NATIONAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Migrant children and communities in a transforming Europe

MiCREATE

Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

The project Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe (MiCREATE) aims to stimulate inclusion of diverse groups of migrant children by adopting child-centred approach to migrant children integration on educational and policy level.
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AUSTRIA

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1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to propose some policy recommendations related to the integration of migrant pupils in Austrian schools. The recommendations are based on the findings of international research on the integration of migrant children in education (MiCREATE) conducted in Slovenia, Denmark, Spain, the United Kingdom, Austria and Poland. The research included newly arrived, long-term migrant, and local children. More than 6,000 children were involved in the multi-method study, which lasted from September 2019 to September 2021.

In Austria, we have identified the following needs to be met in order for the Austrian school system to evolve towards a more child-centered approach:

- More focus on students' bilingualism and multilingualism.

- Diversifying school staff to create role models for newly arrived and long-term migrant children.

- More school autonomy to give schools the opportunity to adapt every-day-school life to needs of students of the particular school.

- More financial and human resources for schools.

- More time and resources for native language instruction and more proactive and low-threshold psychosocial support.

- Reform of the Austrian school system, i.e., abolishing the discrepancy between MS and AHS in future possibilities and societal perceptions of the school types.

2. Child-centred policy recommendations

The child-centred policy recommendations present a comprehensive set of recommendations that follow from the policy relevant findings of the MiCREATE project and encompass structural, emotional, and relational dimensions of well-being. They are first organized according to the different levels of addressed stakeholders and policy makers. In the table which follows, they relate to the addressed group of children (newly arrived, long term, local, or children in transition).

2.1 For policy makers (at the local and/or national level):

- Fighting widespread social prejudice against the Secondary School (MS) for being less worthy in terms of academic value and quality in politics and public discourse.

- Consider abolishing the separation of the types of schools (AHS and MS) for pupils from age 10 to 18 years.

- Promoting better relationships between teachers/schools and migrant parents.

- End segregation between students based on their German proficiency as in German support classes.

- Establishing more individual support for children.

- Establishing instruction in mother tongue in schools.

- Increasing the number of social workers and psychologists in schools.

- Promoting multilingualism among pupils.

- Introducing same financing system for both school types (AHS and MS).

- Ending the individualization of integration processes and implement child-centeredness.

- Increasing diversity among teachers.
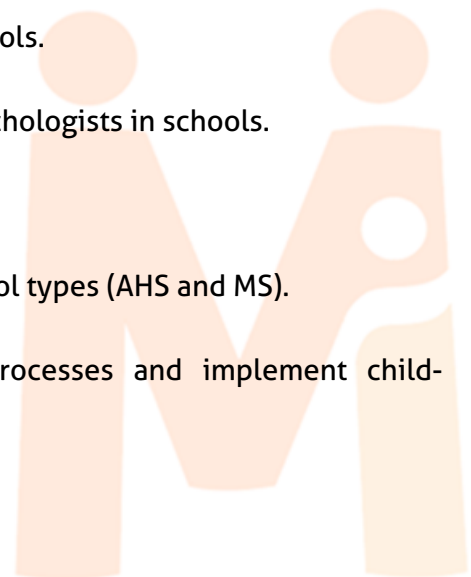
2.2 For schools, teachers and other involved stakeholders, experts etc.

- Antiracism training for teachers and pupils.

- Assisting individual support for migrant children.

- Tackle racist structures in order to make a change.

2.3 For any other responsible body, organization or other stakeholder important for addressing children's needs

- Recognizing the importance of unconditional recognition and valuation of children.

- Child-centeredness, especially listening to children, offer them safe spaces where they can come together and exchange ideas.

Figure 1: Main Policy recommendations

	Children		
Policy makers/ stakeholders	Newly arrived children	Long - term resident migrant children	Local children
Local and national level	Reform of the Austrian education system: e.g., Abolishing the differentiation in the school system between AHS and MS. Multilingual information campaigns for migrant children to inform them about their rights and where to get support. More financial resources for schools e.g., for education in mother tongue.	More financial and human resources for schools. Enlarge diversity of teachers. Implement school autonomy. Multilingual information campaigns for migrant children to inform them about their rights and where to get support. More financial resources for schools e.g., for intercultural education. Reform of the Austrian education system: e.g., Abolishing the differentiation in the school system between AHS and MS.	Reform of the Austrian education system: e.g., Abolishing the differentiation in the school system between AHS and MS. More financial resources for schools e.g., for education in mother tongue.

Schools, teachers	Legal establishment of psychologists and social workers at every school.	Diversity of teachers. Education in mother tongue. Psychological counselling. Legal establishment of psychologists and social workers at every school.	Legal establishment of psychologists and social workers at every school.

3. Policy indicators, monitoring, assessment

This part conceptualizes a few policy indicators that could assess and evaluate the proposed child-centred policies on the basis of the MiCREATE project findings. They concentrate on the less measurable variables such as happiness, belonging and feeling good. We propose the following:

- Surveys among students and teachers asking about their well-being to gain information about needs and wishes of migrant children: Those measures can help understanding what migrant children need and wish for and support their agency in a self-determined life. Nevertheless, it is difficult to reach all children equally, therefore language barriers for example must be taken into consideration. The survey must be prepared in a range of languages. Furthermore, there should be personal assistance for the pupils.

- Establish regular seminars with children to understand what their needs and wishes are: The seminars can be another source to understand how children perceive existing policies and what they wish for in future policies.

- Evaluating budget for schools: Evaluation of school budgets would give knowledge about the financial situation of schools and could be a possibility to talk about additional programs that schools can/cannot finance. Moreover, differences in the financial resources of MS and AHS could be discovered.

- Establish rules for diversifying school staff: Rules would establish a tool to guarantee a certain degree of diversity in every school, independent of the school's employment policies.

- Establish seminars and courses for teachers to include more child-centeredness: Guidelines could be promoted to help teachers establish child-centeredness, subsequently those guidelines would be a possibility to measure child-centeredness of teachers approaches.

- Changing the curriculum of teachers' education towards more child-centeredness, knowledge about basic needs, sensibility for topics such as migration and integration: A new curriculum would guarantee a certain degree of knowledge about how to implement child-centeredness for future teachers.

- Include NGOs with expertise of multilingualism at schools: NGOs and experts can help schools develop child-cantered approaches and create an understanding that respects multilingualism of children as positive asset. Furthermore, experts can create evaluations about state of multilingualism at certain schools.

- Expanding access to psychosocial counselling and support in order to promote well-being: those experts could evaluate the well-being and help to improve well-being of all children in schools.

- Include social lessons in the curriculum to stimulate discourse about well-being among students: Those lessons could help establishing a culture of mutual respect in schools and guidelines could be developed how to measure well-being and what to improve individual well-being of children.

DENMARK

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1. Introduction

The objective of this paper is to present recommendations for a child-centred policy based on empirical research and fieldwork results. The aim is to identify gaps in existing policies and approaches in order to recommend child-centred migrant integration policy based on adjustability, flexibility and contextuality, and on migrant children's participation. The recommendations consider four themes as central for migrant children's integration and inclusion: ontological security, transnationality, peers and friendship and language. Each of these thematic sections considers (a) problems, (b) recommendations and (c) responsible stakeholders. According to the fieldwork carried out, the essential responsible stakeholders that may address migrant children's needs are:

- School level: Educational staff: teachers, social educators, psychologists, management teams. parents' associations, teachers' associations, students' unions, university colleges (educating teachers).

- Local level: Local administrations and politicians, policy makers, social workers, NGOs, migrant and cultural associations, unions, sports associations, youth centers and clubs, pedagogical programs outside of school.

- National level: Politicians in the field of education, and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Immigration and Integration is also very important due to its integration and repatriation policies.

2. Ontological security

A basic sense of ontological security is crucial for the experience of becoming part of and interacting with a new society. The interviews with the children show, explicitly and implicitly, that social anchors related to being in Denmark provide a sense of ontological security. It is important for children to feel safe, that their family members are safe, and that they have positive and predictable future options for education, employment, and income. The feeling of basic security, stability and predictability for oneself and one's family thus appears to be a main factor influencing inclusion and integration processes in a positive way and allowing for wellbeing.

Problem: Worries about war in country of origin, where family members are still living, worries about being deported. The so called 'paradigm shift' in Danish immigration policies, emphasizing repatriation and possibilities to sending refugees back to insecure areas (such as Syria and Somalia) and other harsh legislations are extensive threats to migrant children's well-being and ontological security.

Recommendation: Withdraw laws on deporting refugees to unsafe countries; withdraw current restrictions on residence permits, as they are harmful for children's wellbeing. For children's worries, it is recommended that children get access to talking to school staff about their worries, and to psychological support.

Responsible: Politicians (immigration laws) respectively school staff and management.

Problem: Unstable and insecure life conditions in Denmark such as low income and insecure housing conditions, influencing children's wellbeing and conditions for inclusion and integration.

Recommendation: Ensure that refugee and immigrant families have sufficient income and secure and predictable housing.

Responsible: Politicians (national level) for income, politicians (local and national level) for housing policies such as "ghetto plans" resulting in demolishing of buildings in certain areas.

Problem: Unpredictable prospects regarding education, income, and employment. Some children worry about their future jobs and education options, indicating a mismatch between the rigorous demands of the education system and an inadequate reception teaching system not fully suitable for fulfilling students' learning needs.

Recommendation: Secure that reception classes and the school system in general teach migrant children Danish to a sufficient degree. Offered migrant children a full range of academic disciplines, and the possibility of teaching in languages they already master, to

prepare them for upper secondary school.

