



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

## Milestone

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## **Executive summary**

This final report of the CHILD-UP (Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue as a way of Upgrading Policies of Participation) H2020 project (GA 822400) aims to summarise the most important results of the CHILD-UP research.

Chapter 1 presents and explains the concepts that have been used in this research: children's agency, facilitation of children's agency, use of a narrative approach applied to the contents of the analysis, the concepts of hybrid identity and hybrid integration to explain the way of including children with migrant background (CMB) in school and community. The chapter offers an overview of these concepts that allows the following analysis of the collected data.

Chapter 2 describes the methodology of the projects. It includes a description of the mixed, quantitative and qualitative, methods used to explore children's agency and hybrid integration, and the data collected during the different phases of the field research (quantitative survey, individual and focus group interviews, recording of interactions in classroom and parent-teacher meetings, pre-test and post-test to explore the outcomes of the activities. Finally, this chapter describes the methodological impact of the pandemic.

Chapter 3 summarises the most important results of the first phase of research concerning an overview legislation and policies about CMB in Europe and partner countries, showing how legislation does not correspond to policies that negatively influence CMB's trajectories and social life. It also includes some results from the quantitative survey that add elements of knowledge to this overview, for some aspects mitigating the general observation of national policies, for instance for what concerns CMB's family conditions.

Chapter 4 explores the school experience of CMB and, partially, their parents, drawing from both quantitative data from the survey and qualitative data from interviews. On the one hand the chapter shows that CMB' school experience is not diverse from non-migrant children's experiences. On the other hand, the chapter suggests the need to provide opportunities to involve children in decision-making processes and negotiating various arrangements in a school conceived as a relational space. Children would like to see greater reflection on the broader aims of education and changes to teaching methods. They see the school as a place where they feel supported, and defended against attempts at exclusion or discrimination. CMB are perceived as them being given lower grades, undermining their ability to learn or declining remedial teaching. Equal treatment, regardless of gender, is also an important issue. Professionals claim that they should work on their own competences to enable CMB and their families' participation, but it seems that teachers are not always sensitive to CMB's problems, although the survey shows that CMB appreciate teachers' support more than native children. Parental involvement in schools continues to be rather difficult.

Chapter 5 focuses on children's agency and is based on quantitative data from the survey, qualitative data from interviews and qualitative data from recordings of classroom and group interactions. The data shows that the school can play a role in the recognition of CMB's agency by stimulating the autonomous expression of feelings and thoughts, the negotiation of rules and shaping of social

relations according to children's needs. This include interactive methods of facilitation, enhancing personal expressions. On the other hand, internal hierarchies at school negatively impact children's agency. In this context, according to professionals, the gender dimension manifests itself in social expectations of girls and boys with regard to their educational careers and emotional expressions. The analysis of activities shows several successful forms of facilitation which can enhance and support CMB's exercise of agency. Facilitation is based on combinations of facilitative actions and on the ways in which children actively participate in the interaction. The chapter shows the importance of competence in facilitating classroom interactions to produce generalised agency, massively involving CMB, and thus producing the conditions of hybrid integration.

Chapter 6 is also based on quantitative data from the survey, qualitative data from interviews and qualitative data from recordings of classroom and group interactions. The chapter concerns the use of language. First, the data show that, while few CMB only speak their native language, there is a rather similar percentage of CMB who only speak local/national language and speak a mix of local/national and native languages. Thus, two main conditions seem to characterise CMB's use of language. Against this background, schools are prevalently monolingual, despite the claim of the importance of multilingualism from some teachers. On the other hand, several children feel to be supported in their language use, although prevalently in their learning of second language, and less frequently through language mediation. The analysis of classroom interactions shows the different modes of teaching second language, while no case was found for what concerns use of native language. In particular, the classroom context mode, which enhances children's active participation in conversations, is the most facilitative way of learning without evaluations and reducing top-down conveyance of knowledge. This mode does not prevent the use of materials, since materials are used to enhance participation in conversations.

