

NATIONAL POLICY BRIEFS

Migrant children and communities in a transforming Europe



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°822664.

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.

www.micreate.eu

Published by

Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Koper

Koper, Slovenia

www.zrs-kp.si

First published 2022

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AUSTRIA

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1. Summary

This policy brief addresses the issue of integration of migrant pupils within Austrian schools and in society. Our study, conducted as part of the Horizon 2020-funded project 'Migrant children in a transforming Europe' (MiCREATE), has shown that policies addressing the integration of migrant children rarely take into account children's views and their own understanding of well-being. The policy brief makes recommendations for more child-centred policies that take into account the structural, emotional and relational dimensions of children's well-being.

2. Integration issues and recommendations

This policy brief focuses on different areas identified as relevant in our research including school autonomy, its financial and human resources, bi – and multilingualism among students, diversity of school staff, linguistic and psychosocial support in schools.

3. Equality and Educational Policies

In the Austrian education system, a distinction is made between AHS (Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule) and MS (Mittelschule). AHS has a strict admission policy, admitting only students with good grades to attend, while MS is open to all students. This separation at a rather early stage in the students' lives, based only on grades, creates a school system that is biased according to migration history and social class. Therefore, equal opportunities for all children are not guaranteed.

Recommendations

- **Reduce** widespread **social prejudice against the Secondary School (MS)** for being less worthy in terms of academic value and quality in politics and public discourse.
- Introduce the **same financing system for both school types** (AHS and MS).
- Consider **abolishing the separation of the types of schools** (AHS and MS) for pupils from age 10 to 18 years.

4. Adapting everyday school life to the needs of students

Within Austrian education system schools have little autonomy which causes problems when it comes to adapting every-day-school life to the needs of a specific school and their students. There is very little agency for individual schools to adapt procedures, programs and activities according to student's needs. Moreover, schools are generally understaffed, especially with respect to social workers or psychological counsellors.

Recommendations

- Provide more financial and human resources for schools.
- Introduce more school autonomy to give schools the opportunity to adapt every-day-school life to needs of students at the particular school.

5. Bi – multi culturalism and diversity in schools

In Austrian schools migrants are often discouraged from speaking their home language due to the school's attempt to promote the language of the host country. Additionally, there is the low diversity in the composition of the teaching staff. Both can affect migrant children and how they feel at school and perceive themselves and Austrian society. A more representative and diverse school staff would give pupils more opportunities to identify themselves with teachers and promote a more accurate picture of society.

Recommendations

- End segregation between students based on their German proficiency as in German support classes.
- Establish instruction in mother tongue in schools.
- Promote multilingualism among pupils.
- Increase diversity among teachers.

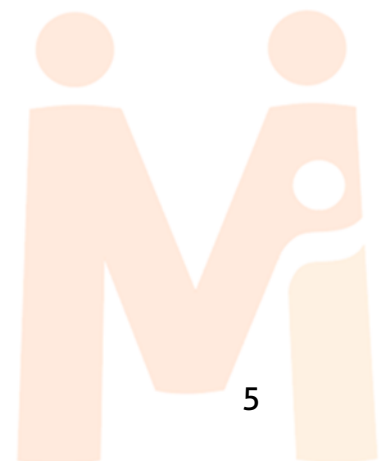
6. The sense of belonging and wellbeing at school

Classmates, teachers and educational staff play an important role in the well-being of migrant children, therefore good relationships are essential. Migrant children sometimes experience racism and do not feel accepted in schools. In this context, they particularly emphasize the lack of psychosocial support in schools.

Recommendations

- Promote better relationships between teachers/schools and migrant parents.
- Increase the number of social workers and psychologists in schools.

- Introduce antiracism training for teachers and pupils.
- Establish and maintain individual support for migrant children.
- Establish more individual support for children in general.



Beyond “integration”, towards equal rights: Removing barriers to migrant children’s inclusion and wellbeing in Denmark

1. Abstract

This policy brief is about inclusion of migrant children in schools in Denmark. The findings are drawn from the Danish part of Horizon 2020 funded project ‘Migrant children in a transforming Europe’ (MiCREATE) carried out by researchers at University of Southern Denmark, 2019-2022. The project actively involved children aged 10-17 from six schools in different parts of the country, through a child-centred approach, using participant observation, art-based interviews, and focus groups, and surveys, as well as interviews with school staff.

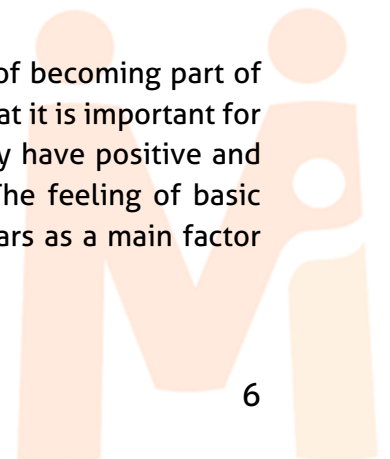
2. Introduction

Our study has shown that, despite differences regarding age, gender, national background, and migration experience between the children interviewed, refugee and immigrant children living in different parts of Denmark have very similar experiences. There exist several facilitators of their inclusion in the Danish society and education system, but there are also barriers that need to be addressed in several domains: children’s well-being, their relations with peers, teachers and other school staff, language and language policies, diversity education, social exclusion, experience of ontological security etc. The findings show that, to reach equal opportunities for migrant children in Denmark, action is necessary. In this policy brief, concrete recommendations are presented for the main finding areas: security, transnationality, language, and friendship, and at different levels: national, local, and school level.

3. Main findings and recommendations

3.1 Ontological security

A basic sense of ontological security is crucial for the experience of becoming part of and interacting with a new society. The research with children shows that 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 appears as a main factor influencing inclusion positively and allowing for wellbeing.



The ontological security of migrant children in Denmark is challenged at three levels:

- war and insecurity in country of origin
- unstable and insecure life conditions in Denmark
- future prospects

3.2 War and insecurity in countries of origin

Children having fled from war still worry about war in their country of origin, because family members still live there, and/or because they worry about being deported from the host country. The 'paradigm shift' in Danish immigration policies, emphasizing repatriation and possibilities to sending refugees back to insecure areas (such as Syria and Somalia) and other legislations are extensive threats to children's well-being and ontological security.

Recommendations

National level: Withdraw laws on deporting refugees to unsafe countries and restrictions on residence permits, as they are harmful for children's wellbeing.

School level: Ensure that children get access to talking to school staff about their worries and to psychological support. Also, it is important that children who need it have access to advice on navigating in the system regarding residence permits, family reunification, etc.