Responsible: Teachers, local and national politicians.

3. Transnationality

Transnational social fields are an important factor in integration and wellbeing of children. It appears from interviews and focus groups that transnational social anchors play an important role in the lives of the children, in particular relatives and friends living abroad, either in the countries of origin or in other countries. In addition, transnational social anchors play a significant role within the children's local context.

Problem: A nationalist, monolinguistic school system, prioritizing Danish as a language and not including migrant children's experiences and languages sufficiently. Transnational anchors and conditions for well-being are not recognized sufficiently, impeding children in feeling fully included.

Recommendation: Teachers and other school staff should recognize children's transnational social anchors as valuable in their lives and their transnational competences as resources. School system should be less nationally oriented.

Responsible: Teachers, teacher educators, policy makers as responsible for the nationally oriented school systems.

4. Language

Even though school policies unequivocally prioritize Danish as the main language, reception classes and the school system often fail to teach migrant children Danish to a sufficient degree. Including languages other than Danish in school can strengthen the transnational social anchors of both migrant children and local children whose mother tongue is not Danish.

Problem: Exclusion of other languages can contribute to an experience of important anchors and competences as not valued in the school context, thereby hindering processes of integration, as at some schools the children were not allowed to speak other languages than Danish.

Recommendation: Include other languages in school; allocate more resources for both Danish as second language, and support teachers' education in translanguaging.

Responsible: teachers, teacher educators, school management, local administration, national politicians.

5.   Peers and friends

Peers and friends are crucial for children's integration and well-being. School, leisure activities and organised sports appear to play a major role as sites for social anchoring. Belonging to peer groups as communities on the micro level is crucial for the experience of integration and inclusion in society in a broader sense for all children, regardless of background. Both Danish-speaking friends and friends with the same background or mother tongue are important for migrant children, as such peers contribute to feelings of belonging and safety.

Problem: It is difficult for newly arrived migrant children to make friends, especially local Danish-speaking friends. Some children find advanced Danish skills a prerequisite for making Danish friends. Reception classes placed in separate schools hinder contact with Danes; and in mainstream classes, support for connecting with children is insufficient. Children experience that the responsibility for making friends is placed on them alone.

Recommendation: The school system – both reception classes and mainstream classes – must further acknowledge the importance of and take responsibility for children's development of friendship, across language skills and backgrounds.

Responsible: Teachers, teacher educators, school management teams.

POLAND

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1. Introduction

The overall objective of this document is to identify specific existing problems related to current policy, regulation and practices regarding migrant children's inclusion processes. This policy summary shows the main findings obtained during the fieldwork in Polish six primary and secondary schools, and with children attending language courses. Seven items were considered: (1) Equality and educational policies, (2) The sense of belonging and well-being in schools, (3) Quality of relations with teachers and staff, (4) Relations with peers and friends, (5) School-families relationship, (6) Language policies and (7) Diversity. Each of these sections considers (a) problems, (b) recommendations and (c) institutions responsible for the change. According to the fieldwork carried out, the essential responsible stakeholders that may address migrant children's needs are:

- Educational staff. Teachers, families, social educators, social integrators, intercultural assistants, management teams, family associations, teachers associations, students unions, educational associations, teacher training institutions, etc

- Local and regional administrations and agents. Social workers, NGOs, migrant and cultural associations, unions, sports associations, community centres, libraries, cultural institutions, and community lounges.

- Local, regional and national politicians. *Ministerstwo Edukacji i Nauki* (Ministry of Education and Science), *Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych* (Ministry of Interior Affiairs), *Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów oraz Rządowe Centrum Legislacji* (Chamber of The Prime Minister of Poland and Governmetal Legislation Centre), *Kuratorium Oświaty* (Regional Education Supervisory Board), City council with the Eductional and Social Policy departments, etc.

The national policy recommendations end with a summary of the most important postulates.

2.   Equality and Educational Policies

2.1   Legal status

Problem: In reference to the legal status of children who migrated with parents and without parents or whose parents subsequently left Poland the legal regulations create certain gaps that deteriorate the integration process. There are no clear instructions and those existing are largely ignored in practice concerning the custody over the minors who are unaccompanied by parents. Furthermore, the period of education in Poland is not included in the period required to obtain the right to long-term EU residency. This means that completing education in Poland leaves children at the beginning of the path to have strong roots in the hosting country like they were newly-arrived migrants.

Access to education and integration programs is much restricted for children seeking asylum due to structural and organizational constraints in reception practices. Most reception centres are located far from large population clusters, often requiring transporting to schools and limiting the possibility for additional extra-curricular activities. Motivation for learning and frequency of abanding school by asylum-seeking children is also a problem. Children suffering from the migration crisis at the Polish-Balarusian border are victimized by the wrong decisions of their parents and hostile attitudes of Polish Border Guards and governmental policies that are contrary to international humanitarian laws and those regulating access to asylum procedures.

Recommendation: There shall be clear law indications regulating the status of unaccompanied children staying in Poland and their presence in schools. A responsible custodian must be appointed with the due process of law. There must be clear instructions for teachers implemented on the responsibilities and safety of children staying in dormitories.

Children who fully completed at least one level of education shall be granted access to long-term residency. The shorter periods of education shall be included in the period required for the long-term residency.

The organization of the reception shall change to make reception centres more open for the community life and relations with the engagement of local children. Dispersed accommodation of asylum seekers in rented apartments shall be preferred over the isolated reception sites.

Communication between school and reception centre shall be organized in a way allowing children for the active participation in community life. Education shall be inclusive from the day of arrival and no obligatory forms of education shall be provided inside the

centres. Parents of the asylum-seeking children shall be instructed how stabilisation of life and taking educational courses are important for the well-being and future perspectives of the children.

The ban on entry of humanitarian organizations and medical staff to the border zone at the Polish-Belarussian border needs to be revoked. All families with children shall be granted access to the fair, indiscriminate and fast border or asylum procedures. No "push-backs" are allowable. Children at risk need to be cared for with the consideration of their best interests.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school staff.

2.2 Human and material resources

Problem: Teachers have few pedagogical resources to work in contexts of diversity or meet students' needs. They are often overwhelmed by dealing with the overloaded curriculum and must balance between individual approaches and keeping up with the requirements. Some teachers are lacking intercultural competencies and declare to feel insecure in the approach to diversity issues.

The Polish schools are suffering from overpopulation. Sufficient financial resources need to be provided to expand the school base and provide additional teaching positions. The organization of schools and education needs reform in direction of more project-oriented teaching and teamwork specificity. Local students and long-term children pointed out the crucial role of teachers in the adaptation/inclusion process for migrant and local children who are new in the school, not only for cognitive aspects but also for the emotional and personal accompaniment. That reinforces the importance of caring in education and the need for human resources for implementing caring policies in the school.

Recommendation: Teachers and educational personnel require more and better professional development. Policies should guarantee that university curricula and professional training approach these issues, so teachers can feel more confident working in schools with socio-cultural diversity. There is a need to work on these topics during initial and in-service teacher education. The Administration should recruit more specialists—for example, cultural mediators/intercultural assistants, psychologists or translators. More teachers would be needed to provide lower ratios in class to meet each child's needs, especially newly arrived.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians.

2.3   Mentoring programs

Problem: Although some students have general ideas about the future professions they would like to have, many teenagers (newly arrived, long-term and local) lack a clear understanding of how to reach jobs. This refers also to migrant students who, being ambitious has little knowledge about the reality of the labour market in the hosting country. Furthermore, some of them due to wrong guardianship were directed to vocational schools outstanding their interests.

Recommendation: From a policy perspective, mentoring programs open relevant contributions regarding the potential benefits of offering resources to make students more aware of their future academic paths and jobs. More hours to job orientation shall be dedicated in each school term or external orientation programs provided for schools in the region.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school management, job counselling centres, and local social services providers.

3.   The feeling of belonging and well-being at school

3.1   The first months at school

Problem: Some students felt excluded, disoriented and anxious during their first months in the host country. Their initial troubles were due to language acquisition and the impossibility of explaining themselves in an unknown language. From a policy perspective, the first schooling months require special attention.

Recommendation: It would be fundamental to think about practices and policies capable of structurally embracing migrant children's life stories to offer them spaces to give meaning to their experiences. It is also crucial to equip teachers with resources to better understand pupils' contexts, stories and particularities. The investment in the intercultural competencies of teachers shall continue at the local and national level – especially by providing diverse teaching to university syllabuses. Intercultural assistants shall be provided for children, playing an active role in the integration process and not only as language support. Orientation guidance and orientation camps shall be organised in the early period of migrants' presence in schools.

Responsible: Properly trained and equipped educational staff, national government, universities and teachers' training centres.

3.2   The preparatory classes

Problem: The preparatory classes ensure more extensive learning of the host country's language and offer emotional support. On the other hand, the Polish system is badly organized allowing to join different grades in one class and enforcing the same curriculum. The number of preparatory classes is still low and the reality of teaching slows down the integration with local peers.

Recommendation: the preparatory classes demand reforms – individual curricula for those classes need to be drafted or more independence in the teacher's approach granted. Some of the classes shall be conducted with local children to facilitate integration in the whole school community. A child-oriented approach needs promotion and implementation.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school staff.