Chapter 7 analyses recordings of parent-teacher interactions including language mediation, available only in a limited context, to understand if this is a possible way of enhancing preservation of native language. In some cases, CMB also participate in these interactions. The chapter describes the mismatch among different ways of exercising rights and responsibilities of production of knowledge. On the one hand, teachers and mediators do not coordinate the production of knowledge, so that mediators' renditions are attempts of mitigating teachers' monologues. On the other hand, while this form of mediation can empower parents' participation, although with limited effects for their agency, it is not effective with CMB whose agency is suppressed. The few cases in which teachers and mediators coordinated, since teachers renounced to monologues, parents' agency was much more empowered. However, in these cases children did not participate in the interaction.

Chapter 8 focuses on communication that directly invests the problem of hybrid integration, examining quantitative data about professionals' training and professionals and parents' perspectives on intercultural relations, results of interviews about integration and cultural differences, and analysis of recorded interactions in which hybrid integration is shown. The chapter shows the importance of narratives of personal cultural trajectories and their interlacements. In facilitated interactions, CMB are able to express themselves, to take the floor, to lead the conversation, to defend their positions and to reject possible undesired interpretations. However, it also shows that the insufficient training in multicultural matters, the sense of difficulty in approaching multicultural classrooms and the

ambivalent narratives about hybridity, cultural differences, assimilation and irrelevance of cultural trajectories can influence the support of CMB's personal cultural trajectories and dialogue in the classroom. Moreover, parents' frequent ethnocentric positioning can be a serious obstacle to the production of conditions of hybrid integration in schools.

Chapter 9 concerns the way in which children have considered the pandemic, in interviews and some recorded interactions. The interviews stress that remote teaching has especially affected CMB children. Their lack of participation was caused by a digital divide and digital illiteracy, but also insufficient support from teachers and peers. Despite some positive effects being mentioned by children and professionals, the dominant opinion about remote teaching is negative. In terms of agency, the impact of the pandemic has been two-fold. On the one hand, the pandemic has limited the children's agency since their voices and opinions have not been taken into account. On the other hand, the older children see this period as one which developed their sense of autonomy, responsibility, and self-control. Conversations in facilitated activities, show children's agency in narrating the experiences of lockdown. This experience has been very relevant for children, but not always negative. The difference between negative and positive narratives depends on three factors regarding children's experience: (1) the intensity and importance of the experience of family life; (2) the relevance of relations with classmates; (3) children's interest in school and learning.

Chapter 10 describes the results of the analysis of children's evaluation of the activities in which they have participated, drawing from both questionnaire and focus groups. Questionnaires and focus group show the importance of dialogue, dialogic teaching and support of personal expression: dialoguing and sharing expressions, both with teachers/facilitators and with classmates, were the basic ingredient of successful activities. Dialogue did not always happen and it did not happen for all children, but it seems clear that this is the indication emerging from the research. The difference between contexts is also evident in the post-test questionnaire, but much more nuanced in the focus groups. However, some data shows coincidence between analysis of the activities, questionnaires and focus groups. It seems that many children observed negatively the cases in which teachers upgraded their own epistemic authority.

Chapter 11 describes the tools produced by the CHILD-UP project. The archive includes 124 written documents and 32 audio-video of selected facilitated interactions. The data-driven training package, including a Massive Open Online Course, is designed to support professional, offering practical tools to transform promotion of CMB's agency and hybrid integration from an aim to a methodology, promoting skills and communication strategies in professional practice and empowering users to become agents of innovation in communicating with children. The guidelines aim to give some orientation to those professionals who are interested to enhance dialogue, CMB's agency and hybrid integration. They aim to support the planning and design of activities that are inspired to innovation following the results of the CHILD-UP research.

Chapter 12 summarises the most important results of the research and provides some conclusions about its meaning and importance. It is highly recommended to read this chapter carefully.