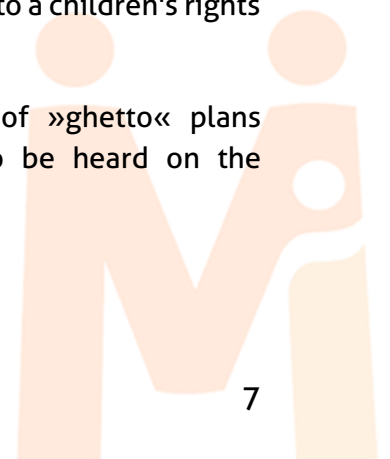
3.3 Unstable and insecure life conditions in Denmark

Unstable and insecure life conditions in Denmark such as low income and insecure housing conditions (as in the »ghetto plan« resulting in demolishing of family homes in certain areas) influence children's wellbeing and form barriers for inclusion. In a children's rights perspective, it is important to ensure that refugee and immigrant families have sufficient income and secure and predictable housing.

Recommendations

National level: The government and Folketing should ensure sufficient income support for migrant families with children and rethink »ghetto« plans according to a children's rights perspective

Local level: Municipalities should rethink their implementing of »ghetto« plans according to a children's rights perspective and invite children to be heard on the consequences of the plans



3.4 Future prospects

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

Recommendations

National level: Secure that reception classes and the school system in general teach migrant children Danish to a sufficient degree. Offer 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.

School level: Secure and monitor sufficient support for migrant children's learning and educational outcomes.

3.5 Transnationality

Transnational social fields are important for children's inclusion and wellbeing. It appears from MiCREATE research, that transnational relations play an important role in the lives of the children, both due to relatives and friends living abroad and in the local context. However, the national, monolingual school system, prioritizing Danish as a language does not include migrant children's experiences and languages sufficiently which impedes them in feeling fully included

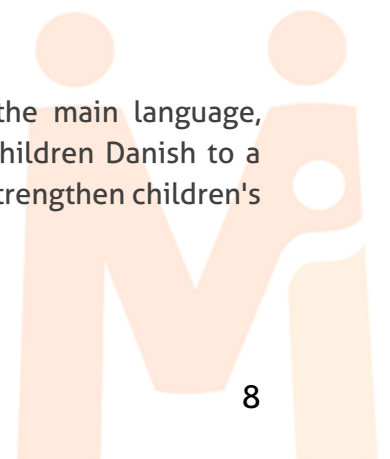
Recommendations

National level: School system and curriculum should be revisited according to children's needs.

School level: Teachers and other school staff should recognize children's transnational social anchors as valuable in their lives and their transnational competences as resources.

3.6 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 children's learning and their experience of inclusion.



Recommendations

National level: Open for inclusion of other languages in school; allocate more resources for both Danish as second language and minority languages, and support teachers' education in translanguaging.

School level: Implement translanguaging and include minority languages in teaching and leisure activities.

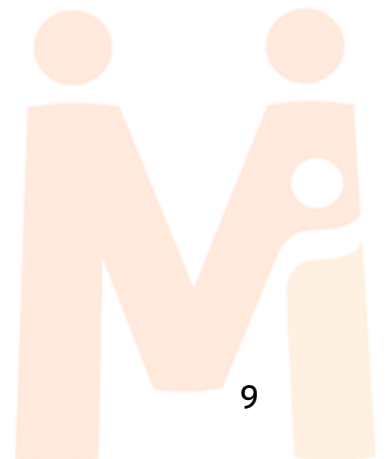
3.7 Peers and friends

Peers and friends are crucial for children's inclusion and well-being. 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. Some children experience that the responsibility for making friends is placed on them alone.

Recommendations

National level: 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.

School level: School staff must work proactively to take responsibility for children's development of friendship, across language skills and backgrounds.



From research findings to policy recommendations on effective integration

1. Summary

This policy brief is concerned with the integration of migrant children in Polish society which become less homogenous and more migrant-friendly, especially at the local communities' level. The findings are drawn from research carried out as part of the Horizon 2020 funded project 'Migrant children in a transforming Europe' (MiCREATE). Using a child-centred approach, MiCREATE actively involved children through surveys, autobiographical interviews and focus groups. We found that although overall migrant children had positive experiences at their school and appreciated the attempts made to celebrate their cultures, disparities remained. Integration is seen in Poland as an expectation for migrants to adapt to the new environment with the active help of local communities and institutions. The education of the host society is set aside. There is also a strong tendency to limit integration practices in education to gain language proficiency. More needs to be done so those migrant children can feel a sense of belonging, safety, and attachment to Poland. This report focuses on several key issues that need to be addressed at a policy level including organization of education, language policies, diversity policies, teacher-pupil relationships, and school-parent relationships.

2. Keywords

Integration, migrant children, Polish schools, education, language acquisition, well-being

3. Relevance to legislation

Poland is lacking a migration policy document since 2016 when the ever only strategy that described the complexity of migration policy lasted for three years period. In education, solutions referring to migrant students were introduced after 2017. Despite the migration laws being drafted and implemented by the central government, the local authorities started to take over the integration tasks locally. Almost all major cities in Poland have adjusted their services and social policies to the needs of foreigners settling. Nevertheless, those policies and solutions are still underdeveloped. There was no major change in policy after the outburst of the Russian-Ukrainian war. We believe that result of the Micreate study has great relevance for the upcoming migration policies. Yet today its results may be adopted to change the education law and frameworks serving better the needs of foreign-born

students. The shift in the geopolitical order demands the crystallisation of modern, effective and child-centred migration policies in education for which the results of our study are an answer.

4. Relevance to actual integration problems

This report focuses on key areas identified in our research and relates to increasing diversity in schools, the rapid growth of foreign students numbers, the need for a diverse curriculum that represents different cultures, language policies, bullying and discrimination, and teacher-pupil relationships, and school-parent relationships.

5. Description of the problem and proposed solutions – general migration

In our fieldwork, it occurred that migrant children do not differ much in respect of the socioeconomic factors, desires, plans or social status of their peers who did not have any migration experiences.

Foreigners settling in Poland admit it had been a positive experience for them making eventually their lives better.

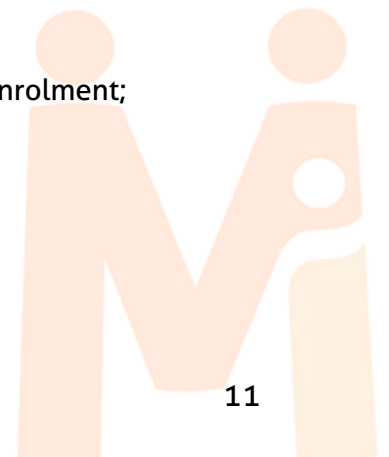
Due to the similarity of cultures and languages, the integration process was quite a short one and after breaking the language barrier most children found their places in school communities and the local environment.

School, teachers, friends, hobbies and some other anchoring activities were mentioned as important factors of integration (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2018).

Children who came to Poland, in most cases, expected aid in orientation, especially with the help of someone who might have guided them in the school's environment or informed them about the learning culture and customs.

