



**Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue
as a way of Upgrading Policies of Participation**

Milestone 9

Obstacles and Opportunities in the Integration of Migrant-Background Children in Schools – CHILD UP Practice Analysis

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| Creator | Main author: Shannon Damery Contributors: Paula Kuusipalo, Maiju Kinossalo, Henna Jousm.ki, Federico Farini, Franziska Wächter, Margund Rohr, Marlene Märker, Sandra Märtin, Thomas Drößler, Sara Amadasi, Krystyna Slany, Magdalena Ślusarczyk, Marta Warat, Erica Righard, Anne Harju, Petra Svensson, Källberg, Chiara Ballestri |
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Executive Summary

This is the final background report for the H2020 project, Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue as a way of Upgrading Policies of Participation – CHILD-UP. CHILD-UP researches the social conditions of migrant children's integration through social participation, with the final aim of proposing innovative approaches to understanding and transforming their social conditions. The first objective, which was achieved with the context analysis, was to provide a European overview of the situation of migrant children, and also to focus specifically on the policies and practices of integration in schools, reception centres, social services and communities in the seven partner countries: Belgium, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

This report offers a better understanding of the school systems, obstacles, and opportunities that migrant children and their families encounter in the countries involved in CHILD UP. It provides the background against which the qualitative research is being conducted and offers context to those findings by:

- Outlining where responsibility for education lies in each country
- Explaining how migrant children are incorporated into the school system
- Investigating the achievement gap that exists between migrant and non-migrant pupils
- Detailing best practices and weaknesses in terms of integrating migrant children into schools in the local context in each country
- Presenting how different educational systems approach second language learning and host-country language support

Achievement gap

In all the partner countries, migrant children's school achievement is lower than that of their non-migrant peers. This situation is dependent on many factors, some of which were discovered to be the same across partner countries. These include issues such as teachers having lower expectations of migrant children; migrant children being subjected to negative stereotypes; migrant children having large gaps in their education; poor communication between school and migrant parents; the fact that migrant children are often less likely to be enrolled in pre-school and kindergarten; and parents having an insecure migratory status in the country of residence. This area would benefit from more robust data collection as it is lacking in some countries and done without much nuance in others. The research and reporting should consider the diversity of migrant background children and incorporate factors such as socioeconomic standing, parents' level of education, among others. This would give a more accurate overview of their school performance and what targeted interventions could help to improve it.

It would benefit migrant children's school performance if they had free access to early education, and if this was available regardless of one's migratory status or income. The availability of resources to support migrant-background children should also be more clearly communicated to migrant families.

Incorporation into schools and systems of school governance

In the partner countries, the school system is the responsibility of different levels of government, ranging from mostly centralised national responsibility for education, to increasingly significant local responsibility and autonomy. Who carries this responsibility can have an impact on how much delay migrant children experience before entering school, and how the system of school incorporation works. These differences lead to varying degrees of bureaucratic hurdles, waiting lists, and school segregation.

Highlighted approaches to supporting migrant children's integration in schools

Each partner was asked to highlight best practices in terms of programming to support children in their integration in school. What became clear was that many programmes have not been thoroughly evaluated and that these practices often exist at the local level, making it difficult to generalize. Nevertheless, common themes from the programmes were identified. Within in-school programming, best practices were identified as:

- Programmes that helped to combat discrimination
- Training for teachers to work with migrant background children
- One-to-one mentoring
- Initiatives that encouraged cross-cultural understanding/sharing
- Programmes and funding that targeted the achievement gap

Programming outside of the school setting was also identified as being valuable for integration and wellbeing in school. Highlighting the importance of a holistic approach, innovative programmes were identified as those that considered areas of children's lives outside of school and fostered communication between families, school actors, and outside actors such as NGOs and social workers. The programmes that were highlighted fell into the following categories:

- Extra-curricular/after school programming
- Parental involvement in education
- Mentoring
- Early intervention

Support of Home and Host Country Languages

Local language acquisition is key to academic success and integration, but the valuing of home languages is also important for migrant children's wellbeing in school and has been linked to overall linguistic proficiency.

In terms of local language acquisition, every country offers some form of targeted support in language acquisition to newcomers. The length of this targeted supported varies by country, as well as whether or not students are separated from mainstream classes for broader instruction. Separating children from the mainstream classroom has mixed outcomes. While separation may allow more targeted language instruction, the time spent outside the mainstream classroom limits the possibility of building relationships and communication in the local language with non-migrant peers. Partner countries adopt different approaches to the length of time and the number of subjects separated provision is provided for.

While a number of the partner countries had official policy in support of home language provision in school, this stated valuation does not often lead to actual, practical measures in the classroom. This may be due to lack of funding, resources, or trained professionals to support the home language such as in Sweden, Finland, and Poland, but can also be due simply to the belief that migrant students' home language proficiency is a barrier rather than a resource.

Conclusion

Across Europe, migrant children have lower educational outcomes than non-migrant children. This is a trajectory that can begin early in the school career and have long-term implications. Monitoring children's wellbeing in school, as well their academic performance; understanding how outside factors impact school integration and outcomes; and robust communication with parents are all key components of migrant children's academic success and overall welfare. These are also areas in which partners have highlighted innovative programming and promising new measures. While there are various funding initiatives earmarked for supporting migrant children, what is key is to ensure that local actors have some level of flexibility in how to use these funds since they are the experts on what is needed in their specific context.

Approaches to teaching the local language are very different across countries. There is not clear consensus on the best way to support migrant children in learning the local language and some countries have bridging programmes to offer targeted support while others offer language classes but students remain in mainstream classes for most the day. What is clear is that it is important that time spent outside of mainstream classes should be limited because it can have negative impacts on migrant children's school integration. It is important that migrant-background children have the chance to socialise with both migrant and non-migrant background peers. Additionally, schools and teachers should value migrant students' culture and home language and treat these a resource rather than obstacles to learning. This positive treatment can impact migrant children's wellbeing, sense of belonging and also contribute to reducing discrimination and bullying.

A common theme running through all the findings was that, for the benefit of migrant students, teachers must be better supported. Teachers are under a lot of pressure to ensure that children perform well both academically and socially, and they often work in situations with limited resources and inadequate training. A main focus in each of the partner countries was on better preparing teachers to work with migrant children, to detect and combat

discrimination, and to communicate with migrant families. While there are promising developments in these areas, more funding, creativity, and research are needed to better support teachers in their work. CHILD UP is specially positioned to support teachers in their work as it will offer access to innovative methods that they can adapt and use in their own classrooms.

1. Introduction

The H2020 project, Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue as a way of Upgrading Policies of Participation – CHILD-UP, aims to analyse the types of interventions that can be used to enhance the potential agency and hybrid integration of migrant children. Migrant children encounter obstacles to integration in schools throughout most of Europe (ETM 2017; Janta &Harte 2016) and children with a migrant background typically have lower educational outcomes than their non-migrant peers. There is also an achievement gap between migrant non-migrant students, with migrant background students underperforming academically when compared to their non-migrant peers (ETM 2017, Schleicher 2006, Van Maele and Poeze 2018), is present during all stages of education, all the way through to university entrance, where migrant children are less likely to enrol than their non-migrant peers. At the same time, studies show that migrant students are also more likely to report a lack of wellbeing and belonging, despite also reporting high levels of academic motivation (Van Maele and Poeze 2018). While the achievement gap narrows for the second generation, the above-mentioned issues still persist (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019). There are numerous structures in place that account for this difference, including the fact that migrant students are more likely to attend lower-quality schools (OECD 2010) or are not offered sufficient preparation and language instruction when starting school in a new country.

This report offers further insights into this unbalanced situation with a mapping of school programs and other services aimed at supporting the integration of migrant students. It evaluates in school, extra-curricular¹, and after-school² programmes and highlights the potential insights they can offer for integration in formal education. It further highlights certain best practices in terms of local language acquisition and accommodation of/use of non-local languages, use of home language and mediation in classrooms, how ‘home language’ and cultural differences are addressed in the classroom and how language is valued by school actors. While gendered information was sought out, in most cases there is a lack of data on gender and no programmes were highlighted that targeted a specific gender. Based on input from the partners, the report describes: the employed methodology, the definition of ‘migrant background’ used in the project, the migrant/non-migrant achievement gap, responsible parties for education governance in each country, delays in migrant children starting school and not enrolling in pre-primary education, programmes that were highlighted as best practices in support of migrant children in each partner country, and the support of home and host country languages.

¹ Programming run by the school, but that goes beyond what is strictly required of the school in terms of teaching the curriculum.

² Programming for students that may or may not support the school curriculum and is run by other entities (such as NGOs, charities, etc).

2. Methodology

This report draws on grey and scientific literature from the relevant European and local levels, and specific country data and information provided by all project partners. This information was gathered through a template, created by the main author, containing questions to guide the procurement of information. These templates were completed by partners and then reviewed to find key information that was then grouped by theme. What is contained in the report is based on both the main author's initial proposal for the report, but also what important material and ideas emerged during the research process. After the completion of the first draft, partners were invited to give their feedback which was subsequently reviewed and incorporated by the main author.

2.1 Migrant Background – employed definition

In order to complete the research in a way that would allow for coherent discussion across different countries and different educational contexts, it was necessary to agree on a common operational definition of 'migrant background'. This was not unproblematic however, as each country and region faces their own unique challenges and opportunities based on the makeup of the migrant population and the experience and available resources in the host community. There are numerous ways to define 'migrant' and 'migrant background' and each comes with its own implications, connotations, and pitfalls. Different definitions are used amongst different groups and for different aims. Political definitions may differ from academic definitions which may differ from those used in the media, etc (Anderson and Blinder 2015). These definitions may have little in common with how people in these groups actually define themselves.

Amongst the partners, the discussion revolved around two common definitions of migrant. One definition includes those who were born outside of the country of residence and who also have at least one parent also born outside of the country of residence. The other considered definition, and that adhered to by the European Commission, is "A person who has: (a) migrated into their present country of residence; and/or (b) previously had a different nationality from their present country of residence; and/or (c) at least one of their parents previously entered their present country of residence as a migrant" (European Commission 2019). This second definition, the key word being 'or', includes more people within the definition of 'migrant background,' while the former definition is narrower. The partners decided to use the second definition and this has several consequences. One of these is that in countries with a great deal of return migration or the conferring of nationality by parentage, like Poland and Italy, people with nationality in the country of residence will be counted as having a migrant background. This will be further discussed in the WP4 report on the results of the quantitative portion of the study, but is an important distinction to bear in mind. It is also important to be



cognisant of the fact that ‘migrant’ is a broad and heterogenous category, encompassing people from diverse educational and socio-economic backgrounds – which can have an impact on children’s resources and school experiences.

3. Context of migrant children's integration in schools

3.1 Achievement Gap: Migrant and Non-migrant Students

While it's stated that at the European level, migrant background children underperform when compared to their non-migrant peers, there is a great deal of nuance that needs to be recognised in order to best support migrant background children in their education. The achievement gap looks different in the partner countries, but also within the countries as there is great deal of regional and local differences – even at the level of individual schools, and within migrant populations themselves – as there are many different types of migrants with diverse backgrounds, experiences and resources. Some regions, and specific schools, have experience working with migrant populations and are therefore better prepared to support their needs and know what kind of resources and interventions they require. Some regions and schools, however, are encountering migrant populations for the first time and are in many ways starting from zero in trying to accommodate them.

All partners noted that there is an achievement gap between migrant children born abroad and children born in the host country, but the data available to support this varies by country. The achievement gap, with migrant children's educational outcomes falling below those of non-migrant children, is dependent on many factors and some of these are common across partner countries. Some of these factors include: teachers having lower expectations of migrant children; migrant children being subjected to negative stereotypes; migrant children having significant gaps in their education; migrant parents not being well acquainted with school systems and the available resources; migrant children being less likely to be enrolled in pre-school and kindergarten; and parents having an insecure migratory status in the country of residence.

In countries with longer histories of migration, the achievement gap is well documented. In Germany, Belgium, and Sweden for example, it is known that children with a migrant background are less-likely to attend pre-primary education, an important factor in their educational success. This can have long lasting effects on children's educational attainment (Spiess et al. 2003). The gap between migrant and non-migrant young people continues to the university level, where the difference in entrance qualifications between these young people in Germany has widened (Deutsches Jugendinstitut 2012) and in Sweden, migrant children born abroad are under-represented in higher education. In general, the age of arrival has a significant impact on children's school performance – typically the younger the better because language acquisition tends to be easier for younger children (Cahan et al 2001). In Sweden specifically, it is evident that the achievement gap for migrant students is larger for those who arrive in the country after age 7 (Swedish national agency for education 2012; Nilsson & Bunar 2016).