## Introduction

This is the final report, which was realised in seven countries: Belgium, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The research project was coordinated by the **University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Italy)**, and conducted in collaboration with six research partners, including: Université de Liege (**Belgium**), Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (**Finland**), Zentrum für Forschung, Weiterbildung und Beratung at the Evangelische Hochschule Dresden (**Germany**), Jagiellonian University Krakov (**Poland**), Malmö Högskola (**Sweden**), University of Northampton (**United Kingdom**). Moreover, the project was supported by three organisations: the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (**based in Italy**), the European School Head Association (**based in The Netherlands**) and Federation des Regions pour la Recherche, l'Education et la Formation (**based in France**)

The project included two general objectives.

- The analysis of the current enhancement of the ability of children with migrant background (CMB) to participate in changing their social and cultural conditions of integration.
- The investigation of the way this ability is accounted for and engaged with in educational interventions and policies, and in the children's relations with social protection services, families and communities. The CHILD-UP project aimed to understand how these objectives were applied in different sociocultural settings, in seven countries and in local contexts in these countries.

These general objectives were split in specific objectives regarding research and methodology objectives, as well as interventions and policies and dissemination. Specific research objectives concerned the production of knowledge on several aspects.

- Policies and practices of CMB's integration in education and social protection systems in the seven European countries participating in the CHILD-UP project.
- Competences, expectations and practices of children's integration in schools, social services and reception centres.
- Perceptions, expectations and participation of CMB about their education.
- Participation of CMB's parents and guardians in their children's school experience.
- Practices of second language learning, facilitation of dialogue, intercultural education and interpreting/mediation in educational contexts.
- Possible conditions of discrimination and marginalisation of CMB (and their parents), including a focus on the **gender-based** aspects and differences related to migration and hybrid integration experiences, family background, educational expectations and interactions, in which gender identities are expressed and negotiated.

Against this background, the CHILD-UP project had the ambition to analyse the conditions of hybrid integration in the education system and to introduce new methods in this system, based on dialogic practices enhancing CMB's agency and hybrid integration. In more detail, CHILD-UP aimed:

- **To analyse CMB's agency and hybrid integration, and the possible overcoming of stereotypes and prejudices.** CHILD-UP investigated ways and problems of CMB's participation in constructing knowledge, claiming their right to produce knowledge and participating in changes in their social context. Thus, CHILD-UP aimed to understand how to enhance CMB's agency in terms of their capability to both shape their own identities and to influence their social contexts.
- **To analyse if and how dialogue can be a presupposition of CMB's agency.** CHILD-UP investigated if and how dialogic practices can enhance: (a) the fair distribution of active participation in interactions (equity), (b) expressions of sensitivity to interlocutors' interests and/or needs (empathy), (c) treatment of disagreements and alternative perspectives as enrichments in communication (empowerment). Thus, CHILD-UP aimed to understand dialogic ways of enhancing agency and hybrid identities, cross-cultural adaptation and abolishment of cultural/ethnic barriers, both in school and community.
- **To address the qualities, actions and programs that support or hinder CMB's agency in their own hybrid integration.** CHILD-UP investigated how social and cultural contexts can support or hinder children's agency and hybrid integration.
- **To generate an enduring change in interventions and policies of hybrid integration through a dialogic system.** CHILD-UP investigated practices that can develop as a dialogic system, which promotes more accurate standards of equitable access to high quality education. In particular, this investigation was used (1) to compare and suggest practices; (2) to recommend policies, and (3) to promote profitable collaborations among organisations with the function of educating and protecting children.