3.3   School and environment connection

Problem: Sports, leisure and cultural activities in and outside the school are vital for students' well-being. Some students miss a stronger relationship between social entities, neighbourhoods, cultural activities, families and school. The learning process is held in the formal structures of classrooms and schools, only with occasional extra-curricular activities or off-school trips. The contact between school and migrant parents is not facilitated and some of such parents do not use introduced channels of communication with the school.

The presence of CSOs in schools was endangered by the educational law reform that was hopefully vetoed by the President of Poland. The ideological crusade of the far-right organizations put however pressure on school communities to avoid diversity topics in teaching practices. The presence of diversity and tolerance was declared by newly-arrived children and long-term students as spaces influencing their learning and performance along with their social and emotional skills.

Recommendation: Facilitating practices that connect the school with their social and cultural environment, with the economic resources needed, can be a proposal for inclusion policies. Create opportunities for language acquisition in the non-formal learning environment – more outdoor classes (city walks, excursions, city games, etc). Fostering cooperation between schools and CSOs. Strengthening the school autonomy in setting partnerships with local organizations and groups.

Responsible: local and regional administrations, school staff.
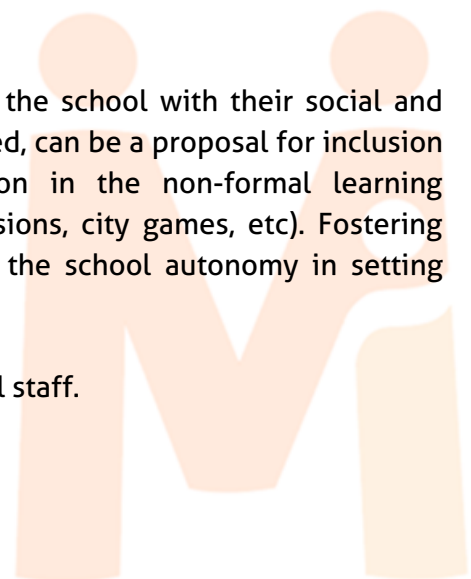
3.4 Quality of relations with teachers and staff

Problem: Participant students highlighted the role of classmates, teachers, and other educational staff as critical in the inclusion processes. Although Polish teachers were praised for their attitude and engagement the organization of the education process gives little space for the individual approach and for students themselves to express their interests and individual skills. Children with lower language competencies are often overlooked and excluded from classroom activities.

Recommendation: Policies and schools' projects should address a holistic approach to education by developing pedagogies of care and engagement. Children's language competencies shall be raised by fostering their inclusion and engagement in classroom activities. An organization of teaching practices require reform to be more project-oriented and teamworking, which could foster language acquisition within the group of pupils working together. It is also essential that policies consider teachers' expectations and academic self-concepts during initial teacher training.

Responsible: school staff, universities, and teachers' professional development institutions.

3.5 Relations with peers and friends

Problem: Newly arrived children tend to report difficulty arriving and getting to know new people and getting oriented in the new environment. Specifically, they stress the feeling of knowing only a few people, mostly from the same linguistic and cultural circle and the role of the familiar relationship in coping with this lack.

Recommendation: Policies and initiatives should address children's socialisation and well-being in and beyond the school environment. This could be achieved through extra-curricular activities, excursions, cultural events, teamworking, and homework team activities. Integration programs with the joining of local CSOs are also recommended.

Responsible: school staff, local and regional administrations, and agents (NGO, social workers, etc.).

3.6 School-families relationship

Problem: There is evidence that providing a space for students' families helps facilitate the inclusion process of migrant children and adults. Presently migrants' parents are rarely taking part in the life of the Polish school or the life of the neighbourhoods. It was reported in the study that some families face difficulties participating in school activities due to the language barrier or incompatibility due to work schedules. Parents of foreign students do not use communication channels established by schools.

Recommendation: Policies and schools' projects should create strategies and policies to facilitate family inclusion and communication (especially in secondary schools). This activity needs engagement and devotion from the school staff by drafting schemes of communication and contact designed according to the needs of migrants' parents.

Responsible: school staff, local and regional administrations and agents (NGOs, social workers, IT staff at school, intercultural assistants).

3.7   Language policies

Problem: The language was a central aspect when discussing existing inclusion models (for newly-arrived, long-term and local children). A first evident aspect is the need to learn the local language. Pupils reported that learning to speak Polish is one of the most challenging issues newly arrived migrant children face. This challenge is partially addressed by the existing policy of the reception classroom, or additional language classes. Those solutions are provided in schools only and not given to younger children. The practice of teaching sometimes does not foster fast language acquisition.

Children noted the value and richness of cultures and languages in their schools as very positive. Nonetheless, they also recognised a scarcity of initiatives to take advantage of this richness.

Recommendation: Policies should offer specific language support for newly arrived students and long-term students of any age. The number of hours available must be individually assessed enabling one to gain sufficient language competencies within a semester.

It would be necessary to think about policies and initiatives to support children's mother-tongue. Maintaining students' existing languages has a "positive impact on functional literacy, including educational success as a whole" (Staring et al., 2017, p. 5). Hence, specific policies and actions should consider and take advantage of the cultural-linguistic richness of the schools. Bi or multilingualism must be seen as an asset and incorporated as it into the learning practices.

Responsible: Local, regional and national politicians, school teaching staff and management, CSOs, language centres, cultural assistants.

3.8 Diversity

A holistic approach to inclusion

Problem: diversity teaching is hardly existing within the Polish schools' reality. Problems of tolerance, social and cultural diversity, race, ethnicity, freedom of religion and discrimination are not included in the school curriculum. Schools in reference to the learning process are focused on monocultural, homogenous, Eurocentric narration. Integration is seen as an expectation for the migrant children to make adaptation efforts with sufficient support from institutions. No obligations from the host society are encountered in this view. The organization of the education process is not flexible enough to serve well the needs of migrants' children, often expecting too much progress or readiness to perform the tasks in the Polish language.

Recommendation: Efforts must be made to reconceptualise the idea of integration or inclusion, as it is the basis of schools' organisations and how newcomers feel in the new country. Diversity teaching must be part of the school curriculum base and incorporated into all subjects taught. Teachers must be equipped with certain competencies and skills enabling them to form alliances with CSOs for the well-being of all school communities. Cultural assistants shall be present in all schools with a migrants' population and a coordinator for such people need to be appointed to manage the presence of foreign students. A database of best practices for the adaptation process shall be established and shared between schools. The assets and community potential in fostering integration shall be assessed frequently.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school staff.

4. Recommendation summary

4.1 Diversity education

- Schools should embody a diversity curriculum that enables children to understand their multiple and complex identities and how their lives are influenced by globalisation (Banks, 2014). Such ideas can be embedded within the history and geography curriculum, as well as civic education.

- Changes should be implemented at the school curriculum level, so that anti-racist perspectives are embedded within the curriculum itself (Joseph-Salisbury, 2020).

- Teachers should be trained on how to address topics regarding diversity within the classroom. Training should be provided by experts within the field, including researchers. The training should also be offered to trainee teachers so that ideas of a diverse curriculum can be implemented early in the teacher's career. Such training may help teachers overcome the hesitancies they may have in addressing topics

around diversity. Such matters must be included in the curriculums of teachers' studies or training. There shall be an obligatory methodical module covering the work in a diverse, multicultural environment. Multiculturalism and social diversity need to be obligatory parts of pedagogical studies in the 21st century. Children with different cultural backgrounds shall have the opportunity to present their perspectives during classes. Cultural differences shall have been encompassed in the daily school routine and not be introduced in an actionizing manner. Multicultural festivals, diversity days, etc shall only complement the ongoing integration process and need to be free of labelling and stereotyping, as well as a patronizing approach to other cultures.

- A diversity curriculum should be taught in all schools, not only those with a larger number of migrant children.

- Schools should endeavour to increase the quota of intercultural assistants who proved to be the greatest support for children with the migration background in their adaptation. Each school shall reserve the funding in their budget to hire intercultural assistants. The organization of the classroom shall engage migrant students in performing all tasks.

- Schools shall appoint a migrant coordinator who could deal with migrant children's orientation in the school environment and be a contact point for any intervention necessary during the adaptation process. If possible, pre-enrolment orientation camps might be organized as day camps on school premises.

4.2   Bullying

- At least the local government should make the collection of data on incidents of bullying and its background a mandatory action.

- The reaction to bullying incidents shall be officially dealt and measures involving victim, perpetrator and community shall be introduced in the problem resolution process.

- The programs on violence prevention and a secure school environment, including training sessions for teachers shall continue and get funding from local and central government. Preventing bias violence shall be incorporated into school conduct policies.

- Antibullying messages need to be communicated through the curriculum with the students' voices being utilised to tackle racial bullying, as research indicates that this may be more effective (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

- The appointment of a trustworthy person to deal with school problems including inter-peer or teachers-peer relations shall be considered.

4.3   Language

- Schools should take an opportunity to use all available measures to the maximum extent to teach migrant children the Polish language.

- The possibility of learning in mixed languages shall be considered in the best interest of the student if gaining proficiency in the Polish language is not expected within one semester.

- The institution of intercultural assistants shall be promoted in schools with the input on being communication and community mediator and not only language assistants.

- With respect to the best interest of the child, education shall be provided in the language of choice of the asylum-seeking children who based on the social assessment report will not define Poland as the country of residence.

- Schools shall support CSOs initiatives in language learning and buddy mentoring systems among peers to facilitate school performance of migrant children and their faster adaptation.

- Schools should develop links with supplementary schools or cultural services that may be offering further classes in children's language to help support migrant pupils to keep a link with their home language.

- Funding and promoting studies for teachers to gain competencies in teaching Polish as a foreign language.