These outcomes vary, however, depending on various factors, such as the socioeconomic standing and the educational background of parents. People with a migration background are not educationally disadvantaged by default, and there are differences between migrant groups. Research in Germany, for example, shows that

differences in school performance does not correlate with a migrant background in general, but according to a long list of criteria: country of origin, migration generation, federal state of residence, social status, etc. (Deutsches Jugendinstitut 2012).

Early school performance is even more crucial in educational systems with tracking, such as in Germany, Belgium, and Italy. Data in Italy on the ISCED2 degree evaluation in 2016-2017 showed that 67,3% of migrant children obtained an average school mark between 6 and 7, while the majority of Italian students (55,3%) received 8 or more out of 10. This difference strongly influences the choice of the ISCED3 level of education. The achievement gap in Belgium is one of the largest in Europe in terms of the difference between students with a migrant background and those with a non-migrant background achieving baseline levels of proficiency in academic subjects. Between students born in other countries - with parents who were also born in other countries - and non-migrant students, the gap in obtaining academic proficiency is 31 percentage points (with foreign born students performing below non-migrant). This is larger than the EU average which is a difference of 22 percentage points between foreign-born and non-migrant students (with foreign born students performing below non-migrant). This disparity is seen in international testing outcomes, but also when looking at the number of students in higher education, where migrants are underrepresented (Van Maele and Poeze 2018: 12). Additionally, the growth of the school-going population is anticipated to be one of the largest in Europe with teacher shortages in big cities - where migrant-background children are concentrated. It largely the freedom of school choice³ that allows for high concentrations of migrant children in certain schools. Families of non-migrant children tend to move their children out of schools when migrant children are enrolled, but migrant families also often live near each other and have their children attend the nearest school. This separation is then further complicated by the uneven distribution of experienced teachers (OECD 2017:6). While migrant children are concentrated in certain schools, experienced teachers are often concentrated in schools with very few migrant pupils. Migrant children often face a challenge in starting school at different times and with different educational experiences than their non-migrant peers, and if they cannot quickly overcome these challenges, and continue to perform below the level expected for their age, they are more likely to be placed in educational tracks that are considered less academically rigorous. By default, it may then be more difficult for them to change tracks later in their academic career and to go on to higher education.

In Poland, there is less available data on this topic. While the overall number of migrants and the number of migrant children in school is relatively small, the increase in recent years has been significant. Despite having one of the lowest levels of early school leaving in the EU (Federowicz and Sitek PISA 2015), migrant children in Poland are still at a high risk of dropping out (according to Eurostat data and the accounts of NGO workers). The key challenges are the lack of systematic monitoring of school-aged children, the lack of appropriately qualified teaching staff and insufficient involvement and co-operation of local authorities for the purpose of integrating migrant children (Szelewa 2010, Muchacka 2013). As opposed to Belgium, migrant children in Poland are dispersed

³ In Belgium, families can send their children to any school they choose regardless of geographic location.

throughout schools and the number of pupils with a migrant background in each class is low. This situation offers both opportunities and challenges for migrant children. It often means that less money and fewer resources are invested into supporting migrant children. There are a limited number of staff who are trained and experienced in working with migrant children because there is very little demand in each school – an issue that could perhaps be combatted if there were more concentrations of migrant children in individual schools. At the same time, while the concentration of migrant children in schools often means more resources and targeted support are available for them, the dispersal of migrant children means they have more opportunities to socialise with the non-migrant population. A final issue in Poland is that many migrant families are planning to continue their migration journey, often aiming for Germany. When a family is not planning to settle in Poland long-term, it is possible that the current education of children in the country of temporary residence is less of a priority than planning for emigration.

Compared to other European and OECD countries, the learning outcomes of migrant background children in Finland are far behind those of their non-migrant peers (KARVI, 2019; OECD 2017b.) Funding and research on how to improve the educational outcomes of migrant background children have been added abundantly since 2015, but there is still a lack of coherent practices. Pedagogical practices do not yet meet the needs of the new and rapidly changing population of students (OPH 2018:77). Evaluations have revealed that there are also significant disparities between schools and great variation among the qualifications of teachers working with migrant background students. There are also major regional differences in terms of outcomes and competences because some regions are accustomed to working with new migrant populations while others are encountering them for the first time (OPH 2018) – which is also the case in some areas of Germany, for example.

What becomes clear from looking at each of the partner countries' situations, is that dispersal versus concentrations of migrant children in schools is not an obvious choice in terms of the wellbeing/education outcomes of migrant children. When children are dispersed they often have better chances to build social capital with the non-migrant population, and schools are less likely to be overtaxed in terms of providing the specific resources that are needed for this population. When children are concentrated in schools, however, they are able to benefit from support from other migrant background children and their schools/region are more likely to have invested in the necessary resources, in addition to being able to provide support based on past experience.

Finally, the achievement gap is also linked to children's early school education. Early school education is shown to lead to positive outcomes in terms of overall school performance, but not all migrant children are entitled to pre-school and kindergarten (often based on their migratory status), and its availability varies by country (as detailed in the context analysis). When it is available, migrant families may not take advantage of it because the availability of these types of resources is poorly communicated.

It would benefit migrant children's school performance and integration if they had free access to early education, and if this was available regardless of their migratory status and income. The availability of such resources also

needs to be more clearly and thoroughly communicated to migrant families. It is also ideal if migrant children can build social capital/networks with both non-migrant and migrant peers as these relationships offer different types of benefits. Finally, the achievement gap should be more widely researched, and the research and reporting should consider the diversity of migrant background children and include factors such as socioeconomic standing, parents' level of education, educational background and language ability of migrant children, etc. This would give a more accurate overview of their school performance and what targeted interventions could help to improve it.

3.2 Incorporation into school and systems of school governance

Delays in starting school (which can include not attending kindergarten and pre-school, and long breaks in education due to migration) can have serious impacts on children's school performance and their overall wellbeing. For migrant children, these delays happen for many different reasons in different countries, and these differences have much to do with how the education system is set up and where responsibility for education lies. Delays are common for migrant children, but especially for asylum-seeking, refugee and undocumented migrants. According to the EU directive, access to school must be granted no later than three months after an asylum application has been filed (EU Directive 2013/33/EU). The EU highlights that stability and continuity in education is essential for children, and the time between their arrival in the host country and when they begin school is often too long. "Longer breaks may hit the most disadvantaged migrant students hardest" (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019:76). Despite the knowledge that gaps in starting school can have powerful negative impacts, in practice, however, policies to combat this problem are not strictly adhered to, and there are different reasons for this in each country.

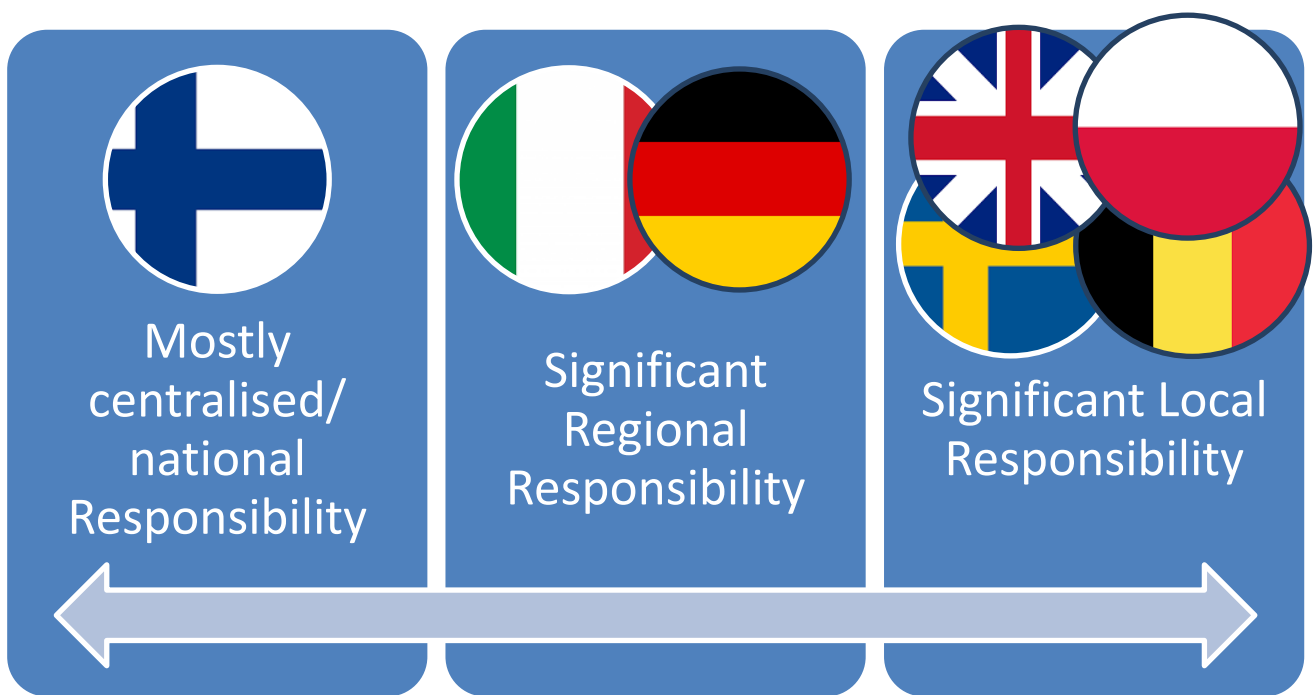


Figure 1 – The continuum showing which level holds the most responsibility for education governance.

In the United Kingdom and Italy, school delay is a significant problem because children have trouble gaining admission to schools due to the many bureaucratic hurdles (McIntyre and Hall, 2018: 6; The Children’s Society, 2019, UNICEF 2018). In Italy there is a great deal of regional variation in educational practices, but the state has exclusive legislative authority on the general organisation of the education system (e.g. minimum standards of education, school staff, quality assurance, general guidelines for teaching programmes, etc.) (EURYDICE 2020). The Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) is responsible for the general administration of education at national level. Its decentralised offices (Regional School Offices - USRs) guarantee the application of general provisions and adherence to the minimum performance requirements and standards. Regions have joint responsibility with the state in some sectors of the education system such as school calendars, distribution of schools in their territory, funds directed towards supporting students in higher education, etc.). Regions have exclusive legislative competence for the organisation of the regional vocational education and training system. In some cases (e.g. in Emilia-Romagna region), local administrations run or organise kindergartens and infant schools (ISCED0). Additionally, schools have some degree of autonomy: they define the specific curricula, organise teaching (school time and groups of pupils) (Eurydice 2020). While State schools preserve a more traditional stance towards education, municipal schools sometimes adopt more progressive approaches.

In the UK, there are several different bodies responsible for various facets of education. The UK Department for Education (DfE) governs the education system for the whole country but Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have a devoted governmental department that is responsible for education in their nations. State schools are required to teach the National Curriculum and some state schools became academies, a trend that has seen an increase since the election of the right-wing government in 2010 (Shah 2018). Academies are state funded schools that are under direct contract from England’s National Secretary of State for Education. They are not controlled by local education authorities but instead are governed by a multi-academy trust (MATs) and a central trustee board. Academies have more autonomy than other schools. For example, they can select up to 10% of their students according to aptitude, they have no obligations in terms of the qualifications of the teachers they employ and they can set their own curricula. Then there are free schools which are a more recent development and are similar to state-funded academies. A common problem is long waiting lists to enter schools⁴, even for non-migrant children, but there are also documented instances of discriminatory or inconsistent admissions policies,⁵ which strongly impacts this population, as well as problems finding a place in school when one arrives during the academic year (Dorling, MacLachlan & Trevena 2017; UNICEF 2018).

⁴ According to UNICEF (2018) the 20-day target has not been met in a single region of the UK.

⁵ Schools are reluctant to admit migrant students (a) to avoid a negative impact on their results profiles (in upper-secondary level) (b) due to issues over funding arrangements or pressure on school places (c) due to difficulty providing evidence of address (Dorling, MacLachlan & Trevena, 2017; UNICEF, 2018).