CHILD-UP also included important **objectives of intervention** concerning the education system. In particular, the project aimed at **improving CMB's ability to change their conditions of integration** and to choose ways of participating and co-creating their social and cultural contexts. This requires **the development of dialogic methods** that can be applied in different educational institutions at the European level and which can allow substantial and significant contributions to support children's exercise of agency and hybrid integration. This also requires the improvement of ability of children, as well as professionals and policy-makers, **to understand and intervene in the gendered structures that** affect hybrid integration. These objectives of intervention are **based on research materials, guidelines for interventions and evaluation of these interventions, interactive training packages, both online and in person, for professionals.** These can enhance models of hybrid integration based on children's agency in education systems. On these premises, it is possible the **promotion of active and open reflection on and questioning of assumptions, biases, and tendencies** in schools and other institutions with the possibility of imagining new ones.

Objective of interventions are strictly linked to **policy objectives.** These include the **development of synergetic connections between schools and their social and cultural contexts**, encouraging coordinated planning and collaborative realisation of hybrid integration, with the involvement of parents and caregivers, the **provision of evidence to the current policy debate** and **the stimulation of public policies**, at the local, national and EU levels, that are coherent with the findings of the research and integrated into the overall policy goals.

CHILD-UP was also based on a plan of **dissemination and communication** of research-based materials, guidelines for intervention and self-evaluation, training package for professional (see [www.child-up.org](http://www.child-up.org)), and a plan to **multiply its impact** by influencing (a) local practices and policies through the action of **Local Stakeholder Committees**, and (b) national and European policy making through the action of an **International Stakeholder Committee**.

## **Structure and contents of the report**

The report aims to summarise the most important results of the field research realised during the project. The ambition is not that of reproducing all results, which have been presented in four different reports, but to select and re-organise data from these reports in a systematic way. For this purpose, the report includes eleven chapters and a general conclusion.

**Chapter 1** presents the conceptual framework of the project, including the most important concepts of agency (and gendered agency), facilitation of agency and hybrid integration.

**Chapter 2** explains the methodology of the project, in particular the mixed methods used in the field research and the impact of the pandemic on the research. Chapters 3-10 are based on the CHILD-UP research, using data from its different phases and methods.

**Chapter 3** describes element of legal, political and educational background of the field research, but also including some data from the field research.

**Chapter 4** describes the results of the field research for what concerns the school experience of children and in particular of CMB.

**Chapter 5** describes the results of field research on children's agency and the ways of facilitating it in school.

**Chapter 6** stresses the importance of language acquisition and language teaching for hybrid integration of CMB.

**Chapter 7** deepens the issue of language through an analysis of language mediation in the Italian setting to identify problems and possible advantages of this mediation.

**Chapter 8** describes the conditions of intercultural communication, i.e. communication directly enhancing hybrid integration through the interlacement of narratives of children's different personal cultural trajectories.

**Chapter 9** is a report of the ways in which children (and some professionals) describe the conditions of lockdown and return to school based on new regulations to prevent the diffusion of COVID 19.

**Chapter 10** is based on the children's evaluation of the activities organised in schools, through questionnaires and focus group interviews.

**Chapter 11** explains the tools produced on the basis of the field research, including an archive of materials, the guidelines for facilitation of agency and the training programme for professionals, including a MOOC (Massive Online Open Course), self-evaluation tools.

**Chapter 12** summarises the most important results of the CHILD-UP complex research and draws some conclusions from these results.

# Chapter 1. Concepts

## 1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the conceptual framework of the CHILD-UP project. In this project, theory was considered particularly relevant as a guide for field research. It was designed to be applied through a multi-method approach (see Chapter 2). From a theoretical point of view, the CHILD-UP project is based on a combination of five conceptual dimensions that inform and shape its analytical design:

1. The important factors that condition education and social life of children with migrant background.
2. The value of facilitation as a means to create dialogue and to enhance children's agency.
3. An anti-essentialist view of intercultural communication and hybrid integration.
4. The understanding of interpreting as language mediation.
5. Gender as social construction and gendered agency.
6. Narratives as expression of agency.