Recommendations

- Appoint a guidance manager in school to provide aid for migrant pupils;
- make school communication channels accessible for migrants (websites, networking tools);
- organise “open weeks” or “orientation camps” in the period of enrolment;
- promote intercultural assistance services;
- organise ad hoc assistance in the earliest period after arrival;



- explore the local assets of the international community, ie: Erasmus students, the community of ex-pats.

To overcome the difficulties with the language proficiency Polish system enable the possibility to form the preparatory classes for children who do not speak Polish at the desired level.

This solution usually separates migrant children from host communities and is not effective in respect of the learning process due to organizational shortcomings.

In the organisation of education, several fostering factors must be taken into account. The study showed that migrant children praised Polish schools higher than local children did. Many of them were more conscientious and had a much more serious approach to education and school tasks than their Polish peers. Migrant children found a school more welcoming, caring and supportive compared to their previous experiences in the country of origin.

Recommendations

- Preparatory classes shall be organized based on students' skills assessment;
- a separate curriculum is recommended for teaching in preparatory classes;
- in subjects where the language of education is difficult to learn the possibility to teach in mixed-language method need to be adopted;
- explore the possibilities of transnationalization of education practices – schools in the cloud, joint learning within the international schools' network.

The problem of the education of unaccompanied minors needs better attention from policymakers and the reform of the custody/guardianship system over those students to secure their rights and security.

Poland is lacking a centralised system of children guardianship and childcare centres are often unprepared to meet the specific needs of migrant children

Recommendations

- Create the fast-track legal procedures to appoint guardians and custodians for unaccompanied children;
- introduce regulations on the obligations and responsibilities of schools and dormitories that enrolled unaccompanied minors;
- provide the effective communication tools with migrant children's absent parents.

It appears also that integration is not treated in Poland as an ongoing and complex process requiring a holistic approach, including environmental activities with the participation of peers and the community.

All state founded integration measures are limited to additional language classes and subject tutoring to compensate for the differences in curriculum or manage problems children may have with the understanding of the teaching materials.

Recommendations

- Prevent the exclusion of migrants, especially migrants in transition by fast inclusion of those people into the society and local communities (avoid spatial, cultural, linguistic and social segregation);
- assess and draft local analyses of intercultural assets and community potential for the engagement in the integration process;
- join different stakeholders – business, diplomacy, academics, activists to expand and improve the effectiveness and quality of the intercultural activities;
- provide structured integration programs with the exchange of experiences between schools and acknowledging the local heritage as a point of anchoring and identity building;
- draft and implement a diverse, cosmopolitan school curriculum.

Some schools decided to employ intercultural assistants who assist migrants in performing tasks and are agents in communication, also with families and the neighbourhoods.

This is one of the most effective integration tools, however much underdeveloped and undervalued presently in Poland.

Recommendations

- Invest in the development of intercultural assistance, built around the stability of employment, equalizing the position of assistants with teachers and providing financial planning that would balance the employment opportunities with the demand declared by migrant families;
- build community networks between schools, families and social services to better care for children, their development and well-being.

Peers are central to the lives of migrant pupils; they supported children linguistically, socially, and in the classroom, especially in secondary school where their voluntary support replaced the aid of teachers more common in primary schools and lower classes.

The children were 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.

Recommendations

- Promote the mentoring and buddy systems in school relations;
- promote teaching practices that are project-oriented and based on teamwork.

Language barriers were identified by participants as one of the key challenges faced by migrant pupils. Newly arrived children appreciated the ability to have additional language classes but remembered also their first months in school as a harsh period causing anxieties about their competencies as students.

We believe that permission to switch or mix languages in the course of the first period after arrival is a good practice that shall be recognized and put into the teaching framework.

Recommendations

- Implement fair qualification and grading criteria – adjust exams to the cultural context of the migrant child at least in the first three terms of learning;
- encourage migrant children to participate and be directly involved in classroom relations and activities;
- provide a set of solutions fostering language acquisition by children and their parents;
- train teachers to work with the CLIL method – Content and Language Integrated Learning;
- promote bi or multilingualism and explore its utility in teaching/learning practices.

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 for children (Engel de Abreu, Cruz-Santos, Tourinho, Martin & Bialystok, 2012).

Additionally, bilingualism may be useful at an economic level as well, whereby bilinguals can become a support mechanism for new arrivals and those without competency in speaking Polish.

The importance and functionality of bilingualism are still underscored and unexploited in the teaching/learning practices.

The positive aspect of Polish school reality is that many Polish teachers earned diplomas as teachers of Polish as a foreign language. Such studies were very popular in recent years and often got reimbursement from local government or were sponsored by other institutions. Most of them are then prepared to work with migrant children. It was clear in

the research that such teachers have a more positive attitude to foreign children than those who were not experienced with the topic.

Evans & Liu (2018) suggest that the education systems should include all languages due to the key role they play in children's development. We found that where home languages were incorporated into the school environment, the pupils received them positively. The ability to communicate with a pupil in his language was perceived as an important factor of community-based inclusion practice.

On the other hand, many teachers underlined they are lacking more general intercultural competencies and knowledge about different cultures. Despite the reimbursement schemes provided by the local government they rarely join intercultural studies. Interviews with teachers showed that rising competencies are often inhibited by the structure and organization of the educational system.

Recommendation

- Teachers should be given training and resources on teaching a diverse curriculum.

The Polish migration law does not include the period of receiving education in Poland (sometimes eight or more years) to the five years continuous stay required to become a long-term EU resident (permanent residential status).

This irrational solution deteriorates the integration of migrants by creating a structural and legal obstacle for people who usually are already permanent residents of the country in social and cultural terms.

6. Specific problems of children in transition

The most important problem of the children in transition that referred to peer relations was organizational and administrative obstacles resulting in poor school contact between children.

The reception centre as a place of housing is not freely available for those living outside and permission to enter is given by Office for Foreigners – an institution distant from the centres.

Children are often transported between school and centre with purposely rented buses that drive according to schedule. This does not allow children in transition to participate in the afternoon classes and extra-curriculum activities.

Recommendations

- Reform the organization of the reception to make it 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 public education shall be provided inside the centres.

The dependence of children in transition on their parents' choices often determines their educational chances. Parents often decide to move further to other EU countries which causes children's disappearance. The aforementioned lack of centralised guardianship results in disappearances and escapes of unaccompanied minors.

Poland, being a country of first entry and not the actual choice often discourages children from participation and engagement in education, especially in gaining language proficiency.

Recommendations

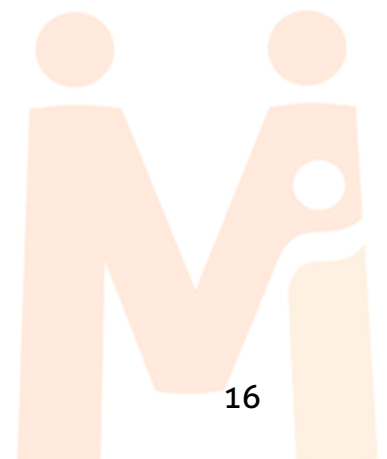
- Provide tutoring in the language of the choice;
- adopt more child-centred social counselling, addressed to parents, explaining that errant mobility is deteriorating children's education and social advancement opportunities;
- build modern and effective, fast-track children guardianship.