Like the UK, Sweden also falls into the category of diffuse responsibility for education and this can make it difficult to say exactly how much delay occurs and why. There is a national curriculum issued by The National Agency for Education (Skolverket), the central administrative authority for the public-school system, but the responsibility to organise education lies with the municipalities or charter schools (Skolverket n.d.). The education of migrant children is thus a local responsibility, resting with the municipality, but the most common practice for new migrant students is to place them in transitional classes (Nilsson & Bunar 2016). In relation to the right to attend school, asylum-seeking children in Sweden have the right to attend school, including pre-school and upper secondary school. This means that the municipality in which the children live has the responsibility to provide education for them on the same terms as for other children in the country. Even if asylum-seekers are 18 when they arrive in Sweden, they have the right to complete their secondary education. When it comes to undocumented children, they have the same right to education on the elementary and upper secondary level as children with residence permits. However, they do not have the right to pre-school, out-of-school provision or adult education. Further, it is suggested that the children should start school no longer than a month after the arrival in Sweden or as soon as it is appropriate with respect to the child's personal situation – but it is not clear if this rule is adhered to.

Within Belgium's complex system of governance, school governance is fragmented. Belgium essentially has a three-tiered system of governance including the federal government, three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and the Brussels Capital Region) and three language-based communities (the Flemish community which is Dutch-speaking, the French community, and German-speaking community). The regions and communities overlap in sometimes complex ways, and it is the communities which hold the greatest responsibility for education. Each has its own system of education that is very little controlled by the Federal government. The Federal government sets the age range of compulsory school attendance, sets minimum requirements for qualifications, and legislates in the case of financial reforms/initiatives (OECD 2017:21). The information in this report will namely focus on the French and Flemish community education systems because no project research was conducted in the German-speaking community. All institutions in all the Communities have a great deal of autonomy, and as long as they adhere to the core learning outcomes, which are set down in legislation, schools can set their own curricula. In terms of school delays, while overall pre-school attendance is considered high in Belgium, there are lower attendance rates among ethnic minority children and this continues into higher levels of education (Van Maele and Poeze 2018:12). In the French Community there is a problem of grade repetition, where students do not pass a grade level and must repeat the level. This often means students are more likely to leave school early⁶.

In Germany, the entire school system is under the supervision of the state and different policies and practices exist in different federal states (Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs: Hg. 2017a). As explained in the context analysis that was produced in advance of the current report,

⁶ Importantly, OECD research shows the practice of having children repeat a grade level does not improve overall outcomes (OECD 2017:9).

migrant children in different federal states experience delays of varying lengths. For refugees, for example, it may be the case that schooling only begins when they leave the initial reception centre and are assigned to a municipality. This can take longer than three months. Most states only provide placement in schools if the families have their "habitual residence" and it's likely that the children can attend school for at least one school year. While there is mandatory school attendance, it is also required that children attend schools which are not segregated. This is problematic, for example, when children attend school in reception centres as these are considered segregated. Similarly, the second language learning classes that may be required before entering mainstream classes also pose problems in terms of integration because children are again separated from mainstream classrooms. In the area of early childhood education, voluntary offers are used to promote the language skills of children and to prepare them for school. Nevertheless, there are many children in primary schools who have insufficient knowledge of German and who need language support. Children with a migrant background are also less likely to attend kindergarten.

The education system in Poland is centrally managed by two institutions, the Ministry of National Education (general and vocational education) and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (higher education). They determine the national educational policy, including goals and curricula and the structure of the school system. They also oversee centralized exams (after the primary school and secondary school certificate). The administration of education and the running of schools, however, is decentralized and is the responsibility of local governments. There are also many non-public schools⁷, which are attractive to families because they promise better infrastructure, more extra-curricular activities, or they make strong claims about teaching methods and educational outcomes, such as Montessori and Waldorf-schools (Długosz 2013).

The responsibility for education in Finland lies primarily at the national level. The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the Basic Education Act. The National Board of Education is responsible for the national core curriculum that provides a common direction and basis for school education, such as objectives, hour distribution and required subjects. The system, however, is characterised by a high degree of autonomy. Municipalities are the main provider of basic education since they have a statutory obligation to organise schooling for all children residing in the area (Finnish Education in a Nutshell 2017). In addition, some private organisations provide some basic education. The national framework allows regional and local variation; hence the core curriculum implementation can have different emphases and there can be regional variation. Education providers and municipalities are expected to draw up the local curricula and annual implementation plans based on the national core curriculum (Soini, Kinossalo, Pietarinen & Pyhältö, 2017), and decide how much autonomy to grant to schools

⁷ On all levels of the school system including higher education. This phenomenon was caused by people's expectation the better education will strengthen children's chances on the labour market. Since the 90s Poland faces the educational boom, the number of the children choosing the general secondary schools and the universities and higher school increased significantly (Długosz 2013).

and teachers have autonomy over pedagogical practices. "They can decide themselves the methods of teaching as well as textbooks and materials" (Finnish Education in a Nutshell 2017).

In addition to delays in starting school, a further delay may impact migrant children. This is an educational delay involving the *level* at which migrant children start school. There are different approaches to the placement of migrant children including: placing them with other children of the same age, placing them in a lower grade level in order to allow them time to 'catch up'⁸, the use of bridging or transitional programmes to allow them to learn the host country language in a dedicated setting or some mix of these practices. In other cases, however, there is little in the way of common practices and these issues are handled on a case by case basis at the level of the school.

Finland decides on a case-by case basis which level/grade to place migrant pupils in. This decision is based on a pupil's age, knowledge and skills. In general, this means that migrant children are placed a grade lower than what their actual age would dictate. If a pupil is placed in a preparatory class, integration into mainstream classes begins immediately in subjects where knowledge of the local language is less necessary, for example mathematics. Integration into mainstream classes occurs gradually, as decided by the agreement of the preparatory teacher and the recipient teacher (FNAE). In terms of teaching migrants, expertise has wide regional or even school-wide variations, and therefore outcomes of teaching efforts to counteract delays are also varied. The availability of teachers who have education or experience in teaching multicultural groups varies regionally. The main reason for this is that the number of migrants has increased rapidly and there is not enough staff who have sufficient knowledge of the field. There are also municipalities that are encountering migrants in the school system for the first time. Continuing education for teachers on these topics have been established since the increase of migrant flows (University of Turku n.d.).

In Italy and the UK, migrant children are generally placed in the grade corresponding to their age, unless there are reasons to do otherwise. In Italy, this is decided on a case by case basis by taking into consideration various competences and the knowledge of Italian. If it is decided that the child should be placed in a lower grade level, they are only allowed to be placed one grade level lower than their age would dictate (Guidelines to reception and integration of migrant students, 2014). Not unlike Italy, Poland and Sweden are also examples of the case by case practice⁹. Children should be admitted to school based on documents detailing their educational background, and then the decision is left up to the headmaster of the school with input from the parents. When there is not documentation, children must have an interview to assess their background and possible placement. It is difficult to generalise these decisions because sometimes headmasters decide to place a child according to their age and other times they place them based on their educational experience (*Regulation of the Minister of National Education*

⁸ In this report this term is used to mean placing children in mainstream classes at the level that their age would dictate and then expecting them to catch up to their classmates.

⁹ This term is used in this report to mean that children are based in a grade level on a case by case basis in which their specific situation and skills are considered in the placement proceedings.

of 30 July 2015). According to the Ministry of Education's data (2017-2019) bridging programs have been established only in 13 primary schools, mainly in the biggest cities (*Regulation of the Minister Of National Education of 23 August 2017*).

In Sweden it is mandatory for schools to map newly arrived students' knowledge in language, literacy, and numeracy. The outcomes of this assessment are considered along with a student's age and personal circumstances and then a final decision is made by the school headmaster about which school year to place the student in, how the teaching should be planned, and how the teaching time for the subjects will be distributed. During the first year, the headmaster can also decide on a redistribution of teaching time to allow for the study of Swedish as a second language. Moreover, the headmaster has to appoint a mapping team that includes both mother tongue teachers and subject teachers (Swedish national agency for education 2016).

Germany and Belgium offer specific bridging programs. In Germany, these vary widely by federal state. There are two main models that are used, the integrative and the parallel model. In the integrative model, migrant children attend mainstream classes while also receiving additional German language support. In the parallel model, there are separate classes for learning the German language. The common practice is that migrant children should not remain in these classes for more than one or two years. There are also partially integrative classes which also include time for students to participate in some subjects in the regular class, depending on their language skills (as is the case in Finland). In Belgium, the French community offers DASPA classes and the Flemish community offers OKAN classes. These are classes for language education and school preparation for newly arrived migrant children who do not speak one of the national languages and who might have spent time out of school. These classes can last for an academic year or longer, and while children who attend them often feel positively about the experience they still stress that they would like to have more interaction with local children (UNICEF Belgium, 2018: 83). These classes may have unintended consequences and sometimes make children feel scrutinized and segregated, especially due to their long duration.

As we can see from the practices detailed above, there is little in the way of systematic assessment of migrant children's abilities. Those making decisions about migrant children's grade-level placement may not be experts on assessing such matters, and availability of teachers qualified in language teaching and who have intercultural competences is highly variable (as is clear in the data gathered in work package 4). Recent research tells us that preparatory classes are something of a double-edged sword. While separate classes for migrant children "may provide more time and space for the teaching and learning of the language of instruction than full integration into mainstream education right from the start (Koehler, 2017)" (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019), these may also hamper integration if children spend too long separated from other children. "Moreover, migrant students' educational progress may be delayed if too strong a focus is placed on the acquisition of the language of instruction, to a degree that students' learning in other curriculum subjects is halted" (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). For these reasons, it's a positive sign that where these types of preparatory classes are offered, they are time limited in order to move children back into mainstream classes as quickly as possible. Additionally, children in

these programmes should still spend time with children in mainstream classes as this positively contributes to their integration and socialisation.

4. Approaches to migrant children's integration in schools

An important aim of this report was to highlight best practices in terms of school programming and overall policies supporting the integration of migrant children in schools. What became clear was that in many partner countries there is so much local and school-level variation that it is difficult to choose programming to highlight. It is also difficult to find data on the efficacy and outcomes of these programmes. The researchers from each partner country, therefore, chose certain programmes to detail in this report based on the programmes' aims and the fact that certain programmes may point to an institutional understanding of the obstacles migrant children face. After reviewing partners' feedback, the types of programming fell into several categories. First, there were practices that took place within schools and practices that originated or reached beyond schools themselves, but still aimed to influence migrant children's school performance.

4.1 Practices and Supports in Schools

4.1.1 Combatting Discrimination and Bullying

Migrant children are subjected to bullying and discrimination, but due to underreporting, it's often impossible to say to what extent. While it's clear in previous sections that institutional level discrimination has a negative impact on migrant children's opportunities, such as remaining on school waiting lists or not receiving the proper educational support, the impact on migrant children at the personal/individual level must also be addressed. "The issue of discrimination at school remains very complex to grasp and has a particular resonance insofar as education has repercussions throughout people's lives" (Thibert 2014). Various programmes exist to combat bullying and discrimination, as well as national and local level policy and legislation (either directed specifically at bullying in schools, or else targeting general harassment and discrimination and which can also be applied to schools). Despite growing awareness and understanding of the immediate and long-term impacts, the identification and reporting of bullying and discrimination remain a problem. It's also the case that children of migrant-backgrounds can be bullied for their migrant or ethnic background in addition to other kinds of bullying and discrimination, making them doubly vulnerable (D'Hondt et al. 2015). Discrimination and bullying/harassment are not always the same phenomenon, but they do often overlap and therefore are considered together in this section.

For the purposes of this report, we consider that discrimination can be direct, indirect or systemic. Direct discrimination is easier to measure and can be supported by evidence. "Direct discrimination occurs when, for reasons of race or ethnic origin, one person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation " (Belgian [Directive 2000/43 / EC](#)). Indirect discrimination is more prevalent and much harder to prove and measure. "Indirect discrimination occurs when a seemingly neutral provision, criterion or practice is likely to result in a particular disadvantage for persons of a given race or ethnic origin compared with

other persons " (Belgian [Directive 2000/43 / EC](#)). A third type of discrimination is systemic. It is a "process which involves a system of actors in which no one expresses discriminatory intent directly, but whose result will be to produce a situation of discrimination" (Rebeyrol 2010). Different types of discrimination present themselves in different ways and are perpetrated by different actors. This is why this report considers the different actors and levels of governance in the education system. For example, certain types of discrimination are built in the school systems (such as with the freedom of school choice principle in Belgium), other types come from mistreatment, often inadvertent, enacted by teachers, while others are perpetrated by peers. Further adding to the difficulty of measuring discrimination, is that its effects may not be noticed until long after the discriminatory act has been experienced (Perrot 2006), and this may be why we do not see such a strong correlation between discrimination towards migrant background children and the 'lower' educational outcomes that are often recorded in Europe (OECD 2012). Finally, people who already see themselves as different from those around them are less likely to report feeling discriminated against. Therefore, those who identify themselves as immigrants report facing discrimination less often than the children of immigrants (Thibert 2014). These are all factors to keep in mind while trying to understand the situation migrant children face in each of the partner countries.