- Equip schools with modern and effective learning tools and manuals for teaching Polish as a foreign language. Training for teachers teaching other subjects how to communicate effectively with learners of Polish as a second language.

- Curriculum adjustments to the communicational skills of migrant children

4.4   Educational attainment

- Newly arrived and long-term children should be given tailored career guidance, which should focus on the various pathways to further education. Many of these pupils may be left with little or no formal qualifications due to the timing of their arrival in the country. The model of career counselling described in these recommendations shall be promoted.

- The legal and social situation of the unaccompanied migrant children coming to Poland for vocational training in the job-teaching schools shall be regulated and taken with care and compassion.

- Schools shall develop and expand integration programs for migrant children that are not based on temporary actions but are stable, ongoing, culturally based and two-way in the approach to integration problems. A database of the best practices shall be established and distributed between schools. additional funding for the integration programs shall be secured. Family involvement must be considered at every stage of the planned action.

- To improve academic performance and sustain migrant pupils' motivation towards education, children should be mentored by older students, including those who graduated and joined universities who can guide and motivate the learners to pursue a career.

- The social and professional position of the cultural assistants shall be reformed, stabilised and equalized with the professional position of teachers.
- The process and framework of education require reform based on the promotion of teamwork as the basis of the task performance and organizing projects as a way to gain results.

- The preparatory classes shall be reformed to better answer children's needs and make proper adjustments to the curriculum (individually tailored to the group).

- An enrolment process shall be based on the reliable assessment of the skills and competencies of the child, not limited to the language competencies.

4.5   Parental involvement in education

- Effective communication channels with migrant parents shall be established. A pre-enrollment information meeting shall be held to explain the school requirements and answer all questions. Support from the migrant organization in such meetings is a valuable asset.

- Integration programs with the involvement of families shall become a priority of the school agenda.

- Language training could be provided by schools to help parents understand the system better. Such an approach proved to be effective with asylum-seeking parents.
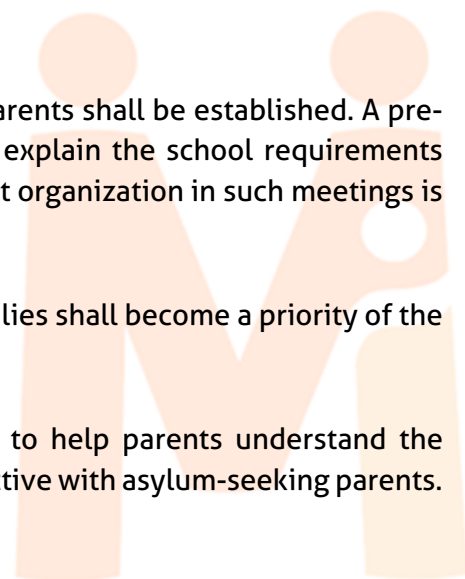
4.6   Leisure

- Leisure activities need to be made inclusive and consider the needs of migrants who may otherwise be unable to access these opportunities.

4.7   Asylum seekers

- organization of the reception shall change to make reception centres more open for the community life and relations with the engagement of local children. Dispersed accommodation of asylum seekers in rented apartments shall be preferred over the isolated reception sites.

- communication between school and reception centre shall be organized in a way allowing children for the active participation in community life. Education shall be inclusive from the day of arrival and no obligatory forms of education shall be provided inside the centres.

SLOVENIA

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1.   Background

Slovenia is one of the few EU countries with a targeted integration strategy specifically for the education sector. Though this strategy does not include child centred perspective it noticeably builds on comprehensive approach to inclusion of migrant children in schools and sets goals, which stem from the gaps identified in the field and, more importantly, address (almost) all relevant elements and actors, i.e. teachers, policy-makers, migrants parents, local and national community, language support, schools curricula. In our research we noticed that progress has been made in the last decade in most fields, including at the level of legislation, strategies and instruments, improvement of language learning support, developing social and civic competences of school staff, development of teaching materials in the field of Slovene as a second foreign language and so on. We also noticed gaps regarding school cooperation with migrant parents (no progress on the level of policy has been identified here) and a need to define appropriate and effective, action-oriented ways of promoting intercultural communication in schools in general. It would be especially important to train teachers in this field, as they are the ones who transfer their knowledge to children and peer groups. Not enough attention and work has been devoted to build a comprehensive strategy and normative framework for respecting and preserving migrants' language and culture origin.

Positive formal developments notwithstanding, systemic normative framework is still needed. The strategy is not legally binding and financially supported, and as a result there

are large differences in its implementation. Integration challenges are mostly left to the individual schools and teachers to self-initiatively organize the school system for welcoming, inclusion and integration of migrant children. There are also differences among primary and secondary level. While protocols of dealing with inclusion and integration of migrant children and other actions dealing with cultural pluralism in the school environment are mostly implemented in primary schools (children aged between 5 and 14 years old), these approaches are almost completely missing at the level of secondary schools (children between 14 and 18 years old). Educational community in primary schools perceives their role not only as mission of training but also as responsibility for educating about the values and ideals of life in society. In contrast, secondary schools tend to act as provider of knowledge and skills to enter university or labor market, which also manifests in lack of interest in dealing with cultural pluralism of students, multiculturalism, xenophobia etc.

There exists a possibility to integrate the child-centred approach more explicitly in the existing policy framework. The strategy and some normative documents already include main underlying principles of child-centred perspective, however these documents do not give enough attention and not elaborate in detail about the positive effects such approach has in terms of integration of migrant children in school environment and in wider society as well. Given that many innovations concerning teaching approaches to migrant integration, teacher's skills and capacities are being introduced through direct training of school staff (implemented within various projects), there exists the likelihood and possibility to transfer the latest knowledge and research outputs concerning child-centred approaches and migrant children integration to school practice.

2. What are the main policy relevant observations that follow from the MiCREATE research among educational community in Slovenia?

- Generally, no consensus exists about the concepts related to integration among the members of education community. The issue of integration of migrant children in schools is largely reduced to language learning. Focus, energy, and most resources are dedicated to this. Other aspects of the integration processes (social, psychological, cultural) are largely neglected.

- The data schools collect about migrant pupils are scarce. There is no legal obligation to collect data.

- Approaches vary from school to school, and additionally between primary and secondary schools. School reception policies differ significantly. Protocols dealing with the welcoming of migrant children are sometimes implemented in primary schools and are almost non- existent at the level of secondary schools.

- The integration support initiatives are predominately left to autonomous decisions of an individual school, the good will of the principal, school leadership, etc. Even in the schools that approach migrant children integration better, this rarely means that all school staff is involved actively in the process of integration.

- Whole school approach is therefore missing. Both the research among educational community and the research of experiences and perceptions in the lives of pupils show that the integration of migrant children in Slovene schools and society relies largely on individuals (their good will, knowledge, resources, and energy), on non-permanent ad hoc solutions and project interventions.

- While most teachers have positive attitude about migration, seeing it as a resource, some members of the educational community express negative feelings toward migrants in general, showing the influence of the prevailing media reports and political discourse. There are still teachers who have prejudices, lack sensibility, spread hate speech, and are intolerant and those who are suitable to work with migrant learners. Yet teachers are not involved in any obligatory professional training concerning the integration of migrant children.

- Hesitation and negative feelings regarding the integration of migrant children and their families exist in the local community among local parents. However, very rarely schools address this issue openly. In rare cases of schools in which the whole local community is recognised as important for the integration of migrant children, schools connect and encourage cooperation between the school and different actors in the local community.

- The Slovenian specific is the division made between "proper migrants" and "nonproper migrants" coming from the republics of former common state Yugoslavia (Serbs, Bosnians, Croats, Albanians, Montenegrins, Macedonians) based on the language and cultural proximity as the result of common state in the past. General opinion is that most children from former Yugoslavia adapt quicker than other immigrants because the language is similar, while Albanian, Syrian, Iranian, French, etc. children struggle longer with the language barrier.

- There is a lack of teaching materials which would address appropriately cultural diversity or help learning Slovenian language to migrant children. Teachers at both levels miss more material, sources and tools that could help them to address topics like tolerance and multiculturality, while on the other hand some reported that they are tired of lectures and seminars about inclusion of migrant children in a classroom.

- Lack of educators' skills to work with migrant children has been highlighted, particularly lack of skills of teaching Slovenian language as a second language.

- Teachers often express the need for training on themes, such as intercultural coexistence, dealing with cultural, religious, and linguistic plurality in school etc. On the other hand, some teachers did not see any necessities for such trainings. In this context, problematic practices of lowering standards for the assessment of migrant children were identified.

- While schools are not formally assessed regarding academic outcomes, public schools with a higher number of migrant children are often perceived as schools of lower quality.

- A child-centred approach is virtually non-existent in Slovenian schools. Even in cases when it would be expected, such as the preparation of individual plans for (migrant) children, children are often not involved. There is evident lack of support for migrant children and the responsibility for their successful integration is placed mainly on themselves and their families.

- The majority of Slovenian schools at both, primary and secondary level, recognize weakspots they have, however, they express lack of capacities to tackle opportunities and issues multiculturality brings along.

- A more holistic and systematic, and legislatively regulated approach to the process of integration of migrant children is still missing both in schools and in the society (with the exception of the language course and some adaptations, e.g. the right to not be assessed during the first year of enrolment in the Slovenian school system).

3. **What are the main policy relevant challenges in integration process to implement child-centred approach that understand children's needs and their well being in different settings?**

- The lack of a holistic and systemic approach to the integration of migrant children and only few elements of child centred approach.