Despite laws do not allow to detain unaccompanied minors, those who are with their parents often share their detention which is not acceptable but imposed by courts as the lesser evil.

The period of such detention is too long and strip children off the educational opportunities. It cause also emotional distress.

Recommendations

- Introduce a ban on the detention of all children;
- provide other solutions for parents of children who presently are exposed to detention measures.

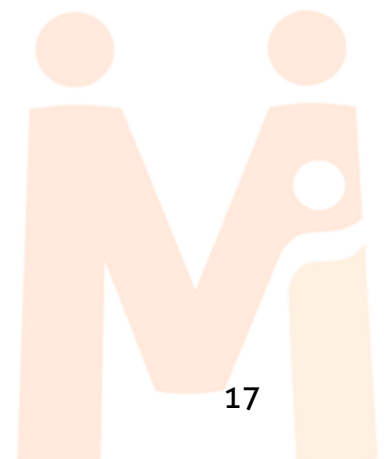


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SLOVENIA

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Integration policies in education should include child-centred approach

1. Summary

This policy brief addresses some key issues of the integration of migrant children in Slovenia. The findings and recommendations are drawn from research carried out as part of the Horizon 2020 funded project 'Migrant children in a transforming Europe' (MiCREATE). Using a child-centred approach, the MiCREATE research actively involved children through surveys, autobiographical interviews and focus groups. Research activities with newly arrived, long-term migrant and local children took place in Slovenia, Denmark, Spain, the United Kingdom, Austria, and Poland from September 2019 to September 2021. 16 (primary and secondary) schools were included into research from across Slovenia on the criteria of cultural diversity. Besides primary research, including field work in schools, dissemination activities and innovative solutions, child-centred EU and national policy recommendations were developed in our Integration and Policy Labs which are to be disseminated in 23 EU and non-EU countries.

The results show that although overall migrant children have positive experiences at their school and most often feel welcome and respected, several diversity and other challenges remain to be addressed by policy makers and school authorities. In spite of existing educational strategies, integration is still seen as one way process. There is an expectation for migrants to adapt to the new environment, while reception society remains the same. Integration is largely reduced to language learning and what counts is educational attainment. Therefore, more needs to be done for children's well-being both in school policies and wider.

2. Introduction

Slovenia, like the other EU countries, is becoming increasingly diverse. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, every seventh inhabitant of Slovenia is an immigrant. Of these, 25,317 were in the under-19 age group in 2021. Both educational system and wider society therefore face challenges due to the growing ethnic, cultural, linguistic diversity.

The number of foreign – born children under 15 years of age has been growing in the last 10 years, particularly the numbers of children from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and North Macedonia that are the biggest groups of foreign – born children in Slovenia.¹

The group of underage migrants, accompanied by parents, family members, guardians or unaccompanied, is a unique and vulnerable group of children with specific rights and needs. Their successful inclusion is one of the key tasks of both EU and national policies.

11,860 foreign citizens attended primary schools in Slovenia in 2019/20, and the vast majority (11,337) came from the Western Balkans. Unfortunately, the data do not provide insight into the number of foreign students studying in Slovenia in secondary school programs.

MiCREATE research has shown that there are numerous facilitators and barriers to the integration of migrant children. While legal and policy framework need to include child-centred perspective, there are several other domains which contribute to the well-being of migrant pupils and their successful integration. These include a sense of belonging and wellbeing, the quality of relationships with teachers and peers, relations between the school and family, language and language policies, and how schools and society deal with diversity, transnationality and multilingualism.

3. Legal and policy framework

The legal framework and the integration documents in Slovenia noticeably build on comprehensive approach to inclusion of migrant children in schools and set 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, migrant children’s parents, local and national community, language support, school curricula.

Republic of Slovenia and its relevant ministries have been among the first in European Union to develop Strategy for integration of migrants in education environment.²

¹ SURS (2019). Demography and social statistics. Education. Basic education. Youth. https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatDb/pxweb/en/10_Dem_soc/10_Dem_soc__09_izobrazevanje__04_osnovnosol_izo_braz__01_09527_zac_sol_leta/?tablelist=true 62 SURS (2019) Children, foreign citizens, in primary education by country of citizenship, Slovenia, annually https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatDb/pxweb/en/10_Dem_soc/10_Dem_soc__09_izobrazevanje__04_osnovnosol_izo_braz__01_09527_zac_sol_leta/?tablelist=true

² Eurydice. 2018. Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures. Accessed 23 September 2019. https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/integrating_students_from_migrant_backgrounds_into_schools_in_europe_national_policies_and_measures.pdf

The Strategy³ envisions wide spectrum of principles, which are to be taken into account when planning measures of integration: 1) equal access to education; 2) flexibility of curriculum, autonomy and professional responsibility of the educational staff; 3) respect for the children's culture, multiculturalism and interculturality; 4) ensuring conditions for achieving learning objectives and good standards of knowledge; 5) active learning and offering diverse possibilities of expression; 6) cooperation with parents.

Positive formal developments notwithstanding, systemic normative framework still needs to be developed in Slovenia. Existing integration policy framework allows big differences between schools.

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.

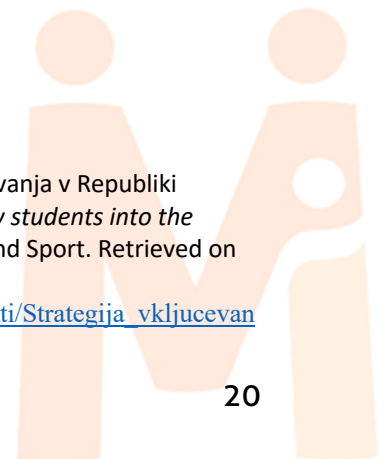
The data schools collect about migrant pupils are scarce. There is no legal obligation to collect data which would be the source for evidence-based policies.

No consensus exists about the concepts related to integration among the members of education community and 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 mostly neglected. Integration is still understood as assimilation and not as a two-way process. There is evident lack of support for migrant children and the responsibility for their successful integration is placed mainly on themselves and their families.

School reception policies differ significantly. Approaches vary not only from school to school but also between primary and secondary schools. Most often initiative depends on individuals. 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.

In Slovenia there is no systematic monitoring of the inclusion of migrants in education which would be the basis for policy planning in this area.

³ Strategija vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji. [*Strategy for integration of migrant children, basic school and upper secondary students into the Education System of the Republic of Slovenia*] (2007). Ljubljana: Ministry of Education and Sport. Retrieved on 10 February 2012 from http://www.mss.gov.si/fileadmin/mss.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/razvoj_solstva/projekti/Strategija_vkljucevanje_migrantov.doc



Recommendations

- 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 include monitoring and 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 migrants in development of services, and development of workforce skills.
- 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.