All state schools in the UK are required by law to have a behaviour policy that includes how to react to and prevent bullying. It is estimated that between April 2017 and March 2018, 17% of children, ages 10 to 15, were bullied in the previous 12 months (Department of Education 2018). Children of white ethnic origin were more likely to report being bullied and it is not clear if this reflects actual levels of bullying, or if this group felt more comfortable reporting such behaviour. Children were then asked if they felt their school dealt well with bullying. Children who said they had been bullied were considerably less likely to report that their school dealt with bullying very well or quite well (Department of Education 2018). In the recent Good Childhood report by the charity 'the Children Society' (2019), findings showed that children's happiness with school was low and had decreased in recent years. Children's unhappiness at school was closely linked to bullying and feeling safe. The legal requirement to have a bullying policy is positive, as well as the practice of measuring levels of bullying and children's feelings. Insight into the result of these bullying policies is lacking however.

In Germany, the federal program against bullying in schools was launched in 2018. More than 200 social workers were trained as "respect coaches" to help schools reduce religious bullying and to promote tolerance and an understanding of democracy (BMFSFJ 2020). Rather than leaving it up to schools to create a policy or programme on their own, like in the UK, this federal level guidance may offer to uniformity and clearer minimum standards, as well as the possibility for sharing good practices across schools and regions. Having qualified, specially trained professionals to share their knowledge and experience is appreciated by country experts and targeting religious bullying shows an awareness and targeted reaction to a known problem. Additionally, the programme "Fairplayer" is designed to support prosocial behaviour and to prevent bullying in grades 5 to 9. The programme was awarded the 2011 European Crime Prevention Award (FairPlayer 2019). The programme provides a manual for teachers to

follow in order to teach pro-social behaviours. They work together with specially trained psychologists and focus on discussions about moral dilemmas.

In Sweden, the Education Act states that it is the headmaster's responsibility to ensure that measures are taken to prevent abusive treatment of children and pupils, including bullying and discrimination. Reported rates of bullying in Sweden were very similar to the UK. An evaluation by the Swedish national agency for education (2011) show that within a period of a few months between 16 and 19 per cent of pupils had been subjected to degrading treatment. The pupils reported that the bullying was primarily due to their appearance, envy, or because others were stronger. Reasons that can be linked to the different forms of discrimination were less common, but they included gender (particularly among girls), disability, and ethnicity. Again, the effort to gather data on bullying, including the reasons that bullying has occurred, is positive, but little was highlighted in the way of combatting this behaviour because the response is largely left up to individual schools.

A 2014 study by Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) found that children in Wallonia were bullied/harassed at about the same rate as the rest of Europe. From the sample of students from 2nd primary to 3rd secondary, 16% of respondents reported that they were habitually subjected to harassment and 14% reported that they were regularly the agents of such harassment (CODE 2014). A study in bullying and victimisation in Flanders highlights the fact that bullying and discrimination can come from teachers as well as other students (D'Hondt et al. 2015). This treatment can also be inadvertent, which points to the need for targeted teacher training. Research in Belgium also found that adolescents with a migrant-background in schools with a higher percentage of migrant-background students reported less victimization (Agirdag et al. 2011). "Higher immigrant school composition may lead immigrant adolescents to be less vulnerable to victimization (Agirdag et al. 2011) due to a shifting and diversification of the student majority and an increase in immigrant students' ability to protect one another or prevent bullying of compatriots from a similar background" (Walsh et al. 2015:3). While there is little recent data on bullying directed towards migrant children in Belgian schools, it's important to note that Belgium (as well as the UK, Poland, Germany, and Finland) is above the OECD average in terms of students' self-reports and index of exposure to bullying (OECD 2017c)¹⁰.

As stated above, freedom of school choice in Belgium can sometimes lead to segregation and inequality (Thibert 2014). In the Flemish Community, there have been efforts to combat this trend. An effort of local education organisations has resulted in a project called School in zicht19 which encourages non-migrant families to place their children in schools with high numbers of migrant-background children (MIPEX, 2015; OECD 2018). In the French Community Article 70 of the 2016 Decree, which focuses on education necessities (Décret portant diverses dispositions en matière d'enseignement), requires that by 2018 all schools have plans in place to tackle key educational issues, one of these being "preventing discrimination, violence and harassment" (OECD 2017).

¹⁰ Italy was not included and Sweden was below average.

Zacheus et al. (2019) conducted a study on migrants in Finnish schools in the Southern and urban parts of Finland. They found that approximately 25 % of respondents thought that they had been bullied or discriminated against at school, a higher percentage than in the UK and Sweden. In addition, Myllyniemi (2017) states that young people with a migrant background faced more discrimination when compared with individuals with a Finnish background. In the same study it was found that half of the students agreed that discrimination was widespread in Finland, and that there seemed to be a clear link between discrimination and children's negative feelings towards school. The first-generation immigrants also felt that they were different from others. The research states that prolonged feelings of otherness "tend to result in negative attitudes towards a future in Finland and weaken the likelihood of integration" (Zacheus et al. 2019). In addition, the second-generation respondents rarely considered themselves Finnish. Girls' and boys' relations about multicultural diversity was different with girls being more positive than boys.

The 2015 ISTAT report in Italy shows that over 50% of interviewed children aged 11-17 have been the victim of some kind of offensive, non-respectful, or violent episode in the preceding 12 months. These percentages were higher for females: over 55% of females and 49,9% of males aged 11-17 experienced bullying once in a year, while 20,9% of females and 18,8% of males experienced bullying on a monthly basis. The percentage of children who experienced bullying once or more per month decreases with age¹¹. At all school levels, among migrant-background children, males were more frequently exposed to bullying than females (Survey on bullying and cyberbullying, Audition of the president of National institute of statistics, ISTAT, 2019, gov.it. (n.d.). Among children living in affluent areas there was a lower percentage who suffered from bullying (50,3% in the 12 months preceding the interview) versus those who lived in poorer areas where the rate reached 55,4% (ISTAT 2015). The 2019 ISTAT survey (ISCED2 and 3 schools) with migrant children shows that they suffer from bullying more frequently than Italian children. Migrant children reporting having been bullied at least once in the preceding month was 17% higher than that of the Italian control group.

In Poland, there was little available data on these issues, so what's provided here is information gathered informally from NGO workers. According to NGO's¹² working with migrant youth in Poland, these young people often experience low self-esteem and frustration. A number of different reports¹³ show that children with migration experiences suffer from a great deal of discrimination, bullying, and violence. Young Poles express a great deal of prejudice and engage in hate speech against refugees - especially through social media, but also in schools (Hall and Mikulska-Jolles 2016; Winiewski et al. 2016).¹⁴ Name-calling, ridiculing, bullying, and even events

¹¹ There was also regional variation

¹² In several places in this report, the Polish team provides information gathered informally from NGO workers, who at that time requested that their names or affiliations not be shared. Those persons could be further interviewed in the qualitative part of the project.

¹³ The research the report is based on was not realized in schools but shows attitudes of young Poles in general. The report presents research results for the years 2014-2016.

of physical violence often do not meet with an appropriate response from teachers¹⁵. A report prepared by the Ombudsman's office and ODIHR/OBWE investigating the situation of Ukrainians, Muslims and Sub-Saharan migrants living in Poland shows that the number of migrants affected by hate crimes is rising and this affects their everyday behaviours and feeling of safety. Migrants report avoiding the use of their native languages in public, avoiding clothing associated with Islam, and even trying to mask their skin colour¹⁶. More research in this area would likely lead to more good practices in terms of combatting such behaviour, but for now there is little to highlight in terms of concrete actions against bullying and discrimination.

While it is clear that bullying is a problem for children, and migrant children in particular, in all the partner countries, the responses to this problem vary. In some cases, there are laws and national level policies, while in other cases the approach is less centralised. Bullying makes children feel othered and, in some cases, unsafe. A feeling of safety can be an important aspect of belonging (May 2013) and therefore responses to bullying can impact integration. Once again, a great deal of responsibility rests with teachers who are the school personnel most likely to witness bullying and who are best positioned to respond and create a culture of 'non-acceptance' of bullying behaviour. This is, however, a sensitive and complicated issue and requires particular training and this should be supported and offered in some way by the various actors involved in the educational system: the local school, the school network, the local govt. etc.). More detailed and rigorous data gathering and research in this area is also needed to support targeted measures to country discriminatory behaviour and bullying.

4.1.2 Teacher Training and Support

All the partners cited teacher training as an area for improvement and something that had the potential to greatly enhance integration outcomes for migrant students. Teachers are often in closer and more consistent contact with migrant children than any other service providers (such as social workers, healthcare workers, interpreters, etc.) and they have to work with diverse groups of students – in terms of cultural and educational background. A great deal is expected of teachers with regard to supporting the integration of migrant children and working with migrant families. The support and training for teachers, however, is often limited. In general, teacher training initiatives are typically a local or regional responsibility (and in Germany it is mostly left up to the individual states). In Finland, however, continuing education for teachers in cultural and language responsiveness is funded at the national level¹⁷ and teachers have a great deal of autonomy in their work, but there is less flexibility in training initiatives.

¹⁵http://geremek.pl/assets/files/Powroty/nielatwe_powroty_raport_koncowy.pdf (access 10.07.2019).
https://tea.org.pl/userfiles/raporty/tea_raport_www_final.pdf (access 10.07.2019).

¹⁶<https://www.rpo.gov.pl/pl/content/jedynie-5-przestepstw-motywowanych-nienawiscia-jest-zglaszanych-na-policje-badania-rpo-i-odihrobwe> (access 10.07.2019).

¹⁷ <http://dived.fi/>

In the UK, there are several initiatives of note in terms of training teachers to support and work with migrant background children. There is a push to hire teachers with a migrant background in order to improve the cultural competence of the teaching force (Manzoni and Rolfe 2019) and some researchers have suggested that this could positively impact students' sense of belonging (Katsarova, 2016). In England and Wales the Teacher and Training Agency (TTA) introduced measures to make "the teaching profession more accessible, attracting more ethnic minorities to the profession" (Manzoni and Rolfe 2019:15). The OCED, however, stresses that this initiative cannot stand on its own. To effectively teach and support the integration of migrant children, *all* teachers should be trained and properly supervised and supported to work with this population (OECD report 2015) . The National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC) found that EAL¹⁸ training is still not widely and dependably accessible across the nation (European Commission, 2019).The Schools White Paper (DFE 2011, online) included proposals to support EAL pupils. The aim would be to ensure that the skills needed to better teach this population would become part of the core teaching skills that teachers must acquire (Manzoni and Rolfe 2019:15), which would be a good practice and help increase the number and distribution of properly trained teachers.

In Poland, there are several NGOs and local authorities that offer programmes aimed at educating teachers in methods for working with migrant children. The majority of these programmes are sporadic and their existence relies mostly on external funds (e.g. EU funds, Norway grants, Batory Foundation, OSF, etc.) or current political priorities. Among the biggest NGOs focusing on these topics is the Centre for Citizenship Education which focuses on the education of the Polish teachers through projects like "Let's talk about the refugees. Club of the Good Conversation". Jagiellonian University, Akademia Ignatianum, The Maria Grzegorzewska University and Białystok University offer postgraduate studies that train teachers to work with refugee pupils. Several certificates in working with migrant pupils are provided by NGOs - such as the Foundation for Social Diversity (FRS), Ocalenie Foundation, The Rej Foundation, CEO or Antidiscrimination Education Association (TEA) - and some teacher education centres (e.g. WCIES in Warsaw). Local teacher training centres also organise trainings on a regular basis and these touch on multicultural challenges. One downfall is that these programmes rarely offer support/training for communicating with and including migrant families in the education of their children, something that could benefit all teachers in all the country contexts.