- The whole process of reception, inclusion, and integration of migrant child is left to the individual school, individual principal and individual teacher, her/his sensitivity, awareness, good will, and ingenuity.

- Failure to take into account the intergenerational context: non-awareness of the adult and/or child-centred perspectives.

- Predominant adult centric approach in school and teaching: 1) teachers expect the learners to mostly work quietly and independently; 2) not many of them are paying attention to individual needs; 3) they focus on individual performance.

- Not adequate addressing of the issue of belonging and safety (family, friends, social networks).

- Transnational, multicultural and plurilingual social anchoring of immigrant children is not sufficiently addressed.

- Explicit engagement with cultural diversity topics are rare and the curriculum neither reflects the diversity of learners nor it challenges Europocentrism.

- Migrant learners are often perceived as a problem in educational process.

- Existing language nationalism/mono lingualism: learners miss more interaction with teachers in their mother tongue or a short wrap up of the teaching content in adjusted form, some teachers are not particularly fond of listening to migrant children's home language during classes or in breaks.

- Not all learners report positive experiences with teachers: some of them differentiated between learners according to their surname, physical appearance, and religion.

- Psycho-social support is not adequate i.e. children are not using it.

- Individual programs for children are not always prepared with the active involvement of the child and family and weak at the secondary level.

- Work with migrant children is mainly the responsibility of school counsellor, psychologist or multiplier (on project basis) and there is not enough staff employed for this work, i.e. not enough paid qualified staff (project based and ad-hoc solutions).

- No specifically planned financial means except on project basis.

- Some local parents do not appreciate multicultural schools and public schools with a higher number of migrant children are often perceived as schools of lower quality.

- Troubling peer dynamics affects migrant learners' wellbeing, especially cases of exclusions and discrimination due to origin, religion or language. Some local children are disturbed by their peers speaking in foreign language.

- While language learning process is the core issue of the integration process there still exists language constraint over a longer time, the existing fond of language teaching hours does not suffice and there is not enough additional learning support.

- Due to the language knowledge deficiency and mono-lingualism of the system, migrant children cannot demonstrate their real knowledge and are often disadvantaged.

- Difficulties in contacts with families and a lack of support from the family: a special challenge is the involvement of parents who do not speak Slovenian language or those from traditionally more closed communities.

- Most of newly arrived migrant children enrol in the vocational secondary schools to start earning money as soon as possible and this often regardless their interest and aspirations.

4. What are the opportunities that might allow for adopting the child-centred approach?

- The existing policy framework offers a possibility to integrate the child-centred approach more explicitly.

- The strategy and some normative documents already include main underlying principles of child-centred approach.

- Schools at both, primary and secondary level, recognize weak spots in their approaches.

- Educational community in primary schools perceive their role not only as mission of training but also as responsibility for educating about the values and ideals of life in society.

- Teachers who work with migrant children are actively expressing their training needs.

- Usual practice of direct training of school staff (implemented within various projects and programmes) offers opportunity to disseminate the latest knowledge on child-centred approaches.

- In principle, schools try to provide accepting, tolerant, warm and emphatic environment for migrant children.

- The most of the (migrant) children have the feeling of safety in school and in their school environment and that can rely upon their teachers.

- Most teachers are positively contributing to children's wellbeing. They adjust learning materials and offer them help and support.

- Newly arrived learners think that they can influence school process and express their wishes and interests, which is important aspect of the child centric perspective.

- Reception policies and good practices of inclusion play a great role for newly arrived pupils: they all can be framed by a child centric approach.

- Individual program in cooperation with the newly arrived child and the family could be the door to the child centric approach: while it is taking into account the child`s age, provenience, and existing knowledge and sets objectives, activities, assessment modification, additional teaching support, etc.

- Child-centred approach can be first and more easily adopted in teaching practical subjects.

- Long term migrant pupils can often help newly arrived because they speak the same language.

- There are many local children with migration background who also have anchors in different cultures and are bilingual and multilingual and thus understand the newcomers' concerns.

- Most local children are seeing cultural and language differences as a benefit not a disadvantage.

- Generally, local classmates are perceived as tolerant (also to various languages), accepting, curious and friendly, although it seems that the older the learners are, the higher the level of intolerance is.

- Peer to peer support and mentoring programmes bridge the gap in the process of cultural integration, while peers from the same country of origin help migrant learners to develop and embrace their identity.

- Leisure and sports activities are important dimension of integration and definition of wellbeing, providing them with an opportunity to socialise with peers, expand their social network or develop their future aspirations, e.g., becoming a professional athlete.

- Many migrant children have clear vision of their future and aimed ambitiously at active participation in the reception society.
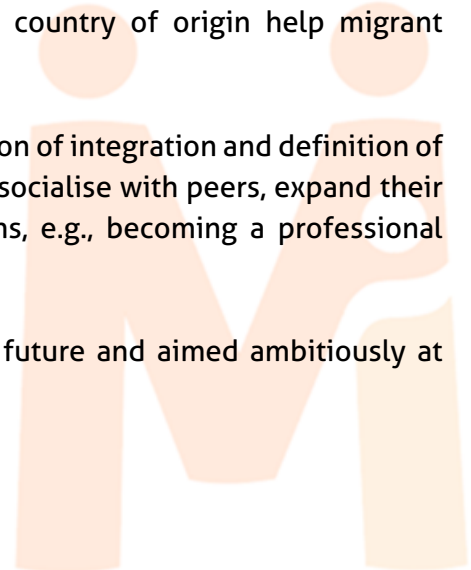
5. Policy recommendations: what are possible solutions?

5.1 National level

- Develop holistic, participatory, systematic, legislatively regulated and financially supported approach to the process of integration of migrant children both in schools and in the society. Such an approach would allow permanent and generalized treatment and procedure in every school; it would clearly define responsibilities and obligations of schools and members of the educational community in ensuring successful integration.

- Build up multi-stakeholder partnerships, local strategies adapted to the concrete needs assessments, participation of immigrants in development of services, development of workforce skills.

- Adopt the child-centred approach (that recognises children's needs and considers their current wellbeing, and strengthens their capacity for agency) more explicitly into the existing policy framework – and implement it at all levels.

- Improve data collection on migrant learners at the national level and in schools. Include data on bullying and harassment in schools.

- Address and promote the understanding of integration as two-way process of inclusion at all levels – national, local, school: with policy makers, teachers, families, local community etc.

- Support integration efforts at the local level and improve cooperation with relevant NGOs and civil society actors at all levels through programs and projects.

- Make full use of EU funding in the area of integration.

- Elaborate in detail about the positive effects of child-centered approach in terms of integration of migrant children in school environment and in wider society.

- Introduce and/or strengthen individual support to migrant children at both performance and wellbeing level at the level of the whole system.

- Change the normative about the number of children in classes with newly arrived migrant children (lower the number of children).

- Improve language teaching by introducing more legally guaranteed hours for Slovenian language learning and with more qualified teachers; learning language course should start earlier, before the enrolment in school, and long term migrants should also be considered for additional language support. Language learning

assistance should also be provided in the second and third years and, if necessary, later.

- Develop more cosmopolitan curriculum that allows for intercultural education at all levels.

- Enable policies that allow for greater multi-lingualism and pluri-lingualism: this includes strategy and normative framework for respecting and preserving migrant children's home language and culture (for example, build multi-lingual practices and spaces, enable schools to also offer teaching in migrant pupil's home languages, and to offer learning of these languages to local children).

- Do not allow for segregation of schools – concentration of highly disadvantaged children in certain schools only and for big differences between schools (primary-secondary, high-low number of migrant children) and pay more attention to integration processes in secondary schools.

- Monitor general wellbeing (from child centred perspective) and social economic status of all children, with particular attention to migrant children. Ensure systematic interventions in cases of socio-economic or other deprivation and harm, including anti-harassment and anti-bullying measures.

- Address gender inequality and divisions among all pupils, and particularly among migrant: pay attention to both girls and boys and the expected gender roles in their lives.

- Monitor socio-economic status and its influence on performance and wellbeing of migrant children

- Readapt university curriculums and lifelong learning activities for educators to provide pedagogical resources related to dealing with discrimination and racism, including intersectional approach (taking into consideration multiple dimensions of children's positions) and non-eurocentric perspective in education.

- Develop quality teaching materials that include all aspects of integration process going in two ways.

- Plan for and recruit more staff dealing with integration through systematization of (introduction of) new working place/s for persons responsible for working with migrant children (i.e.; especially newly arrived migrant children need constant support and a translator from the very beginning of the school year, psychological support.

- Make efforts to have more diversity among educators – increase the quota/number of staff with minority or migrant background.

- Pair schools with higher percentage of migrant pupils with those with lower in order to increase their understanding of children with migrant background.

- Provide a formal and financial framework for cooperation between schools and NGO's with integration, anti-discrimination and anti-racist agenda and expert researchers/academics to work with and at schools.

5.2   Local level

- Foster inclusion in and outside school while promoting child-centred approach: this means recognizing children's needs and making sure their opinions matter and are taken into account in the local environment.

- Build up multi-stakeholder partnerships and improve relations in reception community: with and involvement of migrant children's families, better involvement of local community institutions, sportive and cultural centres and greater involvement and sensibilization of local children, their families, and all other local community members.

- Ensure accessibility and affordability of leisure and sports facilities for everyone.

- Transfer elements of successful integration practices from other local communities or countries and build partnerships with NGOs and experts in the field.