## 2. Childhood and Children

CHILD-UP is about childhood, a culturally dependent category that is defined differently by relevant approaches. The ages it includes, how children are viewed and treated, and their position in society are by no means universal. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1990), to which all CHILD-UP partner countries are signatories, was ground-breaking in its insistence that children's point of view be considered in decisions affecting children's lives. The definition of children it proposes, and which is the same in most legislation concerning children in the partner countries, are all persons under the age of 18. The UNCRC also states that children should be treated as children first, and other factors of their situation should be considered as secondary. For example, in the case of migrant children, they should be treated first as children, regardless of their migratory status. The UNCRC introduced the reference to children's participation for the first time in the history of interventions and policies addressed to children

## 3. Factors and intersections

Since the 1990s, the connection between the different social and cultural factors that condition human life has been labelled *intersectionality* (Crenshaw 1994). This concept has become popular in social sciences (e.g., Cho, Crenshaw and McCall 2013; Hankivsky 2014; Mason 2010) and it has also been related to migration and intercultural relations (e.g. Antyas 2012; Byrd Clark and Dervin 2014; Ensor and Gozdzia 2010; Kaukko and Wernesjö 2017; Szalai 2011). In brief, intersectionality means that "inequities are never the result of single, distinct factors. Rather, they are the outcome of intersections of different social locations, power relations and experiences" (Hankivsky 2014: 2). Intersections can be observed between several factors, such as race or ethnicity, gender, age, class, sexuality, abilities,

geography, religion, migration. These factors may intertwine with political, law, media, economic and educational structures. The interrelation between factors and structures may result in power relations and forms of discrimination. Thus, migrant children's marginalisation and discrimination may depend on the intersection of several factors integrated in Western models of life (Twum-Danso Imoh and Ame 2012). However, the concept of intersectionality can enhance the representation of the vulnerability and incapacity of migrant children, obscuring their contribution to the construction of social relations.

In the education system, the general representation of children's incapacity is important since knowledge is constructed and delivered by adults, and children must simply learn it (e.g., James and James 2004; Wyness 1999). This representation is strengthened in the case of migrant children when their difficulties in using language and in socialisation may emerge. Against this background, the school can be assigned the task of 'acculturating' migrant children (Horenczyk and Tatar 2012), through the conveyance of (1) knowledge (curriculum content, course content, etc.), (2) norms (rewarded and punished behaviours), (3) values (recognition of migrant children as a group, retention of their cultures, etc.), (4) basic and tacit assumptions about cultural differences. Knowledge, norms, values and basic assumptions are conveyed and evaluated in classroom interactions (Luhmann 2002; Mehan 1979). However, the patterns of classroom interaction can lead to migrant children's adaptation to the school context rather than enhancing their active participation (Janta and Harte 2016; Szalai 2011). Education frequently proposes predetermined knowledge of cultural values, inviting migrant children to adapt to educational expectations about their cultural identity (Baraldi 2012b). Thus, the definition of migrant children as vulnerable and incompetent conceals their potential *agency*.

#### **4. Facilitation of agency and dialogue**

The concept of children's agency (Baraldi, 2014a; Baraldi & Cockburn, 2018; James 2009; James & James 2008; Larkins 2019; Oswell 2013; Stoecklin & Fattore 2017) relates to children's actions that are not simple outputs of children's experience of adults' inputs. The CHILD-UP project recognises children's agency as children's active participation based on the availability of choices of action, which made their alternative actions available, and therefore can enhance change in social contexts – for instance, classroom interactions - and children's personal trajectories of lived experience (Baraldi & Cockburn 2018). While children's active participation can happen anytime in communication, the achievement of agency needs the promotion of a child's right to active participation in relation to choice and social change, enabling them to gain epistemic authority (Baraldi 2015a), i.e. rights and responsibilities to access and produce knowledge.

Agency is not simply an individual action, but is achieved in specific social conditions. Thus, analysis of agency must focus on its social constraints (Bjerke 2011; James 2009; Kirby, 2020; Leonard 2016; Mayall 2002; Moosa-Mitha 2005). The structural limitations can be imposed on individual participation and these can be particularly inhibitive for children, who are often included within a hierarchical generational order (Alanen 2009), for instance in the education system where knowledge is conveyed by teachers and children's performances are evaluated by teachers (Luhmann 2002).