Two teacher training programmes in Belgium tackle key problems in the school system. Recent legislation in the French community of Belgium requires teachers to undergo "continuous professional development" and has increased the amount of yearly compulsory training as well as improved opportunities for additional voluntary training which may cover topics that relate to teaching migrant-background children (OECD 2017a:10). Since the year 2000, intercultural education has been included as a key part of teacher training and it includes a focus on how to be aware of discrimination in diverse classrooms (MIPEX 2015, OECD 2018). Teacher awareness of

¹⁸ English as an Additional Language

discrimination is an important first step in combatting such situations and bettering the overall condition of migrant background and minority pupils. In the Flemish Community, a main focus is on the even distribution of experienced teachers across Flemish Community schools (OECD 2017). The lack of teachers experienced in working with migrant background students is key area of concern in terms of the integration and academic success of migrant children. While not targeted specifically at migrant children, they are likely to benefit from the wisdom and techniques that these teachers can share with colleagues and students alike.

There are several institutions in Finland that offer continuing or additional education for teachers who teach migrant students or Finnish as a second language. Some of the courses are provided by the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUF) and the Regional State Administrative Agencies (Regional State Administrative Agencies 2020) and some private institutions and open universities offer some courses and lectures on these topics. When it comes to offers from private institutions or consultants, their services are usually purchased by a municipality, or else the participants pay for themselves. Many of these additional courses, however, are held in Helsinki so they aren't necessarily accessible to the majority of teachers. Currently, there are no national standards as to what should be included in these additional training programmes.

In Germany, Sweden, and Italy the local initiatives highlighted for teacher training focus mostly on language teaching. In Germany, the university regulations for the qualifications of prospective teachers varies by state, as does the content of these studies. In general, however, aspects of intercultural education, language acquisition, language promotion and multilingualism are already addressed in teacher training. Increasingly, there are programmes in which teachers are given further training in "German as a second language" ("Deutsch als Zweitsprache"). An important point is that the Federal Ministry of Education and Research's "Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung" ("Quality Offensive for Teacher Education") programme aims to further develop teacher education regarding the heterogeneity of pupils and inclusion in the classroom. This is key training that all teachers can benefit from and that, as a result, can benefit the classroom experience all of pupils, migrant and non-migrant alike.

In Italy, there is an emphasis on trainings targeting how to work in multicultural and multi-lingual settings, but it still appears that there is little sensitivity toward multicultural issues (Bellino et al. n.d.). This is why the languages and cultures project (2010) was so significant. The aim of this project was to elaborate regional level methods and materials which would be useful to teach migrant children the Italian language, while also preserving children's competence in their mother tongues. It focused on multicultural issues and the valuation of a child's background while also helping teachers to impart the necessary Italian language skills. Showing respect and appreciation for migrant children's backgrounds is an important way to help them feel a sense of belonging and to engage them in their studies.

Teacher training offers a unique opportunity that other programming does not. Through teachers, all pupils can be reached. Whereas other programming, in its design and targeting, may inadvertently omit children who could benefit from such programming, teachers can apply what they've learned to any and all children within their purview. Teachers have in-depth first-hand knowledge of the make-up of the school population and the needs of their students. They also have the ability to treat children who are officially, 'non-migrant', as children who have the same needs as migrant children. It is therefore crucial to focus time and attention on the needs of teachers to address gaps in competences that could allow them to better support the integration of children in their classes.

3.1.3 Mentoring

Pairing migrants with non-migrant counterparts in order to promote cultural exchange and to allow both parties to build diverse cultural capital, has proven to support integration and have benefits for young people and for adults in the labour market (Dubois et al. 2002; Månsson and Delander 2017). This type of targeted one-on-one attention is valuable for both parties, and offers the migrant a chance to gain first-hand knowledge of the local context. Mentoring programmes are becoming popular tools to support the integration of migrants, particularly migrant children, both inside and outside of school settings. The positive outcomes of projects like Intercultural Mentoring Tools to Support Integration at School – INTO (2013-2015) bode well for the impact of mentoring approaches in schools. INTO reviewed pilot programmes in several countries that used a peer mentoring approach where migrant background students (aged 13-19) were trained and then paired with younger migrant students in order to support them both socially and in their school work. Participants in the UK for example, cited having made new friends and benefitted from increased levels self-confidence (Messiou and Azaola 2018). A secondary school in Genova, Italy (in collaboration with the Università per Stranieri di Perugia) has implemented a programme, *Ti parlo? Mi parli?* (2010), aimed at promoting the social inclusion of migrant children to prevent early school leaving. The objectives are to promote students' learning competences, social and civic competences, cultural awareness and expression. It aims to orient migrant children in their new surroundings, introduce and promote the value of different cultures and create a space for mediation and exchange between cultures (Provincia di Genova n.d.). Indeed, these types of mentoring programmes often reach beyond the classroom, as is the case in Sweden and Germany where student mentorship programmes provide mediators who promote communication between school personnel, students and families and provide holistic support. The potential benefits of mentorship programmes are only just beginning to come to light and are certainly worth further investment and implementation.

4.1.4 Cultural Programming

Cultural programming is seen as a strength in Germany, Sweden, and Finland, and it is built directly into the curriculum. Indeed, in places like Finland, where teachers have a great deal of autonomy to organise their instructional aims, cultural programming in classrooms is rarely documented because it is seen as a commonplace,

routine activity. In other contexts, however, there is a greater need for programming targeted at building intercultural awareness and the valuing of cultural diversity. In Italy and the UK this issue is seen as weakness in the school setting, but there are efforts to change this. In the UK, a great deal of focus is on combatting school segregation, but cultural awareness and cultural programming are slowly being incorporated into mainstream activities in schools through debates, writing and reading exercises (Eustice 2012). Incorporating the valuing of cultural diversity and intercultural understanding into the mainstream curriculum benefits both migrant and non-migrant students. In an increasingly diverse world, intercultural awareness should become the norm, and schools are an ideal place for this to begin. All school subjects can benefit from the offerings of cultural diversity. Separating cultural programming as a stand-alone subject may make it seem strange and unique, rather than presenting it as the diffuse reality of life that it is. Incorporating it into the school curriculum also promotes the philosophy that integration is a two-way process with adjustment and learning being necessary on both sides.

4.1.6 Achievement gap

As stated previously, migrant background children often do not perform at the same level as their non-migrant peers, and they are also more likely to leave school early and not pursue higher education. There are many factors that influence migrant children's performance and whether they decide to leave school early, but initiatives targeted directly at the achievement gap are also beneficial. Indeed, monitoring is a first step in achieving balance for migrant children and learning how to support them in their education. In 2016, Belgium implemented The Early School Leaving Monitor system to understand the characteristics of those who leave school early and their post-school progress (OECD 2017). This will likely lead to important insights on the strengths and weaknesses of school programming and approaches. In terms of combatting early school leaving in Italy, there are two programmes to highlight. The Casper project (2016/18) is funded by AMIF (asylum, migration and integration fund) and was instituted in the Emilia Romagna Region. It promotes the social inclusion of migrant children, the improvement of Italian language teaching, and knowledge of cultural identities, and promoting the active involvement of families (Regione Emilia-Romagna n.d.). It realises that all of these elements are necessary in children's wellbeing in schools and overall school achievement. Targeting one element alone, while potentially beneficial, is not as effective as taking a holistic approach to children's education. In 1999, the UK government initiated the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant (EMAG). As the name states, this is a programme targeted at helping children with an ethnic minority background, and those with English as an additional language, to improve their educational outcomes. The funding is dispersed to local authorities who are in charge of hiring the teachers who will work with ethnic minority students (Manzoni and Rolfe 2019: 10) and therefore those who have first-hand local knowledge of needs and gaps can put the money to the best use.

4.2 Outside Practice and Supports

4.2.1 After-school and Extra-Curricular Programming

Support for migrant children does not end with the end of the school day. In fact, after-school programming can be a key resource in migrant children’s integration. These programmes often take place on school grounds and may be run by school staff, thus being an extension of the school experience. Others, however, are provided by NGOs and social cooperatives. Programming provided by outside organisations offers opportunities for actors with more expertise in integration to work with migrant children. Alternatively, programming run by schools may allow teachers to further the goals of their curriculum and the attainment of certain school objectives. Again, the efficacy of these programmes are hard to measure, both in terms of reaching the target population and in terms of integration outcomes. They do, however, provide an important opportunity where integration in schools can be positively impacted. Typically, the aim of these programmes is to support children academically, but there is also programming directly targeting integration or other aspects of children’s wellbeing.

Who provides after-school programming for children in each partner country

| Country | Schools | Outside organisations |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| Belgium | X | X |
| Finland | X | X |
| Germany | X | X |
| Italy | | X |
| Poland | | X |
| Sweden | X | X |
| United Kingdom | X | X |

All schools in the UK are encouraged to provide extra-curricular programming. In England specifically, the government published a policy for ‘Wraparound and holiday childcare’ in 2016. The policy was intended to support parents who work longer hours. Not all schools provide these services directly, and sometimes it is outsourced to other providers. After-school clubs are regulated by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) because they benefit from some degree of governmental funding. Their implementation, however, is patchy and there is great deal of variation in what is offered. A research study by the Nuffield Foundation (Callanan et al. n.d.) found that extra-curricular clubs within schools were attended equally by disadvantaged

children and children from more privileged backgrounds. This contrasted with after-school activities¹⁹, such as sports and music clubs, where children from privileged backgrounds were far more likely to participate and disadvantaged children were underrepresented. While it is positive that there are many options for children to take advantage of after school, it's incredibly important to have widely accessible school programming after the school day has ended. Because these programmes are free of charge, they are more widely accessible and provide a space for migrant and non-migrant pupils to mix socially. Again, migrant background pupils are not universally disadvantaged, but they do often fall within this category and so it's essential that they can benefit from programming that is equally accessible to all children.

In Sweden, extra-curricular programming has less variation. The most common programme is 'school-age educare' for children up to age 13. This programme is governed by national level curricula, but organised at the municipal level or even by charter schools. School-age educare is intended to complement compulsory school by offering recreational and learning activities and the educators who run these programmes have similar training and expertise to that of classroom teachers (Curriculum for compulsory school and school-age educare). The programme is voluntary and caregivers pay a fee for each child who participates, but the fee can be reduced based on family size and income. The programme, while currently the responsibility of the education sector, is still considered to be part of the welfare system in Sweden (Klerfelt and Stecher 2018), thus highlighting its treatment as an important contribution to all children's wellbeing and education. Considering that approximately 84% of children between the ages of 6-9 are enrolled in after-school educare (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2018) the programme appears to be widely accessible. Unfortunately, this programming is not available for students above the age of 13, and thus newly arrived adolescents cannot benefit from these offers and how they can support one's integration. A less common form of after-school programming, and ones that are directly aimed at supporting school integration, are complementary school programmes in multicultural areas. These are financed by donations and organised by volunteers who are often teachers with a migrant background. Often, they can provide some form of culturally informed education. In the city of Malmö, for example, there are several complementary programmes with different aims: to help children with homework; to help children to explore cultural heritage by focusing on aesthetic forms of language and culture; and teaching religion, history, language and culture (Bouakaz 2018). Having options of both academic and culturally centred programming is certainly complementary to the school day and increases the chances for cultural understanding and student integration.

In the case of Germany, a large portion of schools are only 'part-time' and so 'after school' programming looks somewhat different. For the purposes of CHILD UP, the focus is on full-time schools, which offer several activities and additional courses after regular lessons. Statistically, full-time day schools more often are attended by migrant-background students and research shows that these schools, and their offers, do not generally affect the integration of migrant background students (Deutsches Jugendinstitut 2012). After-school opportunities include many different courses and programmes. In addition to the regular offers, there are also activities such as camps,

¹⁹ Provided by actors other than the school

seminars, sporting events, youth clubs, adventure playgrounds and youth farms. These offers are open to all young people and are free of charge – again containing two important elements: accessibility and the possibly for mixing of migrant and non-migrant children.