- Make full use of EU and national funds to support programmes and measures for integration in education.

5.3   Schools, teachers and other involved stakeholders

- Build up a whole school approach to integration (consider an action plan that would allow for monitoring progress and evaluation) and include all staff, pupils and parents into integration efforts and measures (school boards, school principals, pupil's participation organs, class leadership, parents, other staff at schools).

- Introduce child-centred perspective and practice, meaning including children's standpoint at all levels of integration process in education.

- Support all and particularly migrant children to participate in pupil's community system, student's council and participation organs so that their voices are heard there as well.
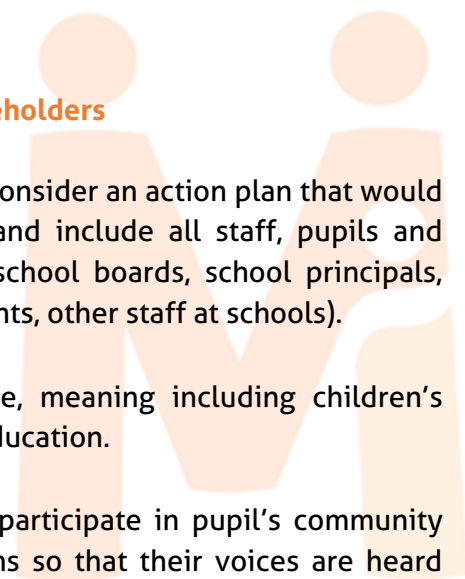
- Establish a more supportive environment/system for migrant children by including several stakeholders (family, local children and parents, the institutions from the local community) monitored and coordinated from one source.

- Introduce holistic approach to work with the migrant children and their families (linguistic, social, psychological etc.), use the opportunity of individual plans to actively involve the child and his/her family (considering specific personal trajectories and child/family history and circumstances of migration).

- Improve communication with, and inclusion of parents/families, especially in secondary schools. Develop guidelines/protocols on how to do it, and avoid ad hoc solutions. Develop constant relationship, not only during reception period.

- Respond to teacher's needs and improve the educator's skills and knowledge to work with migrant children (i.e introduce training on themes of intercultural coexistence, dealing with opportunities and challenges of cultural, religious, and linguistic plurality in school (i.e. offer language learning within the professional development scheme, skills of teaching Slovenian language as a second language).

- Enable greater pluri-lingualism at school.

- Make changes in organisation of work and general approach of the school/s (also at the level of specific adjustments to migrant children needs while taking care that there is no lowering of standards in assessing migrant children).

- Plan for and recruit more staff dealing with integration through systematization of (introduction of) new working place/s for persons responsible for working with migrant children (especially newly arrived migrant children need constant support and a translator from the very beginning of the school year, psychological support).

- Extend (for a longer period) the special adjustments the migrant children are entitled to during the first year of enrolment in the Slovenian educational system. For example, newly arrived migrant children are entitled not to be assessed the first year.1 Moreover, language support is needed the second and third year as well, and sometimes longer.

- Provide good and comparable reception routes for newly arrived children (include written information in different languages about school, local community – also on the website, and school leaflets).

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[1] More clear definition/instructions are needed what this means for migrant children who are enrolled in the last 9th class of the primary school.

- Provide constant intercultural work with local children, including correct and positive information about migrant children; sensibilisation of local children and their families about migrant topics and migrant children needs, fears and desires.

- Train staff and pupils to understand, recognize and respond to racism and discrimination.

- Ensure systematic interventions in cases of discrimination, deprivation and harm, zero tolerance to racism and any other form of discrimination and violence, including anti-bullying and anti-harassment measures and protocols (with children involved into preparation and implementation of these measures).

- Monitor general wellbeing (from child centred perspective) and social economic status of all children, its influence on performance, with particular attention to migrant children (i.e. the case of on-line teaching).

- Address gender inequality, culturally framed gender expectations among all pupils, plus gender differences regarding free time and sports activities (the example of playing computer games).

- Support and organize training of school staff to disseminate and integrate knowledge on child-centred approaches and migrant children integration to school practice.

- Define ways of promoting intercultural communication between children in peer-groups.

- Strengthen mentoring and peer mentoring schemes to support integration of migrant children and promote intercultural communication between children in peer-groups.

- Build stronger relationships between school and social and sportive entities, neighbourhoods, cultural activities, fostering inclusion inside and outside the school.
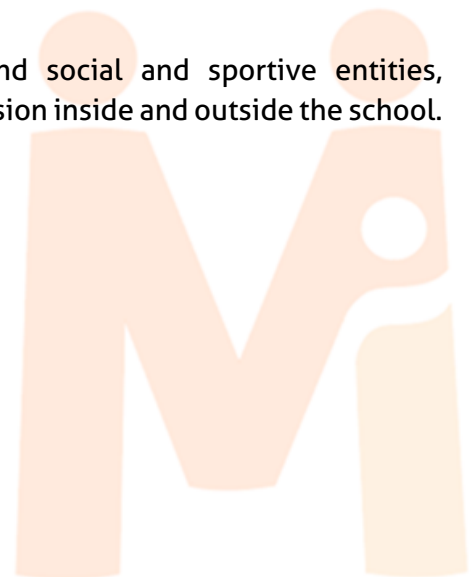
SPAIN

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1. Introduction

The overall objective of this document is to identify specific existing problems related to current policy, regulation and practices regarding migrant children's inclusion processes. This policy summary shows the main findings obtained during the fieldwork in Catalonia's seven primary and secondary schools (Spain). Seven items were considered: (1) Equality and educational policies, (2) The sense of belonging and well-being in schools, (3) Quality of relations with teachers and staff, (4) Relations with peers and friends, (5) School-families relationship, (6) Language policies and (7) Diversity. Each of these sections considers (a) problems, (b) recommendations and (c) responsible. According to the fieldwork carried out, the essential responsible stakeholders that may address migrant children's needs are:

- Educational staff. Teachers, families, social educators, social integrators, management teams, family associations, teachers associations, students unions, educational associations, teacher training institutions, etc

- Local and regional administrations and agents. Social workers, NGOs, migrant and cultural associations, unions, sports associations, *casals* (leisure time organisations such as community centres).

- Local, regional and national politicians. *Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional* (Ministry of Education), *Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones* (Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration), *Ministerio de Universidades* (Ministry of Universities), *Departament d'Educació de la Generalitat* (Education department at regional level), City council, etc.

2.   Equality and Educational Policies

2.1   Citizenship:

Problem: Regarding the legal status, local children with migrant parents or children who migrated to Spain when they were very young may not have Spanish citizenship. There is a need to live more than ten years in the country, among other requirements, which entail a large amount of bureaucracy that can take a few years more. That affects the rights and needs of those children, for instance, concerning their schooling. Children with no citizenship have the right to access public education. However, they may have difficulties finding a place in a school close to their home because they are not registered on the census and cannot access scholarships.

Recommendation: Policies should facilitate the processes of family reunification and citizenship obtention.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school staff.

2.2   Territorial segregation:

Problem: Some cities in Spain, including Barcelona, face the phenomenon of school segregation, which has increased in recent years (Síndic de Greuges, 2016). As a result of this reality, there is a distribution of children in schools based on their household income. Among the causes of this phenomenon is that only some schools have live enrollment, assuming most newly arrived migrant students. In turn, the concentration of migrant students causes the rejection of families who seek alternatives to avoid stigmatised schools through different strategies, favouring school segregation (Bonal & Albaigés, 2009). Thus, there is school segregation for political, economic and social reasons (Estalayo et al., 2021). Therefore, pupils' needs are not met, as equal opportunities are not guaranteed, contradicting the principles of equity and social equality set out in the Education Act. Education cannot compensate for personal, cultural, economic and social inequalities.

Recommendation: Make arrangements to distribute students with a migrant background in different schools. Or provide the necessary resources to schools hosting these students.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians.

2.3   Human and material resources:

Problem: 1) Teachers have few pedagogical resources to work in contexts of diversity or meet students' needs. They are often overwhelmed by dealing with the circumstances of individual pupils, especially newcomers. Teachers need more training to develop learning projects inclusively and broaden the curricular content perspectives to adopt a non-Eurocentric view of knowledge. 2) Although "highly complex schools" in Catalonia have more teachers than other schools, it is not enough to meet students' needs. Teachers and students are missing more staff to provide an inclusive environment. Local students and long-term children pointed out the crucial role of teachers in the adaptation/inclusion process for migrant and local children who are new in the school, not only for cognitive aspects but also for the emotional and personal accompaniment. That reinforces the importance of caring in education and the need for human resources for implementing caring policies in the school.

Recommendation: 1) Teachers and educational personnel require more and better professional development. Policies should guarantee that university curricula and professional training approach these issues, so teachers can feel more confident working in schools with socio-cultural diversity. There is a need to work on these topics during initial and in-service teacher education. 2) The Administration should recruit more specialists—for example, cultural mediators, psychologists or translators. More teachers would be needed to provide lower ratios in class to meet each child's needs, especially newly arrived.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians.

2.4   Mentoring programs:

Problem: Although some students have general ideas about the future professions they would like to have, many teenagers (newly arrived, long-term and local) lack a clear understanding of how to reach jobs.

Recommendation: From a policy perspective, mentoring programs open relevant contributions regarding the potential benefits of offering resources to make students more aware of their future academic paths and jobs.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians.