4. Child-centred approach

MiCREATE fieldwork research results show that migrant children do not differ much in respect of the socioeconomic factors, desires, plans or social status from their peers who did not have any migration experiences. Moreover, children can and want actively influence their lives in the integration process, yet this is often not recognised.

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

A child-centred approach which primary focuses on children's well being and recognizes their agency is still missing in educational system. There is a predominant adult-centred approach in in Slovenian schools and teaching. Teachers expect the learners to mostly work quietly and independently, not many of them are paying attention to individual needs and they focus on individual performance. Even in cases when migrant children would be expected to be actively involved, for example in drawing up individual plans, they often do not participate.

There exists a need and a possibility to integrate the child-centred approach more explicitly in the existing educational policy framework. The strategy and some normative documents already include some 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.

Individual plan in cooperation with the newly arrived child and the family could be the door to the child centred approach: it is taking into account the child`s age, provenience, and existing knowledge and sets objectives, activities, assessment modification, additional teaching support, etc. Moreover, child-centred approach can be first and more easily adopted in teaching practical subjects.

A child-centred migrant integration policy approaches migrant children as *children* through the prism of their present well-being and future opportunities at the same time. It does not treat them as future adults at the expense of their present needs.

Recommendations

- Elaborate in detail about the positive effects of child centred approach in terms of integration of migrant children in school environment and in wider society.
- Introduce child-centred perspective and practice in inclusion policies, so that children`s wellbeing, needs and opinions matter and are taken into account, meaning including children`s standpoint at all levels of integration process in education.
- Build up a whole school approach to integration (consider an action plan that would allow for monitoring progress) 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).
- 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, etc.)
- Support all and particularly migrant children to participate in preparation of school policies in pupil`s community system, student`s council and participation organs so that their voices are heard there as well.
- Support migrant children to participate in preparation of their individual plans.

5. The sense of belonging and well being at school

The school culture plays an important role in fostering wellbeing and integration of migrant pupils. In principle, schools try to provide accepting, tolerant, warm and emphatic environment for migrant children.

Overall, the results show that most migrant children feel happy at school. However, some have specific worries related to their sense of belonging, acceptance, knowledge, and identity. In addition, these children face discrimination more often than children of other backgrounds.

Therefore, school cultures need to be better developed in supporting the needs and integration of migrant children. This is a big task and therefore requires the collaboration of all relevant stakeholders at a national, local, and school level so that schools can become a safe and friendly place, with tolerant and open attitudes, zero-racist discrimination and zero-violence policy.

Recommendations

- Adopt systematic plans and provide financial means for integration strategies and practices in schools at all levels.
- 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.
- Change the normative about the number of children in classes with newly arrived migrant children (lower the number of children).
- Introduce and/or strengthen individual support to migrant children at both performance and wellbeing level at the level of the whole system.
- 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).
- Provide good and comparable reception routes for newly arrived children (include written information about school, local community – also on the website, and school leaflets in languages of migrant children).
- Provide enhanced support for migrant pupils to improve their educational attainment and future educational perspectives. 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).

- 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.⁴ Moreover, language support is needed the second and third year as well, and sometimes longer.

6. Language and language policies

Language barriers represent the key challenge to the integration of migrant pupils. While language learning process is the core issue of the integration process in Slovenia, there still exists language constraint over a longer time. Newly arrived children often have anxieties about their competency in speaking the language of the receiving country. They are aware that without this, they would not be able to communicate with the majority culture and form friendships.

The existing fond of language teaching hours does not suffice. Neither there is enough additional learning support. Children most often use social interactions and informal support from their peers to learn the language.

Moreover, migrant children have multilingual capacities. Speaking the new language goes hand in hand with identity change. It is important that their home languages are valued and welcomed as part of the school space and peer relations.

The problem is that at some schools, children are not even allowed to use their home language. At schools which incorporated migrant children's home languages as their environment, local pupils received them positively as cultural enrichment. Migrant pupils felt accepted. They could better demonstrate their real knowledge. Other pupils gained more learning opportunities.

What matters in integration process for children to feel included is not only the focus on the official language and how proficient they are. Migrant learners should not be perceived above all as a problem that affects the learning process. It is therefore necessary that governments and educational institutions enable policies that allow for greater plurilingualism.

⁴ More clear instructions are needed what this means for migrant children who are enrolled in the last, 9th class of the primary school.

Recommendations

- 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, while avoiding segregation practices, and long-term migrants who are often overlooked should also be considered for additional language support.
- Develop strategy and normative framework for respecting and preserving migrant children's home language and culture. They can build multi-lingual practices and spaces, offer teaching in migrant pupil's home languages, and offer learning of these languages to local children.
- Newly arrived children should have opportunity for communication, classes and knowledge assessment in their home language or the language they speak more fluent than the official language.
- Employ more qualified bilingual and multilingual teachers who can communicate with children in their own language.

7. Relations with teachers and staff

Integration challenges are mostly left to the individual schools, principals, and teachers to self-initiatively organize the school system for welcoming, inclusion and integration of migrant children. 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.

The quality of teacher and pupil relationships thus depend highly on teachers themselves, the pedagogy they use and their level of interest in their pupils. Most teachers are positively contributing to children's wellbeing. They adjust learning materials and offer them help and support.

Children view teachers and staff as supportive and helpful; they also believe they can rely on them.

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 were accounts of teachers who were insensitive, uncaring, and unaware of migrant children's backgrounds and struggles and treated them unfairly because of individual characteristics.

Yet teachers are not involved in any obligatory professional training concerning the integration of migrant children. Therefore, there is a need for teachers who use diverse and innovative teaching methods and material to facilitate engagement of learners who have different levels of language proficiency.

Recommendations

- 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, offer language learning within the professional development scheme, skills of teaching Slovenian language as a second language).
- The training should make teachers confident into deal with issues relating to interculturality, integration, inter-ethnic conflicts, and discrimination
- These themes need to be included into teacher's main education curricula.
- Support and organize training of school staff to disseminate and integrate knowledge on child-centred approaches and migrant children integration to school practice.

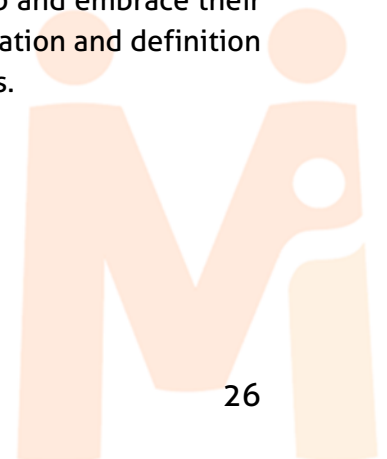
8. Relations with peers and friends

In general, children were positive about their relations with peers, friendships with individuals of ones' own or migrant background facilitated integration, helped with language acquisition, a sense of belonging and identity formation. 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.