In Finland, the municipalities are encouraged to organise morning and extra-curricular activities for the 1st and 2nd graders. These sessions are also open to pupils with special needs from any grade. 98% of municipalities arrange afternoon activities for the youngest pupils, which bodes well for wide accessibility. Unfortunately, morning activities are less common. Compared with other countries, the Finnish school day is relatively short, so these after and before school activities are all the more necessary. Municipalities are responsible for the organisation of these activities, but the aims are laid out in the Finnish Basic Education Act. Some of the aims include: promoting the well-being and equality of children in society and preventing exclusion (OPH, morning and afternoon activities). For older children, there are other types of afternoon activities. Children in grades 1–6 may engage in activities that are homework-centred or that focus on play, socialisation and skill building. Club activities, while based on the goals of the school, are developed in collaboration with the pupils. Including the pupils in the organisation and planning of activities is a useful way to ensure ‘buy-in’ from the students, but also supports integration through self-directed learning methods – a key aim of the CHILD UP project.

In Belgium, there are some version of homework assistance programmes in both the Flemish and French Communities. These are places outside of school where students can go for extra help with their school work and in learning study strategies. In the Flemish Community there are student counsellors who can offer support, and also the Centra voor Leerlingenbegeleiding (CLB – student support centres for Dutch speakers). For Non-Dutch speakers in primary and secondary school, there are community centres that offer Dutch immersion courses. In the French Community, the "écoles de devoirs" (homework classes) are places where children can choose to go after school and which have the aim to “work on the social and cultural development of the young people by helping them with their homework” (Brussels Capital Region n.d.). The mixing of both curricular and cultural aims is a useful holistic approach to children’s education and can benefit both migrant and non-migrant children.

In Italy, after school programmes are mostly dedicated to homework and are often widespread, as is the case in Emilia-Romagna. They are generally successful in supporting children’s school performance and are usually run by social cooperatives, organizations and associations, such as Reggiana Educatori cooperative in Reggio Emilia, or Il Girasole cooperative in the province of Modena. These are not targeted at migrant children, but are for all children who experience difficulties in their schoolwork. While this is useful in supporting school performance of migrant children, and perhaps having an influence on the achievement gap, more programmes targeting socialisation, mixing, and intercultural understanding could support the integration of migrant background-children in schools.

After school programming in Poland is provided mainly by NGOs (e.g. Foundation Ocalenie, Stowarzyszenie dla Ziemi), and can have varied aims. One example is organized by Foundation Ocalenie, which is an organisation that supports refugee, immigrants and return migrants in Poland. It runs the Assistance Centre for Foreigners in Łomża²⁰ (close to a centre for foreigners²¹) to provide support through cultural mentoring with a Russian or Chechen speaker, as well as psychological and legal assistance. There are also programmes that assist children in learning Polish and offer homework assistance. While this assistance is useful, it is mainly offered by volunteers who might not have qualifications in education, which contrasts with the Swedish educare system where those offering support have undergone training similar to that of teachers. During the holidays, camps and integration activities are also offered, which can be effective ways to support the mixing of migrant and non-migrant children.

One problem, which is highlighted by the debate on how to define ‘migrant’ and ‘migrant background’, is that targeted support programmes may not reach children who could benefit from them. For example, there is a difference in support for ‘Polish youth’ and ‘migrant youth’ despite the fact that many children in these categories may face the same problems and are all in the process of learning the Polish language. Migrant is a diverse and broad category, and yet its definition may still leave out people whose circumstances and daily life experiences are those of a migrant. While national level policies may be less flexible, it is important that local level initiatives can be tailored to the needs of the specific population and consider realities that may not be written into wider policy and programming. Certainly, it is essential for these types of programmes to receive national funding in order to increase accessibility, but local level control must remain to allow for the moulding and tailoring of the programming to meet local needs. Additionally, after-school and extra-curricular programming can be an important resource for children in bridging programmes who are separated from the mainstream school population for much of the day. These programmes can be a way for them to begin interacting with a larger, more diverse group of their peers.

4.2.2 Parental Involvement in Education

Research shows that parental involvement is key to children’s academic success and their wellbeing in schools (OECD 2012; Anthony-Newman 2019) and it has evolved significantly in the Western world since the 1970s (Dom and Verhoeven 2006). It is also typically the case that parents become less involved in their children’s education as children grow older²². Parental involvement is built on the assumption that parents are fully informed and have the interest and willingness to actively participate. At the same time, however, educational institutions must

²⁰ <https://ocalenie.org.pl/nasze-dzialania/pomagamy/centrum-pomocy-cudzoziemcom-i-swietlica> (access 10.07.2019).

²¹ Centres for Foreigners are administered by The Office for Foreigners: <https://udsc.gov.pl/en/uchodzczy-2/pomoc-socjalna/> (access 10.07.2019).

²² This was the case with the parent questionnaires returned in WP4. Parents of younger children were much more likely to return the questionnaires than those of older children.

provide the conditions for parents to be able to participate. In general, parents are legally entitled to be informed about their children's progress in school. Parental involvement, however, is more difficult to facilitate. The importance of parental involvement is so well understood that it is also often laid down in legislation and/or policy. For example, parental collaboration with schools is written into the Basic Education and Early Childhood Education Acts and the curriculums in Finland; the Italian Constitution states that parents and schools share the responsibility for the education of children (Guidelines on parents' participation and educational co-responsibility, 2012); in Belgium, both Flanders and Wallonia have legislated parental involvement and the national curriculum in Sweden states that sharing responsibility for education between caregivers and schools creates the best possible conditions for pupils' development and learning. While it is important to bear in mind that, "parental involvement in pedagogical activities stimulates children's abilities and codetermines early cognitive outcomes, social background (measured as parental education) is a more subtle but no less powerful driver of school performance (Cebolla-Boado et al. 2016:52)," the driver that can be immediately influenced is parental involvement.

While it's well understood that parental involvement in children's learning is essential before formal schooling begins, parents typically become less involved as their children progress in their education. It's clear that parents' attentiveness affects children's ability to learn language and children's "receptive and phonetic awareness" (OECD 2012), but parents are also helping children to 'learn how to learn' by showing them how to "plan, monitor, and be aware of the learning process" (OECD 2012:13). When children start school, however, there is often the expectation that teachers take over the educational duties. Studies show, however, that children benefit most from an education that involves educational effort from the parent and school actors working together. Some of the educational support parents can offer is simply modelling practices, such as reading, and this could also apply to new migrants who are trying to learn new languages (even though children become adept at new languages much faster than adults) and acquire new skills in a new school environment. Furthermore, teachers are aware of which parents are more involved in their child's education and teachers may therefore be more attentive towards those students (OECD 2012). Children of involved parents also know they can come to their parents for support in navigating school systems and may be more likely to share information about their schooling with their families.

In most cases, schools are obliged to communicate with parents by organizing at least one parents' meeting a year.²³ Schools often have various other types of events and web-based communication tools are becoming ever more popular. In cases where web portals are frequently used (for example, in Finland) there is the expectation that parents are being communicated with on a nearly daily basis. There is a difference between expectation and reality, however, and many parents – but in particular migrant parents – do not know how to navigate these systems. Parents who are not active in these portals may appear to be uninterested or unwilling to participate in their children's education, when the real problem is a lack of understanding and training in the utilisation of these

²³ In Germany and Finland, these meetings are organized twice a year. In Poland, it is left up to schools to decide the frequency of these meetings, but they usually happen twice a year.

tools. This speaks to a bigger problem in parental involvement. While it's clear that parental involvement in education has experienced a great deal of growth in the past decades, this evolution has come with numerous challenges. It is important to understand the expectations on the part of parents and on the part of schools. While, as stated above, parental participation is legislated in many cases, what's more relevant is how this is enacted (or not) at the local level and in individual schools. Without clear expectations and structures that guide parental involvement, communication channels that allow for two-way communication (so the parents can also express their desires and concerns to schools), and clear structures for the inclusion of migrant families, there can be a disconnect between schools' expectations of parents and how parents participate. Additionally, there is a common tendency to regard the immigrant family as a problem rather than a resource, and schools often fail to cooperate with and sufficiently include parents (Bouakaz 2007; Lundahl & Lindblad 2018). Progress is being made in this area, however, and parent councils are one way that schools try to open lines of communication with parents.

In Belgium, both the Flemish and French Communities have robust parent associations and in the Flemish Community outcomes from school inspections are published and made available on the Internet. School self-evaluations are also made directly available to parents and students. Parental meetings are organised in both communities, but attendance varies greatly. Parents are encouraged to be part of these groups in order to be in touch with schools and voice their opinions (Dom and Verhoeven 2006) and some version of this practice has existed in Flanders since 1988 (Van Heddegem and Verhoeven 1998). Some schools with high concentrations of migrant families who speak many different languages have taken to using pictograms in their communications with parents in order to be more inclusive and to avoid misunderstandings.

In Germany, at a 2013 Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder*), some migrant organisations published a statement which emphasised that joint responsibility is necessary for educational success. The needs of parents and schools were identified in this statement and these included informing migrant parents about the German education system and calling for more binding and more robust parental participation. The statement has resulted in various programmes and initiatives. The problem, however, is that these programmes still do not reach many parents. This is due to many factors, such as the language barrier, lack of capacities, etc. and the concern is that those who most need support are those who are not reached.

In Italy, some indications about parental involvement are provided by the Ministry of Education, University, and Research (MIUR) with the Guidelines to the Reception and Integration of Migrant Students (2014). These highlight the importance of the relationship between families and schools during initial reception and beyond. The guidelines stress the importance of giving information about the organisational and administrative aspects of school life; constructing a relationship based on specific needs of families; involving families in school initiatives, activities, parents' associations and programming. Nevertheless, some studies conducted in Emilia Romagna show that there are some weaknesses. In particular, some schools do not translate documents for migrant parents (for example, forms for registration or information sheets) and some schools do not support cultural or linguistic

mediation and interventions (Commune di Ravenna). Additionally, both migrant and non-migrant parents' participation is inversely proportional to the school grade, being very high only through primary school (ISCED1) and then tapering down from ISCED2²⁴.

The parent councils in Poland are an example of a very collaborative strategy. They are required to meet at least twice a year and some of the tasks include having input on which schoolbooks will be used and parents serving as another layer of approval for the yearly school budget and educational programmes. Unfortunately, most parents (migrant and non-migrant alike) are not engaged and state that they do not have time to contribute to school activities. In terms of migrant parents, plans for onward migration, as well as their migratory status in the country, may also negatively impact their participation in their children's education. Many migrants in Poland intend to migrate to Germany, and in such a situation it is possible that the child's current education is not a priority. Another important element to consider in the Polish context is that civil society is still not fully developed. When Polish parents migrated to Norway, for example, they had difficulty adjusting to the level of involvement with schools that was expected of them (Ślusarczyk & Pustułka 2016). Parental involvement in children's education is an area that still requires growth and has not yet become an automatic and expected practice.

While it is true that sometimes parents are hesitant to get involved in their children's education, this can be due to a host of factors, such as language barriers, cultural differences, lack of time, lack of knowledge about the school system, etc. Research in Finland, (Säävälä et al. 2017) shows that migrant parents, in fact, are viewed by school staff as *more* willing to interact and cooperate than non-migrant parents. Finland also takes a very collaborative approach to parental involvement in education. The expectation with web-based communication is that parents and teachers are communicating on a nearly daily basis. Every educational institution uses a web portal or some type of software to communicate with parents. This practice begins from when children enter municipal day care, and the communication contain elements such as reflections on the child's behaviour, absence/presence in class, homework, participation in class, etc. Parents are also notified about upcoming exams and assignments and are offered a space for private communication with teachers. The aim is to carry out all the everyday, mundane communication through the web portals. While this level of frequent communication with parents can be beneficial for all students, the risk is that the use of the portals is becoming so commonplace that schools/teachers do not always notice that these systems can be challenging for parents, and especially those with a migrant background who are not yet familiar with the systems and the local language. In addition to web-based communication, there are also phone calls and informal opportunities for communication, such as school celebrations and gatherings, where the hope is that parents will attend and interact with teachers and other school actors. Home and school collaboration continues until the child turns 18, but changes as children enter secondary school. In lower

²⁴ As shown by the number of returned parent questionnaires from WP4: almost all parents returned them in ISCED1 and ISCED2, while the level decreased in ISCED3.

secondary school, there are parent evenings to address the parents of the same class as a group. This offers an opportunity for parents to meet and begin building networks to support one another. In upper secondary school and vocational institutions, parents are expected to follow their children's school performance by signing exams and other documents, and through the use of web portals, but they no longer meet the teachers in special meetings unless there is a particular need. As is the case in the other partner countries, a key way for parents to influence school matters are parents' associations. Almost every school has one and they are a part of the Parents' Union of Finland. Nationally, they provide support for education and take stands on questions about the education system at both the national and local levels.