3.   The feeling of belonging and well-being at school

3.1   The first months at school:

Problem: Some students felt excluded during their first months in the host country. Their initial troubles were due to language acquisition and the impossibility of explaining
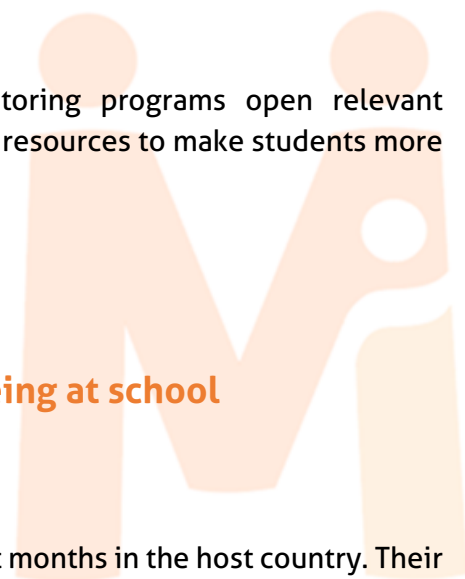
themselves in an unknown language. Some pupils reported a sense of loneliness, sadness and shame during the first period. From a policy perspective, the first schooling months require special attention.

Recommendation: From a policy perspective, it would be fundamental to think about practices and policies capable of structurally embracing migrant children's life stories to offer them spaces to give meaning to their experiences. It is also crucial to equip teachers with resources to better understand pupils' contexts, stories and particularities.

Responsible: Properly trained and equipped educational staff.

3.2 The reception classroom:

Problem: The reception classroom ensures the learning of the host country's language, but it also offers emotional support. Hence, one of the most significant and most highly valued aspects of the reception classroom is that in most cases, the tutor of the reception classroom tries to address students' emotional needs developing a pedagogy of care, where reciprocity and biographical experiences are vital aspects.

Recommendation: more attention needs to be paid to personal accompaniment in the host classroom, working on migrant grief and other elements of the migration and settlement process.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school staff.

3.3 School and environment connection:

Problem: Sports, leisure and cultural activities in and outside the school are vital for students' well-being. Some students miss a stronger relationship between social entities, neighbourhoods, cultural activities, families and school. On the one hand, newly arrived children reported that they would like to have more cultural and social experiences regarding their city. For instance, visiting museums, exhibitions, parks, etc. Promoting these experiences in the school can help students to have the opportunity to explore their city or neighbourhood, as most of them reported few experiences outside the school. At the same time, facilitating access to organisations outside the school, such as *casals*, can help keep this socialisation alive beyond school borders. Newly-arrived children and long-term students reported that these spaces influence their learning and performance along with their social and emotional skills.

Recommendation: Facilitating practices that connect the school with their social and cultural environment, with the economic resources needed, can be a proposal for inclusion policies. This research has stressed the importance of the local environment for migrant childrens' inclusion.

Responsible: local and regional administrations, school staff.

3.4 Quality of relations with teachers and staff

Problem: Participant students highlighted the role of classmates, teachers, and other educational staff as critical in the inclusion processes. According to different studies carried out in European contexts, teacher support, expectations, and attitudes towards student learning and experiences are significant factors to consider when educating migrant children (Janta & Harte, 2016). Some participants expressed the importance of building caring relationships within the educational community to be a safe space. Pedagogies of care involve recognising the complex realities of learners, their histories and specific conditions, listening, emotional accompaniment and recognition of the other (Estalayo et al., 2022; Motta & Bennett, 2018).

Recommendation: Policies and schools' projects should address a holistic approach to education by developing pedagogies of care as a school's comprehensive approach from a policy perspective. It is also essential that policies consider teachers' expectations and academic self-concepts during initial teacher training. At the same time, this points to the need and opportunity to eradicate the expectation bias in higher education.

Responsible: school staff, universities and teachers' professional development institutions.

3.5 Relations with peers and friends

Problem: Newly arrived children tend to report difficulty arriving and getting to know new people. Specifically, they stress the feeling of knowing only a few people at the moment and the role of the familiar relationship in coping with this lack.

Recommendation: Policies and initiatives should address children's socialisation and well-being in and beyond the school environment.

Responsible: school staff, local and regional administrations and agents (NGO, social workers, etc.).

3.6 School-families relationship

Problem: Long-term migrant children pointed out the need for initiatives that connect families with the educational community in the reception period and permanently, especially in secondary schools. That would help to connect their school experience with their social life. Further, there is evidence that providing a space for students' families helps

facilitate the inclusion process of migrant children and adults. However, both teachers, parents and students reported that some families face difficulties participating in school activities due to the language barrier or incompatibility due to work schedules. Existing policies to address this issue consist of formal and informal initiatives, but they are not enough to support the active role of migrant families in the school.

Recommendation: Policies and schools' projects should create strategies and policies to facilitate family inclusion and communication (especially in secondary schools).

Responsible: school staff, local and regional administrations and agents (NGOs, social workers, *casals*).

3.7   Language policies

Problem: 1) The language was a central aspect when discussing existing inclusion models (for newly-arrived, long-term and local children). A first evident aspect is the need to learn the local language. Pupils reported that learning to speak Spanish or Catalan is one of the most challenging issues newly arrived migrant children face. This challenge is partially addressed by the existing policy of the reception classroom, but this educational space only hosts newly arrived students that are over 8-9 years old. 2) Children noted the value and richness of cultures and languages in their schools as very positive. Nonetheless, they also recognised a scarcity of initiatives to take advantage of this richness.

Recommendation: 1) Policies should offer specific language support for newly arrived students and long-term students of any age. 2) It would be necessary to think about policies and initiatives to support children's mother-tongue. Maintaining students' existing languages has a "positive impact on functional literacy, including educational success as a whole" (Staring et al., 2017, p. 5). Hence, specific policies and actions should consider and take advantage of the cultural-linguistic richness of the schools.

Responsible: Local, regional and national politicians.

4.   Diversity

4.1   A holistic approach to inclusion

Problem: During this research, we have realised that one of the main problems is to change existing practice to move from the notion of integration to that of inclusion. That translates into demanding migrant children adjust to local norms, habits, culture, codes, and language in educational practice. In some schools, local culture is the most predominant. Not only for the traditional celebrations carried out during the school year but also for learning content. That may keep pointing out migrant children as the "others", those who are different, those who have to adjust. Within it, many newly arrived children feel that they

should "get adapted" or they "have to learn many new things". Hence, this way of perceiving integration is mainly related to a personal endeavour, where there are no political responsibilities for challenging this issue.

Recommendation: Efforts must be made to reconceptualise the idea of integration or inclusion, as it is the basis of schools' organisations and how newcomers feel in the new country.

Responsible: local, regional and national politicians, school staff.

4.2   Discrimination

There may be situations in which the needs of migrant children are not covered since the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, culture, sex and gender, or socio-economic conditions is not met. The intersectional approach helps researchers understand how these oppressions co-occur, which is essential to address this reality and seek educational equality. For example, if we do not challenge educational system structure roots, migrant girls will suffer discrimination due to the combination of the culture of origin and gender. In the following lines, this topic is broken down into different categories:

Religion diversity

Problem: State schools in Catalonia are secular spaces where no religion is considered more important than others. There are no visible religious symbols in the schools, and religious (mainly catholic) education is not mandatory but an optional subject. Nonetheless, this allegedly neutral place also generates forms of exclusion: most national holiday periods in Spain relate to Catholic festivities (Christmas, Easter, All Saints, etc.). That means that schools are not neutral spaces as other religious festivities are not celebrated or mentioned. Moreover, many students - migrant or not, wish to have their festivals, traditions and worship recognised in schools, as they come from countries where religion is more important (Becerra, 2015). They would like to see more interconnection between their culture, the curriculum and school life. For example, celebrating of Eid al-Fitr, or the Chinese New Year, among other festivities, as well as worship daily practices in the case of Muslim and Evangelical children.

Recommendation: It would be advisable to include festivities belonging to other religions as part of the schools. This approach would allow the schools to take advantage of the opportunities and richness they already have and offer content knowledge that would be more difficult to offer in schools with a more homogeneous population. Hence, specific policies and actions should consider and take advantage of the schools' religious (but also the cultural and linguistic) richness. That implies designing spaces and activities to support conditions and learning from other cultures and religions.

Responsible: Educational staff.

Curriculum

Problem: We could observe how ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism are central aspects of the Catalan educational system in terms of ethnicity. History adopts a Eurocentric perspective, non-western cultural elements are perceived as «exotic» or «folkloric», and racial stereotypes are often reproduced in textbooks and school materials. The curriculum does not usually include references from non-Catalan cultures. That impacts how inclusion processes are addressed and may run the risk of cancelling out the cultural and ethnic diversity by leaving out the cultural background of migrant children and children from non-European origins (children with migrant parents) to become a part of the dominant culture.

Recommendation: It becomes necessary to carry out a critical review of the system's foundations. As long as it continues to be structurally racist, migrant children's needs will not be covered, as they will be the object of oppression by ethnicity. Hence, teacher professional development in antiracist issues is recommended to not reproduce racist behaviours by teachers or other peer students.

Responsible: Educational Administration and school curriculum planners.

Gender diversity

Problem: Because the educational system is not alien to the male chauvinism and sexism that structure our societies and institutions, teachers and peer students will likely perpetuate sexist attitudes if this reality is not addressed through education and teacher professional development.

Recommendation: Gender approaches are necessary that lead us to question the modes of organisation of the school system. Furthermore, from an intersectional perspective, we understand how oppression by gender and sex intersects with oppression by ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Responsible: educational staff, local and regional administrations and agents and local, regional and national politicians.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to highlight problems and challenges related to the integration of migrant pupils within British schools. The report shows findings obtained during the fieldwork of the MiCREATE research project in the United Kingdom. Key issues relating to diversity, bullying, language, and educational attainment are addressed.