However, despite the majority having positive experiences, migrant or minority children also reported peer discrimination because of their migrant background, religion, ethnicity, and language. Some local children are disturbed by their peers speaking in foreign language.

Troubling peer dynamics affects migrant learners' wellbeing, especially cases of exclusions and discrimination due to origin, religion or language. Discrimination and bullying have a proud negative impact on wellbeing of migrant children and therefore need to be addressed at a policy level.

There is thus a need to define appropriate and effective, action-oriented ways of promoting intercultural communication between children in peer-groups. 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.



9. Recommendations

- Include diversity issues into everyday teaching and the curriculum so that children better understand their multiple and complex identities.
- Monitor peer dynamics, children's attitudes, perceptions, and level of inter-ethnic friendships.
- Stimulate peer support by introducing peer to peer tutor system.
- Take care to provide opportunities for diverse leisure and sports activities in school and at the local level to enable socializing with peers.
- Integrate topics of diversity etc. into curriculum and every-day school life.
- Establish and use protocols and procedures to prevent and report harassment on the basis of ethnicity/race/religion/gender etc.

10. Family and school-parents' relations

Families are one of the most important sources of psychosocial support for migrant children. They are a source of identity, feelings of belonging and safety. Families also play an important role in the integration process, yet their role is often overlooked within policy.

Some children expressed that their families were not appropriately treated by school and other institutions. A special challenge for schools is the involvement of parents who do not speak Slovenian language or those from traditionally more closed communities. Moreover, 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.

School-parents relations need to be addressed closer to improve and require more attention from all relevant stakeholders.

Recommendations

- Improve communication with, and inclusion of parents/families, especially in secondary schools.
- Develop systemised guidelines on how schools should include parents within their environment so that this is not done on an ad hoc basis and becomes the charter of most schools.
- Schools should develop constant relationship with parents and not only during reception period.

11. Diversity, transnationality, multilingualism

Migrant children's identities are anchored in diverse, transnational settings. They often have important bonds in several countries and cultures. However, pupils varying identities can be overlooked in the monoculture curriculum which neither reflects the diversity of learners nor it challenges Europocentrism and teaching methods that many schools apply. Explicit engagement with cultural diversity topics are rare.

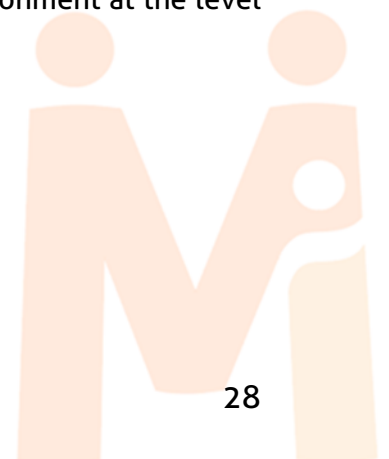
For example, often, migrant children are discouraged from speaking their home language due to the school's attempt to promote the language of the host country, but this makes the pupils feel insecure and less valued. When they are allowed to use their own language and teach others about it, they show a sense of happiness and belonging. It can become a method of bonding with peers and sharing their culture.

Moreover, educators lack teaching materials sources and tools that could help them to address topics like tolerance and cultural diversity, while on the other hand some reported that they are tired of lectures and seminars about inclusion of migrant children in a classroom.

Children's cultures and home languages need to be valued and welcomed as part of the school environment. Governments and educational institutions need policies that allow for greater diversity, and multilingualism both in school and wider society.

Recommendations

- Develop a curriculum that moves away from a colonial framework and acknowledges various cultures, ethnicities, and geographies. More importantly, this curriculum must allow for intercultural education at all levels.
- Include diversity quota in school's employment policies.
- Build strategy and normative framework for respecting and preserving migrant children's home languages and cultures.
- Provide multi-lingual practices and spaces, including teaching in migrant pupil's home languages, and offer learning of these languages to local children.
- Develop protocols of dealing with inclusion and integration of migrant children and other actions dealing with cultural pluralism in the school environment at the level of secondary schools (children between 14 and 18 years old).



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1. Summary

The main objective of this document is to offer specific recommendations regarding migrant children's inclusion processes. This policy summary shows the main results obtained during the Migrate project. This policy brief has seven main sections: (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. In each item, there is a description of the specific problem, its relevance, and some recommendations for policymakers.

2. Keywords

Migrant children, policy, inclusion, school

3. Actual integration problems and recommendations

3.1 Equality and Educational Policies

In Spain, there is school segregation due to political, economic and social reasons (Estalayo et al., 2021). Therefore, equal opportunities for all children (newly, long-term and local) are not guaranteed. Moreover, this situation is exacerbated with schools that lack resources (human and material resources).

At the local, regional and national level, policy recommendations declare a discourse based on the UN Convention on the Child's Rights where the student's welfare (regardless of nationality, economic status, etc.) is the highest priority. However, in some specific cases, this is not respected and ensured.

Recommendations

- To promote an equal student distribution by guaranteeing a minimum percentage of migrant children in each school, including charter schools.
- To hire more teachers and specialists such as social workers, psychologists, and social educators to decrease the number of students per teacher.

3.2 The sense of belonging and well being at school

Educational systems are crucial in foresting migrant children's integration and promoting their well-being. In most cases, children reported feeling happy and comfortable at school. On the other hand, some pupils felt excluded during their first months in the host country. Moreover, some students reported a sense of loneliness, sadness and shame during the first period.

For this reason, a collaboration between the school and relevant stakeholders (sports, leisure and cultural organisations, NGOs, etc.) is fundamental.

Recommendations

- To adopt specific plans and protocols regarding migratory grief and other dimensions of the migration and settlement process.
- To establish practices or policies capable of structurally embracing migrant children's life stories to offer them spaces to give meaning to their experiences.
- To provide teachers with resources to better understand pupils' contexts, stories and particularities.
- To facilitate practices that connect the school with their social and cultural environment.
- To guarantee welcoming routes for schools that provide good reception for newly arrived children.

3.3 Relations with educational staff

The role of classmates, teachers, and other educational staff are critical in the inclusion processes. Building caring relationships within the educational community is fundamental for schools being a safe space. Children need to be listened to and to count with emotional accompaniment.

Pedagogical relationships are essential to feeling the school is a safe space.

Schools need innovative teaching methods and materials to work with cultural diversity and interculturality.

Recommendations

- To implement pedagogies of care, recognising students' complex realities and specific conditions.
- To address a holistic approach to education by developing pedagogies of care as a school's comprehensive approach from a policy perspective.

- To consider teachers' expectations and academic self-concepts during initial teacher training.
- To provide teacher professional development to address interculturality and diversity.

3.4 Relations with peers and friends

Overall, most children reported positive relationships with their peers. They specifically identified it as a critical aspect of their emotional well-being. However, newly arrived children tend to report particular difficulty in arriving and getting to know new people (in and outside of the school).

Policies and initiatives should foster peer-to-peer relationships and the well-being of children in and beyond the school environment.

Recommendations

- To promote socialisation by introducing a peer-to-peer tutor system.