The importance of parental involvement in children's integration and wellbeing in school cannot be overstated. This is why parents and teachers were asked about their communication with one another during the quantitative portion of the CHILD UP project (results forthcoming). The attempts to create partnerships, however, encounter several obstacles such as pushback from teachers who may feel their autonomy in the classroom is threatened, power imbalances in councils and lines of communication, and lack of targeted communication and engagement with migrant parents. In parents' councils, for example, it is often found that the councils may not ultimately represent the voice of parents (as was found in Poland) (Muchacka 2013). Schools may be hesitant to support policy that dictates involvement of parents too strongly, rather than simply adopting the practice of creating opportunities for parental communication and involvement (such as the case in Flanders²⁵). Additionally, parent councils often do not reflect the make-up of the school as they are more often joined and led by 'elites' who have plenty of social, economic and /or cultural capital.

With these potential shortcomings in mind, there are things that could be done in order to encourage migrant parents' involvement in their children's education. While fathers are increasingly taking on responsibility in the rearing of children, it is still mothers who tend to have the responsibility of overseeing the education of children (Griffith & Smith 2005 ; Reay 1995, 2005). This means that mothers spend more time interacting with teachers and schools and it's important for schools to bear in mind that "Perceptions and practices of mothering, in particular in relation to children's educational matters, are discursively shaped by cultural and religious values. Mothering is produced in response to the socially constructed expectations of how mothering work should be done, as well as to the demands produced by educational institutions" (Jamal Al-Deen, 2019:4-5). For this reason, it would be beneficial for schools to pay particular attention to the needs of mothers in terms of assisting them in their involvement and inviting them to collaborate. In some cases, it could be useful to a dedicated mothers' group

²⁵ The umbrella organization of the Catholic schools in Flanders, Vlaams Secretariaat voor het Katholieke Onderwijs (VSKO, the Flemish Secretariat for Catholic Education) had misgivings about a decree mandating parental involvement. "The main problem the VSKO had with the decree was not the legislative grounding of the participation of teachers, students, and parents in school policy. However, the VSKO was against too much formalization of that participation. The VSKO, therefore, preferred to grant parents a 'participation right' rather than a 'participation duty'" (Dom and Verhoeven 2006:7).

(which a school in Flanders has found to be successful) as well targeted communication for migration parents (including translations of documents, the use of pictograms, and clear explanations of technology and the functioning of the overall school systems and expectations of parents and students). Meanwhile, all this must be done while respecting the autonomy, professionalism, and experience of teachers since the desire to foster collaboration cannot come at the cost of ostracising teachers.

4.2.3 Mentoring

As expressed above, mentoring programmes have numerous benefits for both migrant and non-migrant populations. While these initiatives are becoming ever more popular in school settings, there are also important mentoring programmes that exist beyond the school setting and can still positively impact children's integration in schools. In Germany, there are several initiatives targeted specifically at refugee and asylum-seeking children. The pilot project "jmd2start – Begleitung für junge Flüchtlinge im Jugendmigrationsdienst" (Accompaniment of young refugees in the youth migration service) works together with local actors, such as the Youth and Social Welfare Office and schools, to find educational and professional offers and solutions for young refugees. This type of triangulation of support which involves communication between schools, other support services, and the young migrants themselves, has great potential. A holistic approach to integration and to children's school performance has been proven to be more effective than focusing one area of a child's life in isolation. The more information each party can have about a child's challenges and wellbeing, the better they can work together to offer targeted support. Similar mentoring programmes exist in Poland where there are several projects run by Foundation Ocalenie which are designed to support refugee children. One example is "Knowledge to power"²⁶ which provides mentors to help motivate refugee children and build their self-esteem. A second mentoring programme endeavours to create a replicable programme based on individual contact²⁷. Local youth volunteers are paired with newly arrived child migrants and refugees in order to help them orient to their new surroundings. There are also activities organised and financed by the Office for Foreigners (udsc.gov.pl). They engaged organisation and companies in supporting children with things like language learning and homework. Now this task is realized by Open Education (<http://openeducation.pl>). Again, this programming is making use of a type of 'arms around' or 'triangulation' of support by involving several actors and considering children's overall well-being in addition to their educational achievements.

4.2.4 Early intervention

²⁶ <https://ocalenie.org.pl/nasze-dzialania/pomagamy/dzieci-i-mlodziez/wiedza-do-potegi-program-tutorsko-mentoringowy-dla-mlodych-uchodzcow-i-uchodzczyn> (access 10.07.2019).

²⁷ <https://ocalenie.org.pl/nasze-dzialania/pomagamy/dzieci-i-mlodziez/mint-mentoring-na-rzecz-integracji-dzieci-cudzoziemskich-2> (access 10.07.2019).

Offering support to children and their families in the years before children begin formal primary education is part of a holistic approach that can aid in improving children's later school performance. There is evidence that preschool education is a key element in reducing inequalities in children's educational attainment, and that the importance of this early intervention is even greater for children whose parents are less involved in their education (Cebolla-Boado et al. 2016). This is even more significant for migrant children whose parents are, for example, undocumented or asylum seekers spending a great deal of time on legal battles, or whose parents are newcomers and still struggling to become acquainted with the life and the systems in the host country, etc. This is why it is very positive that various countries offer early education interventions with little restriction. Sweden, for example, offers open preschool and programmes for newly arrived families. It includes a meeting place for guardians and children, ages 0–6, and is an opportunity to develop Swedish language skills and be introduced to Swedish society. In Germany, all refugee children under the age of five receive specially designed tools to help them learn to read as part of the "Lesestart für Flüchtlingskinder" programme. In addition, initial reception centres receive support if they want to use reading mentors. In 1998, the UK initiated Sure Start Local Programmes. While these were not directed at migrant children and families specifically, this population did benefit from them. These programmes targeted the most disadvantaged children from the most 'high risk' areas, and within this category migrant background families were numerous. The services were available for children aged 4 and younger, and their parents (Manzoni and Rolfe 2019). The programme was based on the belief that the quality of education once children enter school is not the only significant factor that impacts their educational outcomes (Essomba 2014).

5. Support of Home and Host Country Languages

Language learning has been found to be a crucial factor in pupils' school success and in their social integration and future employment (OECD, 2018). The OECD found that countries where the achievement gap between non-migrant and migrant students is smaller, and that have a reduced achievement gap between second generation migrants and non-migrant students, are those with robust language programming. These programmes have clear sets of standards and well-articulated goals (OECD 2006:11) and help to create the stable foundation on which future academic success can be built. Among the partner countries, support for host country language learning varies by country and between the different levels of education. The approaches to teaching the host country language range from case by case support, to targeted language classes for newcomers in which they are separated from mainstream classes just to learn the host country language, to language learning incorporated into the teaching of various subjects. While the necessity for host country language learning is clear, there is often little buy-in when it comes to the benefits of home language support. Some official political discourse may describe the ability to speak other languages as an educational opportunity, but public discourse often describes it as an obstacle to learning and integration.

In Germany, there is robust German language support, especially in elementary school. For example, there are specific classes that are intended to facilitate children's transition to mainstream classes by supporting German language skills. The type and scope of support, however, varies from state to state. Language support is generally tied to school requirements, meaning that children learn not only the language on its own, but that it is tied to reading, writing and text comprehension. The programme "Ein Quadratkilometer Bildung" builds local alliances where kindergartens, schools, and children/youth facilities work together. Students are accompanied long-term so they are supported through their advancement through grade levels as well as across school transitions, e.g. moving from kindergarten to primary school. Joint approaches to individual language training are developed to offer a wraparound approach to students' language learning (Stiftung Ein Quadratkilometer Bildung 2016) and are viewed as a strong approach to language teaching. Officially, multilingualism is seen as a resource in the German education system. At the same time, the importance of promoting German as a second language as early as possible, and before starting school, is repeatedly underlined.

This is also the case in Belgium where the Flemish and French Communities have a keen focus on local language proficiency. Indeed, the language situation in Belgium is complex, with three official languages and a complex history tied to language identity. Learning the language of the different language communities is already a fraught issue (for example, if Walloon students should be required to learn Flemish and vice versa), even before adding migrant students' language learning into the mix. Both Flanders and Wallonia offer separated reception education tracks for newcomers (Okav for those going to Flemish schools and Daspa for those going to French-speaking schools) which focus on teaching the local language. These can last for longer than an academic school year in

order to ensure language proficiency and preparedness for entering the mainstream classroom. In both OKAN and DASPA class, students are encouraged to speak the language of instruction even during breaks (Van Maele and Poeze 2018:13) and might be in some way punished, intentionally or not, for use and knowledge of home country languages (De Houwer 2007).

Language support for migrant students in Italy is intensive during the first two to three months when newcomers benefit from Italian language learning (workshops in Italian L2). These lessons adhere to a strict timetable and the support gradually decreases. These workshops can group together migrant students of different classes and are organised with the collaboration of local authorities. This phase can be provided either in mainstream classes or separately, according to the needs of the children and the teacher's availability. Several schools do not have a structured space dedicated exclusively to workshops of Italian. In some schools these workshops are not run by expert language facilitators, but by mainstream classroom teachers, support teachers, retired teachers or volunteers, who do not have any specialisation in this field (Commune di Ravenna n.d.). Ultimately, while these classes are readily available, the quality is largely variable.

A 2015 School Census in the United Kingdom estimated that English is not the first language for 1.3 million schoolchildren in England (Howe 2017). From the 1960s until around 2012, a great deal of funding was directed to supporting English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners. After 2012, however, some protections for this funding were removed and so this money can be directed to other activities that may not specially benefit EAL learners. According to recent studies, provisions for supporting this group have decreased (NASUWT Survey 2012), and to continue seeing positive outcomes for EAL learners it is imperative to have targeted funding for them (Malmberg and Hall 2015:12). A similar problem is that the funding for the English as an Additional Language (EAL) initiative, which is part of the Pupil Premium scheme, is limited in what activities it can be used to support. This type of funding would be better used if it were flexible enough to be used at the discretion of local actors in creative, innovative ways (Ainscow 2016). Some schools, however, still receive additional funding for language support from their local authorities. A child lacking English as their first language is often described as an obstacle to learning, for both the child him/herself and for other children in the class (Howe 2017). However, there is a growing counter narrative that native English speakers should view the range of other languages spoken in a school as a positive opportunity, and that students should be encouraged to learn more about the language and cultures of their classmates (Howe 2017). Additionally, Personal Education Plans (PEPs) should include an assessment of a child's needs such as Special Education Needs (SEN) and literacy needs (Department for Education 2017). In this guidance, the importance of learning English is highlighted, but there is also a reference stating that the plan may include support to develop literacy skills in children's mother tongues (Department for Education 2017), though it is not clear how often this support is available. An issue with targeting and measuring the support for students endeavouring to learn the host country language is how to categorise this very heterogeneous group. Accurate data collection is essential in providing the best possible support, and the Department for Education (DfE) has made great strides on this issue. The new system of testing English language proficiency, as assessed by teachers,

includes five levels of language acquisition as opposed to the former system which only considered whether a language other than English was spoken in the child's home (Manzoni and Rolfe 2019:15). Now the categories are: New to English, Early Acquisition, Developing competence, Competent, or Fluent (DfE 2018), which more accurately demonstrates the variation amongst EALs.

A key component of newer migration to Poland is 'return migration.' A significant number of migrants who left Poland in order to work abroad in the post-accession period²⁸ have now returned to Poland. Their children, even when born abroad and never having lived in Poland, are Polish citizens by birth. While this means that they are entitled to the rights of Polish citizens, it also means they are not eligible for certain supports that could benefit them as migrants. Additionally, the re-entry of this population to Polish society is still understudied (Anacka and Wójcicka 2019) and so there is much that is still unknown about their education and adjustment. All children with a migration background in Poland are entitled to extra lessons of Polish language (at least 2 hours per week) and compensatory classes (1 hour per one subject per week). Children who are not Polish citizens can attend these classes without any time limits (e.g. it is possible to have this support for 3 years). Children who are Polish citizens (children of families returning to Poland), however, are entitled to these classes for only 12 months. Therefore, children who are not considered migrants, but who have the same lack of Polish language ability as 'migrant' children, are not entitled to the same support. According to educational regulations, children who are not Polish citizens and who are subject to compulsory education, are entitled to assistance provided by a person who speaks the language of the child's country of origin. This assistant should be employed as a teacher by the headmaster and assistance is granted for no more than 12 months. In addition to serving as a mediator, this person should also help migrant children in understanding the teacher and course contents. Not all schools, however, are willing to employ these kinds of teachers and wages are usually very low. This makes it difficult to find properly qualified (i.e. with pedagogical education) candidates (Wynagrodzenie nauczyciela wspomagającego). Once again, this support is not available for children with Polish citizenship.