2. Addressing diversity in school settings

Diversity is part of a British resident's everyday experience, yet when it comes to educational settings, addressing diversity seems to be an issue reserved for schools with large numbers of migrants. We would like to argue that all schools need to recognise the superdiversity of the British population and foster equality and dignity through promoting cultural diversity and addressing all forms of discrimination and racism. Our research showed that schools do make concerted efforts to represent and reflect the diversity of their student body through dedicating days to celebrate religious and cultural events of ethnic minority pupils such as Eid, Chinese New Year and Diwali, participating in Black History Month (BHM) and South Asian Heritage month, serving halal food and teachers learning words from pupil's home languages. Whilst these actions are commendable, they are insufficient. Schools need to take a transformative approach to their diversity curriculum that enables children to understand their multiple and complex identities. If inclusivity is to

be promoted, then cultural diversity topics must be discussed explicitly and, the curriculum should be reflective of a child's background (Hanna, 2020) and cultural understanding (Ngana, 2015) as there are concerns that if the curriculum does not reflect a learner's cultural understanding, they will be disadvantaged as they may become disengaged with it (Nganga, 2015).

Recommendations:

- Teachers including trainee teachers should be trained on how to address topics regarding diversity within the classroom. Training should be provided by experts within the field, including researchers.

- A diversity curriculum should be taught in all schools, not only those with a larger number of migrant children.

- Changes should be implemented at the school curriculum level, so that anti-racist perspectives are embedded within the curriculum itself (Joseph-Salisbury, 2020).

- Schools should endeavour to increase the quota of their ethnic minority staff so that pupils are represented through the staff body as well. This should happen at the management level as well, whereby more ethnic minority staff take leadership positions in schools (Joseph-Salisbury, 2020).

3.   Tackling bullying

Peers were central to the lives of migrant pupils; they supported children linguistically, socially, and in the classroom, they were also empathetic towards the experiences of newcomers and engaged in practices to help them feel included in the school setting, and this was irrespective of whether they were newly arrived, long-term or local children. Therefore, generally, children were positive about their interactions with their peers, with very few pupils reporting any conflicts. However, where discrimination was reported, it was found that ethnic minority children were more likely to report this than White children. For example, Black, Asian, and Mixed/other ethnic minority children were more likely to state that they had been treated unfairly due to their nationality/race than White children. Children also faced bullying and discrimination that was directly linked to their migratory background, for example, some were mocked due to their lack of proficiency in English, whilst local children in one focus group spoke about the intolerance against migrants and discrimination that individuals face due to their skin colour. They also spoke about the negative stereotypes about Muslims in the media that perpetuate Islamophobia. Romanian children in interviews shared concerns about bullying by Romanian and non-Romanian peers due to the perception that they may be 'Roma'. Worryingly, there are no official statistics to gauge the true extent of bullying within British schools, as schools do not need

to record data on bullying cases according to governmental guidelines. Instead, schools are asked to exercise judgement as to whether in their particular case, incidents of bullying should be recorded (Department for Education, 2017).

Recommendations

- The government should make the collection of data on racist incidents of bullying mandatory (Batty & Parveen 2021).

- School staff, including those in leadership positions, need to be trained on tackling racism.

- Anti-bullying messages need to be communicated through the curriculum with the students' voices being utilised to tackle racial bullying, as research indicates that this may be more effective (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

- Children of minority backgrounds who are more likely to be victims of bullying should be consulted in the design of the curriculum tackling discriminatory behaviour, which may include videos, art, and websites (Downes and Cefai, 2016). This can be done through holding focus groups with pupils on how this discrimination can be tackled. This may be particularly useful with Roma pupils who face stigma and discrimination by Roma and non-Roma pupils.

- Dedicated lectures, seminars, and training workshops by researchers should be held for teachers and trainee teachers in how to deal with racism (Joseph-Salisbury, 2020).

- NGO's and charities of Roma people to hold events on Roma people to reduce stigma.

4. Supporting language as heritage

Children considered it important to learn the host language, but some also recognised that with the increased emphasis on learning English, they were beginning to forget their home languages. Arguably, as well as an emphasis on English, children should be supported in retaining their mother tongue, given that language is not just a communicative tool but linked to one's identity and sense of belonging. The promotion of both languages would mean a higher proportion of individuals in society who are competently bilingual. Bilingualism has many benefits, with previous research showing that bilingualism has cognitive advantages to children (Engel de Abreu, Cruz-Santos, Tourinho, Martin & Bialystok, 2012). Additionally, bilingualism may be useful at an economic level, whereby bilinguals can become a support mechanism for new arrivals and those without competency in English speaking. Indeed, in our research, bilingual children showed that they were already doing

this in their school.

Recommendations:

- Schools should provide opportunities for bilingual parents to host after school clubs and teach pupils their language.

- Pupils should be provided with a wider range of language classes in primary and secondary schools so that migrant children can undertake some education in their home language (Ayres-Bennett & Carruthers, 2019).

- Schools should develop links with supplementary schools or cultural services that may be offering further classes in children's own language, and to help support migrant pupils to keep a link with their home language.

5. Equity in Educational attainment

Some groups of migrant pupils outperform non-migrant children in their educational attainment whilst there are others whose attainment is significantly worse. For example, migrant children who arrive too late to the UK to prepare for their GCSE exams do not always receive satisfactory GCSE results and may leave with minimal qualifications. Therefore, a more tailored approach to the needs of newly arrived migrants needs to be taken at secondary education as clearly a 'one size fits all' approach is not adequate to meet learning needs. Another issue that presents itself here is the academic underperformance of second and third generation boys of Caribbean descent. It seemed that they were falling behind in their academic studies, with one teacher noting that these pupils were the most underperforming group at the school. This has been corroborated by previous research on the academic achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in the UK (Joseph-Salisbury, 2017). These issues need to be addressed at the governmental level, within the curriculum and at schools.

Recommendations:

- Newly arrived and long-term children should be given tailored career guidance, which should focus upon the various pathways to further education. Many of these pupils may be leaving with little or no formal qualifications due to the timing of their arrival in the country. In the UK, there are now 'Access to Higher Education' courses and apprenticeships which are opportunities the children may not be aware of.

- Colleges and Universities should create outreach programmes where they target the migrant community and showcase options that are available for new arrivals and long-term migrants.

- To improve academic performance and sustain migrant pupils' motivation towards education, children should be mentored by older students from universities who can guide and motivate the learners to pursue a career. Ideally, mentors should also include individuals of children's own ethnic backgrounds; this may allow children to better relate to them and raise aspirations.

- Teachers and educational staff, especially those from schools with a lower percentage of migrant pupils, may not have the cultural competence and understanding regarding children of migrant backgrounds. These schools should be paired with schools with a high number of EAL pupils where teachers can learn from one another on best practices in teaching migrant pupils.

- Schools should hold focus groups with black pupils on what can be done to support them in their educational attainment.

- Schools should host alumni programmes for their students where they have an opportunity to return to school in order to gain work experience which may include mentoring.

6.   Policy Indicators, Monitoring, Assessment

This section outlines a number of ways through which the aforementioned policy recommendations can be measured and monitored.

6.1   Diversity / Multicultural education

- Teacher training programmes to hold focus groups with trainee teachers on the effectiveness of cultural competence training.

- Surveys should also be carried out with the students to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions.

6.2   Bullying

- Data on racial bullying in schools should be mandated and necessary for reporting on a yearly basis. The data should be recorded against all ethnic groups, including subgroups, this will account for the heterogeneity of ethnicity (see government guidelines for reporting ethnicity Gov.uk, 2021). Data on bullying in schools can then be analysed to see the true extent of racial bullying as well as seeing the effectiveness of anti-bullying programmes.
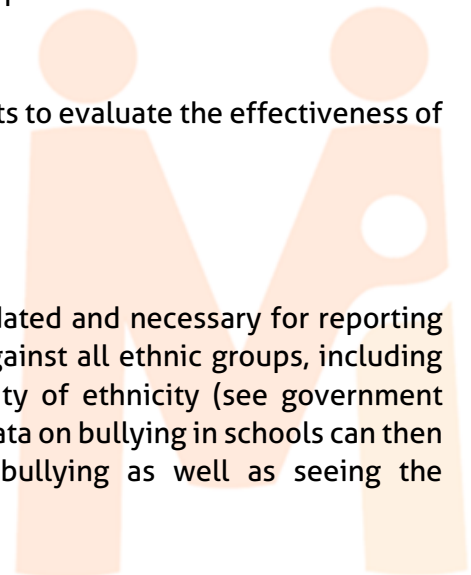
6.3 Language

- Schools to collect data on children's self-perceived level of proficiency at the start of the school year and at the end to assess whether interventions to promote home languages have had an impact.

- Objective measures of language skills (tests) to be employed throughout the school year in language classes to measure competency in the home language.

- Meetings with students at the beginning and end of year to discuss students' language level and impact on learning and social life.

6.4 Educational attainment

- The Department for Education should report educational attainment of all subjects, including arts and not only core subjects such as Maths, English and Science.

- The Department for Education should report the attainment of EAL students separately with further information such as scores of English language ability at the year of arrival as well as the language spoken at home.

- Schools should hold destination surveys to assess migrant pupils' future prospects such as continuation with education and/or career.

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