3.5 School-families relationship

Family is one of the most critical parts of the emotional support of migrant children. Creative initiatives that connect families with the educational community are needed. Besides, providing a space for school families helps facilitate the inclusion process for the child and the migrant adults.

Some families face difficulties participating in school activities due to the language barrier. Existing policies are not enough to support the active role of migrant families in the school.

Recommendations

- To create strategies and policies to facilitate family inclusion and communication with the school (especially in secondary schools).
- To design and disseminate guidelines on how to welcome and include families to become part of the structure of schools.
- To improve dialogue and communication between schools and families to contribute to their inclusion and the inclusion of students.
- To build relationships with families on an ongoing basis, not just during the arrival and welcoming process.

3.6 Language policies

Language learning was a central aspect when discussing existing inclusion models (for newly-arrived, long-term and local children). Pupils reported that learning to speak Spanish or Catalan is one of the most challenging issues newly arrived migrant children face.

Language acquisition plays an essential role during migrant integration processes. Local, regional and national governments and educational institutions must leverage all available tools and resources to ensure new and long-term migrants who do not master the language of instruction (Catalan) receive specific language support.

Recommendations

- To adopt a child-centred approach in inclusion policies that recognise children's needs, consider their opinions, and make sure they matter.
- To employ more qualified teachers such as cultural mediators, psychologists or translators.
- To promote initiatives to support and learn children's mother-tongue.

3.7 Diversity and holistic approach to inclusion

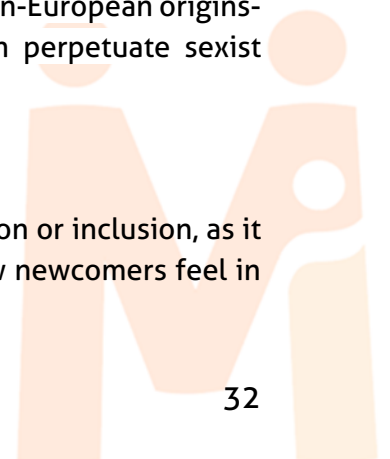
One of the main problems is changing existing practice to move from integration to inclusion. Often, the local culture is the most predominant at schools. That may keep pointing out migrant children as the "others", *the different*.

Integration is understood as the need to adjust the difference within the norm. In this way, integration refers to a personal endeavour instead of a political responsibility.

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 socioeconomic conditions is not met. Even if schools in Catalonia are secular spaces where no religion is considered more important than others, school is not always a real neutral space. That could constitute ways of exclusion. Regarding ethnicity, ethnocentrism is a central aspect of the Catalan educational system. This fact influences the inclusion processes because the curriculum does not take into account the cultural and ethnic diversity, excluding the cultural background of migrant children from non-European origins. The educational system, including teachers and peer students, often perpetuate sexist attitudes

Recommendations

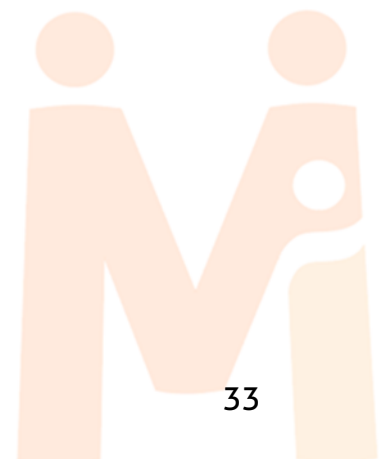
- Efforts need to be made to reconceptualise the idea of integration or inclusion, as it has repercussions on how schools organise themselves and how newcomers feel in the new country.



- Migrant children need recognition of their festivities and traditions in their schools. Specific policies and actions should consider the religious richness of the schools.
- A critical review of the system's foundations is necessary.
- Teacher professional development in antiracist issues is recommended.
- Gender approach is necessary for the school system's organisation, including integration plans.

4. References

Estalayo, P., Miño-Puigcercós, R., Malinverni, P., and Rivera-Vargas, P. (2021): El reto de la inclusión social, más allá de la escuela: Tensiones y carencias de las políticas de integración de niñas y niños migrantes en España. *Archivos Analíticos de Políticas Educativas*, 29(67). <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.29.6258>



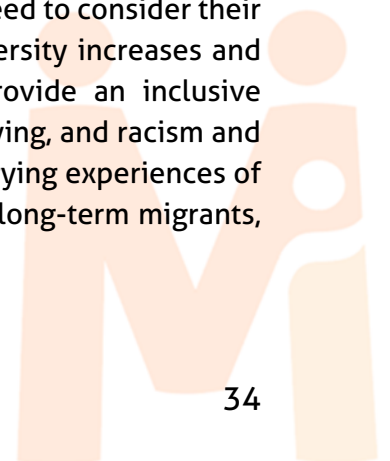
Beyond Integration: Supporting meaningful engagement of migrant pupils in a diverse Britain

1. Abstract

This policy brief is concerned with the integration of migrant children into educational settings in Britain's diverse and multicultural society. The findings are drawn from research carried out at Manchester Metropolitan University as part of the Horizon 2020 funded project 'Migrant children in a transforming Europe' (MiCREATE). MiCREATE actively involved children from 6 schools across Manchester through a child-centred approach, using surveys, art-based interviews, and focus groups. We found that although overall migrant children had positive experiences at their school and embraced the attempts made to celebrate their cultures, disparities remained. Furthermore, it became evident that Britain is still far from being a haven for those who have left their home countries, whether because of conflict or economic reasons. More needs to be done so that these marginalised groups of children can feel a sense of belonging, safety, and attachment to the UK ensuring their full participation in society. This policy brief focuses on key issues, including diversity management and curriculum, language policies, bullying and discrimination, and school-parent relationships.

2. Introduction

The diversity of UK communities is routinely changing; for instance, in 2018, Poland was the top country of birth for foreign-born nationals, but in 2019 India overtook Poland (Vergas-Silva & Rienzo, 2020). Also, due to global conflicts, certain regions of the UK receive migrants and refugees of different backgrounds, creating new challenges for educational settings. For example, recently, the war in Afghanistan has led many Afghans to flee to the UK. They have been housed in regions across the country, with Manchester being one of them. The schools where these children were placed had to rethink their integration strategy. Likewise, the UK is expecting an influx of migrants from Ukraine due to the current conflicts meaning that the regions in which these migrants arrive will need to consider their integration practices and strategies. These examples show that as diversity increases and changes across the UK, it is essential that educational systems provide an inclusive education that fosters cultural diversity to prevent discrimination, bullying, and racism and ensure equal outcomes for all social groups. Our research identified varying experiences of educational inclusion among groups of migrants, such as new arrivals, long-term migrants, and local children with migrant backgrounds.