Teachers are thus assigned much higher epistemic authority than children (Baraldi 2021), as it is shown by classical research on teacher-children interaction (Delamont 1976; Mehan 1979). However, more recently, research on teacher-children interactions has highlighted some mitigation of hierarchical forms of epistemic status and authority, depending on adults' promotional actions (e.g. Mercer & Littleton 2007; Walsh 2011), such as actions of scaffolding (Sharpe 2008) or "revoicing" (O'Connor & Michael 1996).

Sociological research in this field has also highlighted a more radical change, based on facilitation of children's agency (Baraldi 2014a, 2021; Baraldi & Iervese 2017; Wyness 2013). Facilitation is achieved in specific interactions, including organized sequences of adults' actions that enhance children's agency, and children's actions that display agency. In this view, agency is based on facilitation of dialogue as a specific form of communication, which "implies that each party makes a step in the direction of the other", while it does not imply "that they reach a shared position or even mutual warm feelings" (Wierbizka 2006: 692). In adult-children interactions, dialogue is "the starting point, whereby children are consulted and listened to", ensuring that "their ideas are taken seriously" (Matthews 2003: 268). Dialogue is both the form of facilitation, which can be defined as dialogic facilitation, and the result of facilitation, as children's exercise of agency in dialogic communication. Through dialogic facilitation, adult's actions support children's self-expression, take children's views into account, involve them in decision-making processes, and share power and responsibility with them (Hendry 2009; Fitzgerald et al. 2010; Shier 2001; Wyness 2013). To sum up, facilitation is a form of communication designed to mitigate hierarchical forms of teaching and to encourage, enhance and support children's agency.

Facilitation is a way of managing predefined assumptions, doubts, divergent interpretations, different stories and experiences, unpredicted emotions, problems. The basic distinction is between the hierarchical and non-hierarchical (facilitative and dialogic) forms of interaction, which is visible in the organised sequences of facilitators and children's actions. This basic distinction generates a second distinction between enhancement and lack of enhancement of children's (or their parents') agency, thus between upgrading and downgrading of children's (parents') epistemic authority, i.e. rights and responsibilities of producing knowledge in narrative forms. In particular, facilitating agency means dealing with children/parents as persons who can express their own perspectives, experiences and emotions, rather than dealing with them as fulfilling standardised roles, obeying orders, answering predefined questions, and showing school performances. Thus, facilitating agency means empowering children/parents' expressions of different perspectives by showing sensitivity for this expression. Empowerment and sensitivity are less evident in case of more hierarchical forms of interaction. To sum up, facilitating dialogue means promoting equity in the distribution of children/parents' exercise of agency, while hierarchical interactions promote inequality in this distribution.

The CHILD-UP project aimed at looking for and analysing children's ways of expressing agency, structural conditions of agency, and possible way of encouraging, enhancing and supporting this agency through different types of field research, including questionnaires, focus group and individual interviews, recording of classroom activities. This investigation concerned the expression of children's voices, their social and cultural identities and engagement, made possible through the

structure and conduct of the classroom, included in a larger social context. To this end, it was particularly important to investigate interactive classroom practices intending to support non-hierarchical relationships between children and between children and adults. This investigation aimed to evaluate the planning, delivery and conduct of classroom interactions.

## **5. Intercultural communication and hybrid integration**

The analysis of structural constraints of children's agency, in particular the analysis of facilitation, focuses on the promotion of personalised versions of meanings. This may include cultural meanings (Abdallah-Preteuille 2006), thus enabling intercultural dialogue in multicultural classrooms.

