypes
- Fostering of language acquisition/dealing with multilinguality
- Creating new educational spaces of integration

# INTERVENTIONS AND MEASURES

- ◉ Interventions during early childhood
- ◉ Supporting the acquisition of the education/national language
- ◉ Institutional mechanisms
- ◉ Diagnostics
- ◉ Teacher training

# PROSPECTS FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

- ◉ Empirical research
- ◉ Basic research
- ◉ Evaluations
- ◉ Research on teacher training

# AREAS OF RESEARCH

- This requires structural reforms and purposeful empirical educational research in (at least) seven general points:
  - Communicating cultural competence
  - Dealing with heterogeneity in the context of teaching
  - Reducing migration-related educational disadvantages



# AREAS OF RESEARCH

- Parent education and intercultural parent programs
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- Creating new educational spaces of integration

# SCIENTIFIC GUIDING IDEA

- ◉ Knowledge stocks and scientific approaches are still clearly mono-cultural
- ◉ Scientific guiding idea: scientific thought should become increasingly ‘migratory’
- ◉ ...and less territorial

# SCIENTIFIC GUIDING IDEA

- ⦿ Cultural differences must not be considered to be absolute...
- ⦿ ...but to be a changeable potential
- ⦿ Intercultural and gender-oriented pedagogics

**THANK YOU!**