

Problematizing the Notion of Good Practices in the Context of Migrant's Children Integration in Schools

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MICREATE

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Main objective. Understand the limits and potentials of current integration policies and educational systems from a children-centred approach, to stimulate their social integration at educational and policy level.

- Analysis of current measures for integration of migrant children (12-17 y. o.) in European countries -including children of refugees, asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors-.
- Identification of social impacts of the integration programmes through case studies in 6 countries (Slovenia, Austria, Denmark, United Kingdom, Poland and Spain).
- Design of integration measures with a cross-national and local perspective.



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Specific objectives

- To improve knowledge about **children's experiences of life** in new social environments.
- To explore **school peer dynamics** in view of the integration process.
- To **build on the capacity of teachers** and educational staff for diversity managing.
- To **develop child-centred tools** for stimulating migrant integration.
- To design **child-centred integration policy recommendations** for diverse decision-makers.

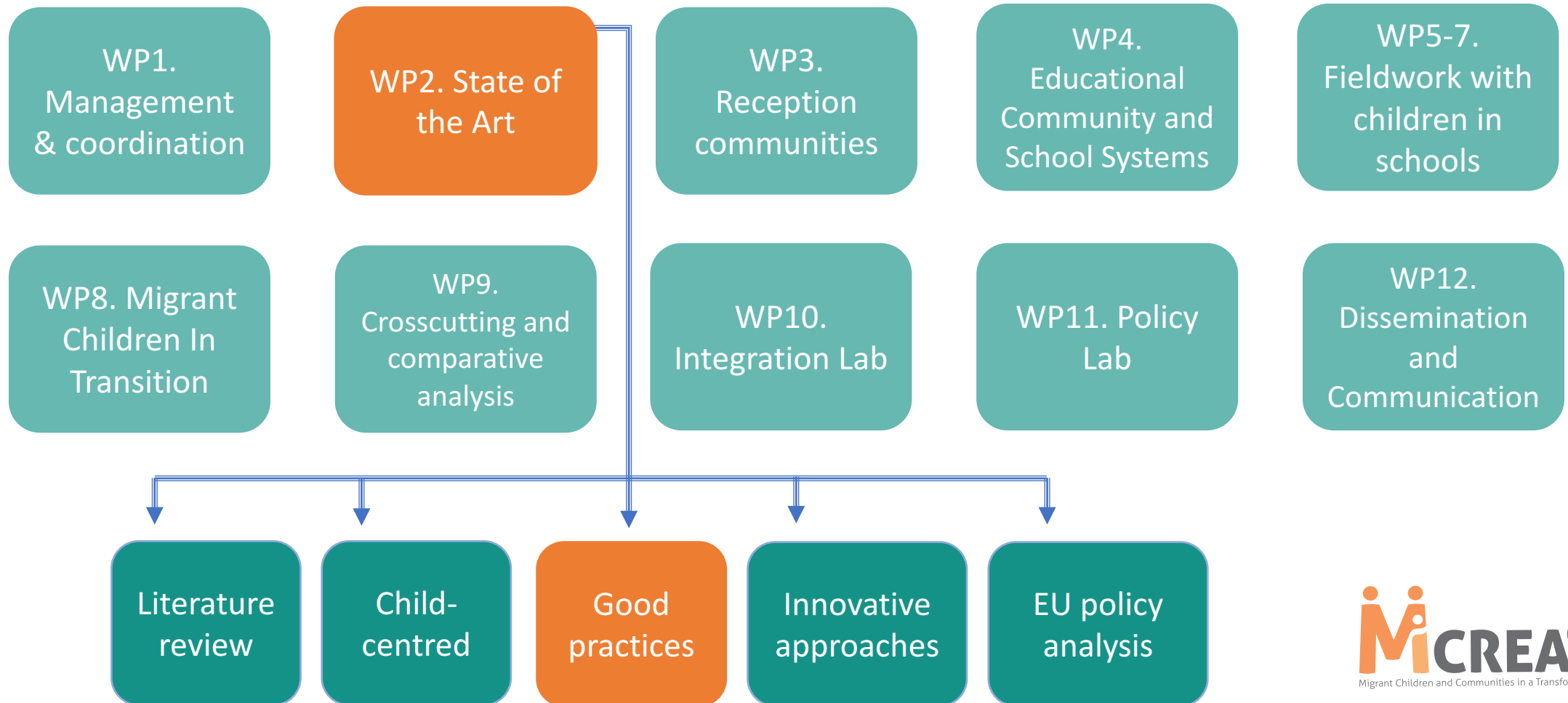


Contextualisation of the research project



- Changes in the phenomenon of migration in Europe in recent years.
- 1.3 million people asked for asylum in other countries in 2016 (EASO, 2016) and more than 2.3 million people to illegally cross the European Union borders.
- Inequality of life conditions and risen of international conflicts.
- Ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity and socioeconomic inequalities are also growing (Currie, 2016).
- **Children and young people** are affected by these circumstances, being 398.255 the number of children younger than 18 who applied for asylum in 2016 (EASO, 2016).
- Need to review and reorient integration policies in the European Union, specially to address the conditions of children.