Since 2017, transition classes have been made available to migrant children in order to offer language support. These lessons are provided individually or in small groups (it depends on the number of migrant children at school). In the 2018-2019 school year, there were 300 pupils in such classes (gov.pl). There is an innovative method (JES-PL) of teaching Polish as a second/foreign language which was developed by Małgorzata Pamuła-Behrens and Marta Szymańska. This method details how to adapt text to a child's needs and capabilities in a systematic way (taking into consideration both the language used in everyday communication and the language of education). Additionally, two projects were implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Mikołaj Rej

²⁸ Accession period began in 2004 when 10 new EU countries (out of which eight—the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia were countries from the ex-Soviet Bloc).
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11614-016-0244-4>

Foundation (fundacjareja.eu/). Several publications have been released which describe the method, provide the class guidelines, and offer adaptations of some texts for children in Primary School (fundacjareja.eu – a). A second adaptation of this method is language related to math (fundacjareja.eu/). The authors of the method have implemented many workshops for teachers²⁹, but they do not have any data concerning how many teachers use this method in their everyday work.

In Sweden, school-support for multilingual pupils consists primarily of three measures: mother tongue education, study tutorials in the mother tongue and Swedish as a second language. The implementation of these measures, however, is not straightforward. It is obstructed by, for instance, political ideologies, economic conditions in individual schools and the lack of training for teachers. Newly arrived children in grades 1-9, who are unable to follow classes in Swedish due to lack of Swedish language proficiency, may receive supervision in their mother tongue (studiehandledning på modersmålet) or in the strongest school language (government.se). At the upper secondary level (gymnasium) they are also often offered a place in a language introduction programme. The right to mother tongue and Swedish as a second language education in primary and secondary school is regulated by a School Act (SFS 2010:800 Skollagen). The right to study tutorials is regulated by the School Ordinance (SFS 2011:185 Skolförordningen) and Upper Secondary School Ordinance (SFS 2010:2039 Gymnasieförordningen).

Children in preschool in Sweden have no targeted language education, but the preschool is expected to support their language development in both Swedish and foreign, mother tongue languages. What this looks like in practice is up to the school headmaster. However, in spite of top down regulations and requirements, it appears to be the competence and determination of individual teachers and schools that have the biggest impact (Otterup 2012). There are other beneficial efforts to support children in their mother tongue, such as “Tell”, which is digital support in newly arrived students’ mother tongues. Another example is the implementation of translanguaging practices in selected classrooms, aiming to improve the pedagogical methods for teaching multilingual children. Educational support in mother tongue languages has been shown to suffer from serious weaknesses, however. Namely, the lack of qualified teachers, lack of cooperation between subject teachers and mother-tongue pedagogues, and a large variation between schools (Swedish national agency for education 2017).

In Finland, if the pupil’s Finnish/Swedish knowledge is insufficient for regular language/literature courses in compulsory school, courses in Finnish/Swedish as a second language are offered. According to the criteria for the division of classes and the curriculum, Finnish or Swedish as a second language is organised entirely or partially depending on the pupil’s skill level. Officially, pupils may also attend courses in their home language, but due to the perceived undervaluing of mother tongues, students who have the opportunity to take these courses may choose not to.

²⁹ In local public Teacher Training Centres.

While most official educational discourse pays lip service to the value of the maintenance and promotion of mother tongue language skills, this stance does not often translate into practice. Some countries have limited structural support for these language skills – such as Germany, the UK, Belgium, and Italy – while others have more initiatives for inclusion, but lack qualified professionals or the support of school administrations – such as in Sweden, Finland, and Poland. While language learning is essential to school performance, and is an important aspect of integration, the best way to promote this learning is to combine it with the promotion and maintenance of the native languages.

| Country | Separated Language Instruction | Incorporated Language Instruction | Support in home Language | Multilingualism seen as a Resource |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <i>Belgium</i> | X | To some degree | Technically yes, but questionable in practice | X |
| <i>Finland</i> | X | X | Technically yes, but questionable in practice | X |
| <i>Germany</i> | X | X | Technically yes, at the level of general teaching, but questionable in practice Provision of native language lessons differ between federal states | X |
| <i>Italy</i> | X | X | Technically yes, but questionable in practice | Technically yes, but questionable in practice |
| <i>Poland</i> | X | X | Technically yes, but questionable in practice | |
| <i>Sweden</i> | X | X | Technically yes, but questionable in practice | X |
| <i>United Kingdom</i> | X | X | Technically yes, but questionable in practice | X ³⁰ |

³⁰ Strategies used by schools to welcome and settle migrant pupils within the school are undertaken at the level of the individual institution and they may also change from one year to another, depending on financial constraints. As a general, but not universal trend, it can be noted that investment to support migrant pupils is decreasing, due to spending cuts at the national level.

6. Conclusion

Children with a migrant background face numerous challenges in school. Clear data on the outcomes of programming designed to help them overcome these challenges is limited, but the objectives of these programmes are still enlightening. They can show us what governments, organisations and schools/educators think are crucial skills and the most important ingredients for school success and children's wellbeing. The challenges facing migrant children in school often begin before children even enter schools. In addition to significant delays in starting school (even more problematic for undocumented and asylum-seeking children), a significant issue is that children may not be placed in a grade level or programme that is commensurate with their experience and needs. In general, there is very little in the way of systematic practices when it comes to deciding grade-level placement. Moreover, there are different approaches to incorporating migrant children into mainstream classes, some schools offering separate programmes for language learning and teaching subjects in migrant children's mother tongues. School systems with these transitional programmes all aim to move children into mainstream classes as soon as possible. This is a positive development as research shows that when children are separated from the mainstream population for too long, it can begin to have a negative impact on children's wellbeing, integration and school performance (Nusche 2009, Dumčius et al. 2013).

Migrant background children would also benefit from a change in discourse around and the treatment of mother tongues in classrooms. Knowing several languages is not universally treated as an asset and there is a lack of support of the learning and maintenance of mother tongues. Some education systems do offer support and programming in this area, but it is highly variable. A common obstacle is that there are not enough qualified language teachers and people who speak the mother tongue of migrant background children. Despite this, the discourse around the value of these languages could still be improved. This could take the form of sensitivity training and supporting the acquisition of intercultural competences.

The challenges for migrant children continue once they are incorporated into the mainstream school system. Across Europe, migrant children have lower school performance outcomes than non-migrant children and it's a trajectory that can begin early in the school career and continue throughout a child's education (which can be especially problematic for children in education systems with different tracks). Some of the common factors across countries that contribute to the achievement gap include:

- teachers having lower expectations of migrant children;
- migrant children being subjected to negative stereotypes;
- migrant children having significant gaps in their education;
- migrant parents not being well acquainted with school systems and the resources that are available; and,
- migrant children not benefiting from pre-school and kindergarten classes.

The gaps persist through to university where migrant children enrol at lower rates. When looking at the achievement gap, it is important to be aware that 'migrant' is not a homogenous category. Achievement outcomes of migrant background children vary depending on factors such as socioeconomic standing and the educational background of parents.

Parents and families are key components of children's performance in school, and schools in different countries have different ways of involving them. When it comes to migrant background children, their parents often seem less involved or less interested, but this can be due to a lack of understanding of how the school system works, language barriers or because school actors do not communicate in accessible ways. Some new programming involves creating parent groups and using mediators to improve the communication between parents and schools.

Other innovative programming may target migrant children specifically or be aimed at a broader population, but still benefit migrant pupils. Some targeted programming includes supporting local and non-local languages, cultural mentoring and sponsorship initiatives, the promotion of cultural awareness and holistic/wrap around approaches to supporting migrant children which involve the cooperation of school and non-school actors. Practices that are less targeted, but still positively impact migrant children, include initiatives such as countering bullying and discrimination, preventing early school leaving, and increasing access to preschool and kindergarten.

The common thread running through most of these issues, is teachers. They spend a great deal of time with children and parents and, in addition to their regular teaching responsibilities, they are expected to counter bullying, promote integration, be culturally aware, and support language learning and home language retention. The lack of teachers trained in 'intercultural competence', qualified in language teaching, and trained in teaching speakers of other languages, was an obstacle cited by every partner country. Fortunately, some of the best practices and innovative programming highlighted by partners were teacher training programmes. This is also an area in which CHILD UP will be well equipped to offer support. While it is not possible to offer training for every teacher, the 'best dialogic' teaching practices highlighted by CHILD UP will be available to all teachers. Therefore, CHILD UP will have the chance to diminish the multi-faceted challenges faced by migrant children and their teachers.

Annexe

Forms for partners to complete

Instructions for partners: Please complete the following form with details about the situation in your country (or if relevant your region/locality, and specify in each answer whether the whole country or region/locality is being discussed). The form is designed to get an overview of the situation in each country and provide comparable information. In each question, there are suggestions of areas to cover, but feel free to add additional areas that are relevant. Ideally answers will provide a concise overview as well as useful links for follow up. There will be an opportunity to discuss the responses for clarification purposes at a later date.

Feel free to use bullet points, but be precise. Questions below are provided to guide you.

Please include figures/data where relevant.

Keep gender in mind while answering the questions below.

Please provide the references for sources you have cited.

Try to limit answers to each question to approximately 600 words.

Let me know if you have questions: Shannon.Damery@uliege.be

Briefly describe the schooling system in your country/region/locality. Things to consider in the response:

Where does responsibility for education lie (national/regional level?)

- *If education is provided regionally, how much regional variation exists?*

How is education funded (e.g. state funded or a significant role of privately paid for education)?

Are there conflicts between different interested parties?

- *For example, between the national government and municipalities in terms of course content, evaluation of students, treatment of migrant students, etc?*

Does the educational system include different tracks (e.g. vocational)?

- *If so at what age are children tracked and how does this impact migrant children?*

At what level are parents/families/guardians required (or at least expected) to be involved in their children's schools? Are there issues around parental involvement or lack of involvement?



What are the particular issues that may affect migrant/refugee/undocumented children and families?

Are there known to be particular issues facing migrant children in schools in your country? (e.g. high rate of early school leaving, high rates of truancy, low performance, etc.)

Have any schools/regions/localities stood out with innovative programming in terms of migrant children and families? If so, what is the context?

How do schools get migrant families/parents involved in their children's education and what are the main issues surrounding this?

What is the official and unofficial stance on undocumented children (difficulty in obtaining diplomas, teachers required or asked to check documents of children or families, etc.)?

How easy is it for migrant/refugee children to access schooling (do they have to wait/is specific documentation needed)?

- *Are they able to access schools with the proper supports for migrant children?*
- *Do migrant families have a choice when it comes to which school children will be enrolled in?*
- *Do migrant children get to begin school at the appropriate age/skill levels? (for example, sometimes newly arrived children may be placed back a few years due to the language and difference in schools in different countries).*
- *What support is provided for migrant children in terms of language?*
- *Are children separated for this support or is it provided in mainstream classrooms?*

What are the "bridging programs" (if they exist) for migrant children to be integrated into the school system?

- *Who runs them?*
- *What is the general content?*
- *Is their success rate measured? How?*



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| <p>School supports and programming:</p> <p><i>What, if any, programs or classroom efforts exist on cultural awareness/understanding?</i></p> <p><i>What after school programs exist?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Which are the most successful/most frequently used?</i>• <i>What are their aims?</i>• <i>Who runs them?</i>• <i>Which children/families take advantage of them?</i> <p><i>How is language informally treated in schools? Are children allowed to speak their 'mother tongue' in class, at lunch, during recreation time, etc.?</i></p> <p><i>Is there discourse around bullying in schools? What are the major issues and what has been the response? How does this impact migrant children in particular?</i></p> <p><i>Is any support provided through schools to migrant parents/families for matters unrelated to schooling (e.g. language training for parents through schools, advice services for parents through schools)?</i></p> |



Do schools partner with outside entities for programming? If so, which ones and how do they collaborate?

Please provide links to any additional resources that may be of use (ideally in English). E.g. policy documents, research reports or evaluations (grey literature); data sources; legislation. For each resource please give a one sentence description of the resource in question.

Is there anything else relevant to add?

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