3. Main findings and recommendations

3.1 Managing Diversity

Our research found that schools used a range of methods to acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of their student body. However, many of these practices addressed diversity at a superficial level. Schools must take an approach to the diversity curriculum that will enable pupils to understand their multiple and complex identities and how their lives are influenced by globalisation (Banks, 2014). 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). Additionally, our findings alluded to a lack of confidence and some hesitancy in teachers being able to discuss specific topics due to perceptions of political correctness and lack of knowledge about certain cultures for example the Roma community (See Badwan et al, 2021).

It seems that although diversity is a part of everyday life in schools, the lack of training and critical engagement on diversity means that it is not adequately addressed (Badwan et al., 2021).

Recommendations

National Level: Teacher training programmes should contain elements of training on how teachers can address topics regarding diversity within the classroom.

Local Level: Experts such as researchers as well as charities and NGOs that support the Roma community should provide resources and cultural competency events for teachers on how to support Roma children and their parents.

School Level: The diversity curriculum provided to children should be differentiated according to the type of migrant children. For instance, second and third-generation migrant children and children of migrant backgrounds are better able to celebrate their migrant heritage through Black history month, but these activities may not be as useful to those who are new to the country. They would benefit more from practices such as buddying, as while newly arrived children need to keep the connection to their heritage- acclimatising these children to their new surroundings should be the focus to ease the transition process.

3.2 Discrimination and forms of new racism

Previous research has pointed to structural forms of racism and its outcomes for individuals of Black, Asian, and Other ethnic minority backgrounds. However, our research acknowledges persistent racial inequalities and new forms of racism through lived experiences, stereotypes, and unconscious biases.

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 judgment as to whether incidents of bullying should be recorded (Department for Education, 2017). This means that the true

extent and nature of racial bullying are unknown.

Recommendations

National Level: The government should make the collection of data on racist incidents of bullying mandatory.

Local Level: School staff in leadership positions need to be trained on tackling old and new forms of racism, stereotypes and unconscious bias.

School Level: Schools should create diversity management groups that are formed entirely of pupils from diverse backgrounds through an intersectional lens. Doing this, will enable different groups such those who are highly stigmatised, especially those of a Roma background, to speak about their experiences, provide suggestions for improvement and take action with the help of teachers where needed.

3.3 Language (As both capital & barrier)

Language was identified as both capital and a barrier. It was a barrier for newly arrived children as they struggled in acclimatising to the education system due to a lack of proficiency in speaking English. Support provided by interpreters, whether official (teachers) or informal (peers), was instrumental.

Schools benefited from multicultural and multilingual teaching staff, but not all schools had this privilege due to funding limitations.

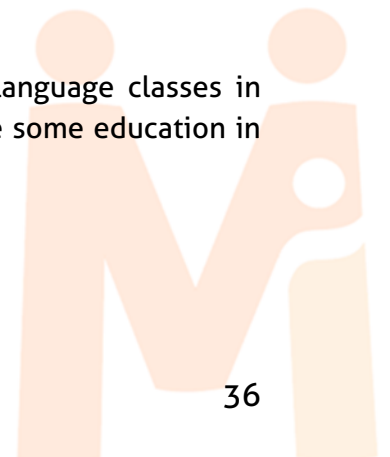
Home languages can be seen as a capital that enrich migrant children's lives, providing them with the benefits of bilingualism, that support migrant integration including essential employability skills. However, if not used, home languages can be easily forgotten. We argue that home languages should be supported and further cultivated in schools rather than being seen as a hindrance.

Recommendation:

National Level: Increase funding allocated to EAL departments so that they can adequately support EAL pupils. This is particularly important given the further disparities migrant pupils faced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (Arun, Batool and Szymczuk, 2021).

Local level: Local councils should fund and facilitate language workshops by migrant parents for migrant children wanting to retain their mother tongue.

School level: 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 and Carruthers, 2019).



3.4 Educational attainment

Schools provided many initiatives to support migrant children's educational attainment, but certain children still need more tailored support. For example, those who arrived too late in the UK to prepare for their GCSE and second and third-generation boys of Caribbean descent who persistently have low attainment rate at GCSE.

The pandemic also posed many additional challenges for migrant children as they suffered significantly in their learning, whereby some had even regressed in their English-speaking abilities, and upon return to school, they had to begin learning the language again. However, due to limited proficiency in English language skills, migrant parents were unable to support their children. Additionally, newly arrived migrant pupils were not allocated school places, leading to gaps in learning (See Arun et al, 2021).

Recommendation:

Local Level: To improve academic performance and sustain migrant pupils' motivation towards education, children should be mentored by older students from Higher Education Institutions (HEI) who can guide and motivate the learners.

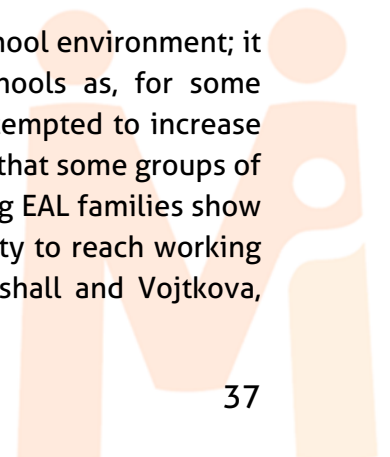
Ideally, mentors should have a similar ethnic background to that of the child they are supporting as this may allow children to better relate to them. HEI's, as part of their impact work, should also provide courses to immigrant parents to strengthen their English literacy skills which would enable the parents to support their child's education.

School level: Run practical classes with older migrant pupils who are at risk of leaving school with little qualifications with subjects and classes that may help them to navigate the society once they leave school.

Schools also need to work with families and siblings to improve reading practices as research shows that enjoyment in reading is more important to their educational success than even the family's socioeconomic status (Department for Education, 2012).

3.5 Targeted parental involvement in education

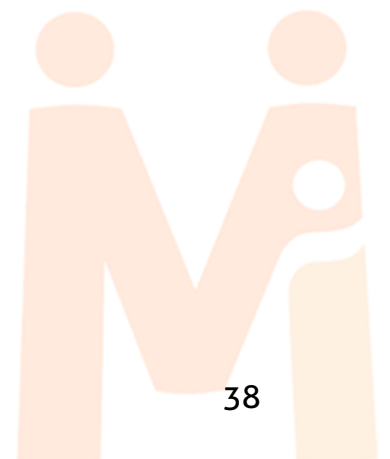
Schools recognised a need for parents to be involved within the school environment; it was thought that this was especially important in less diverse schools as, for some communities, it is difficult to know how the system works. Schools attempted to increase parental engagement through a range of activities, however, it was felt that some groups of parents are harder to reach than others. Previous programmes targeting EAL families show low take-up due to challenges in targeting a diverse group, the inability to reach working parents, or those with childcare needs (Morris, Wishart, Husain, Marshall and Vojtkova, 2019).



Recommendations:

Local Level: Non-profit organisations and charities should share information about the importance of parent/school relationships, this may help to reach hard-to-reach migrant parents.

School level: Increase engagement with different groups of migrant parents through providing language training and hosting group meetings run by parents.



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