Work Package 2.3. Identification of good practices





What is a good practice?

- A model or example of an activity carried out with satisfactory results that respond to a shared vision of "wanting to advance" and constitute the product of the identity of a **specific context where they are carried out** (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).
- The character of **transferability and exportability** (Benavente, 2007).
- The possibility of **overcoming difficulties** and be implemented in other contexts, enabling its application to new situations (Biesta, 2015).



Problematizing the notion of “good practice”

- The terms ‘good’ and ‘best’ practices are used in some reports as unproblematically, without defining what it means, but considering widely **understood, agreed, easily identified and transferred** (Coffield & Edward, 2009).
- “**Is-ought** problem” -decision making in education involves value judgements- and **”normative validity”** of the measurements -many times is limited by what can be easily measured- (Biesta, 2015).
- **Aims and ends of education** embedded in an initiative identified as “good practice”. What kind of citizens students are supposed to become? (Biesta, 2015).



Methodology

1

Identification of more than 50 initiatives considered “good practices” of educational and social inclusion of migrant children in Spain since 2000.

2

Selection of 10 initiatives.

3

Analysis through the SPICE framework (Booth, 2006):
Setting, Intervention, Comparison and Evaluation.

Criteria:

1. Child-centred approach.
2. Stakeholders.
3. Regions of Spain.



Questions that guided the analysis

- Why these cases have been labelled as “good practices”?
- Which imaginaries of migrant children and youth integration / inclusion are behind the initiatives?
- The processes of evaluation -if there are such-, assure an impact on children and youth?



Description of the initiatives

Formal Education (3)

2 finished / 1 ongoing

- Sensitize the educational community on multiculturalism.
- Make linguistic adaptations
 - Promote families participation in school.
- Peer tutoring to decrease absenteeism and support learning processes.
- Mentoring from university to schools to create social bound.

Civil Society (4)

All finished / continuity

- Accompany minors and families in the insertion in the school system.
- Implement training for teachers on interculturality and gender equity.
- Implement activities with students to promote cooperation and respect.
- Listen to migrant youth to rethink integration policies.
- Identify and publish innovative techniques for inclusion.

Administration (3)

All ongoing

- Regulate actions of intercultural education.
- Regulate actions of teaching Spanish to foreign students.
- Reinforce the instrumental learning in cases of late entry into school.
- Promote normative, organizational and methodological initiatives for inclusion in schools.



Reasons to be considered a good practice

- Initiatives from civil society and educational institutions: were considered good practices because they were funded by EU, Spanish Government and City Councils. 2 received prizes from the same institutions.
- 1/7 showed continuity during 10 years, it was implemented in different UE countries and found new sources of funding and support.
- Policies: 3/3 have been active for more than 10 years, (1-2) increased its coverage gradually, (2) collaborated with other entities,(3) and was based on local initiatives.



Notions of migrant “integration” / “inclusion”

Every of this initiatives seek to promote the schooling of migrant children. However, its management model determines the form of intervention.

Formal Education (3)

- Promote the integration of the migrant children into the school
- Promote engagement to his own educational process
 - Sensitize the entire educational community
- Promote the social inclusion of children and their family

Civil Society (4)

- Promote the social inclusion of children
- Generate inclusive skills in the community
- Give value to the origin culture of the migrant children(to enhance multiculturalism)

Administration (3)

- Essentially they seek to integrate migrant children into the local education system.
 - Assistance practices
- Standardizing action dynamics
 - Continuity



Process of evaluation

- Most of these initiatives have been evaluated internally.
- None of the available evaluations have substantive impact results.
- ATAL (Andalucia) and the II Plan for Migrant Student (Basque Country), are the only initiatives that consider process evaluations.
- Most of the evaluations have been made at the end of the implementation period of the initiatives.
- It is not possible to value any of these initiatives as "Good practice" from the available evaluations.



Final thoughts

- Tendency among some public entities to identify and publicise “good” practices, driven by the need for results, but without assuring continuity.
- Need for policy makers to assure continuity to institutions, stability to students and adequate funding (Coffield & Edward, 2009).
- Some policies were based on a reverse approach: understand local practices and the complexity to promote educational inclusion to creating policies that allow responding to those needs.

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