In several studies, the definition of "multicultural" classroom is based primarily on the presence of participants from a variety of cultural backgrounds (for a review of this literature, see Mahon & Cushner 2012; Grant & Portera 2011; Schell 2009). In particular, studies on intercultural education show that there are a variety of ways for handling cultural meanings and identity (Gundara & Portera 2008; Gundara 2000; Huber & Reynolds 2014; Mahon & Cushner 2012; Radstake & Leeman 2010). Importantly, these studies show that cultural identity is commonly associated with communication within specific cultural groups. Intercultural dialogue is thus considered as an enrichment based on acknowledgment of difference among predefined cultural identities (Alred, Byram, & Fleming 2003; Grant & Portera 2011; Guilherme 2013; Portera 2008).

This is an essentialist perspective which "presents people's individual behaviour as entirely defined and constrained by the cultures in which they live so that the stereotype becomes the essence of who they are" (Holliday 2011: 4). Essentialism takes for granted that cultural identities are determined before intercultural communication (Baraldi 2015b). The essentialist ideology is a feature of 'othering' – a process whereby the western world attempts to legitimise its hegemony at the expense of 'others' (Holliday 2011). Essentialism emphasizes internal cultural stereotypes. Anti-essentialist views stress the prefix *inter*, which indicates the importance of relationships and communication, and warns against insisting on predefined cultural identities which are based on an ideological essentialist representation of cultural belonging (Byrd Clark & Dervin 2014). In this view, identity is seen as fluid, malleable, and contingently constructed in communication (Dervin & Liddicoat 2013; Piller 2007, 2011; Tupas 2014). Some studies conclude that the concept of cultural identity can be replaced by the concept of hybrid identity (Jackson 2014; Kramsch & Uryu 2012; Nair Venugopal 2009), which means that identity is always negotiated in communication processes through the manifestation of personal cultural trajectories (Holliday & Amadasi, 2020). In particular, children can show their personal cultural trajectories in communication and these manifestations of trajectories are always negotiated in communication processes, so that they cannot be considered as manifestations of belonging to specific groups.

The CHILD-UP project is based on a non-essentialist interpretation of cultures and cultural identities and aims to investigate the dialogic construction of narratives of culture and identity within classroom communication. Hybridity is conceived as the outcome of a complex intertwining of interactions designed to "open up many possibilities for how narratives can intertwine and express themselves"

(Holliday & Amadasi 2020: 11). The concept of “hybridity” refers to two aspects: (1) facilitation of narratives of personal cultural trajectories as negotiated in situated interactions within the classroom; (2) inclusion in these narratives of a variety of conditions, events and changes related to the experience of migration. The implication of this approach is that facilitation of narratives of personal cultural trajectory does not insist on cultural diversity and identity (Byrd Clark & Dervin 2014). In this non-essentialist perspective, classrooms are the setting for sharing narratives about personal cultural trajectories - the production of *small cultures* (Holliday 1999). According to Holliday (2013: 3), small cultures are “cultural environments which are located in proximity to the people concerned”.

In this view, the classroom –and any other social context experienced by children – are conceived as “multicultural” since they support the production of a variety of small cultures rather than being the sum of individuals with different, predefined cultural identities. Communication is *intercultural* when it produces cultural varieties (Baraldi 2015b). Thus, intercultural communication may or may not be constructed in interaction. The promotion of agency may support intercultural communication because it creates the condition for participants’ choices; however, intercultural communication is not necessarily a consequence of agency. The same is true for participants’ identities: children’s participation may or may not lead to the construction of cultural identities in interaction and the construction of these identities is always based on hybrid conditions of communication. This means that integration in social contexts is always hybrid integration, i.e. integration is based on local negotiation of meanings. This also implies that integration cannot be considered a reduction of variability; rather it means enrichment of social systems with variety and variability of personal cultural trajectories produced in small cultural situations.

If promoting children’s agency means promoting children’s choices, children’s participation is not instrumental to achieve any predetermined objective, including intercultural education. Such a predetermination contradicts the conditions of children’s agency because it assumes that children’s choices are subordinated to adults’ agenda.

## **6. Language mediation**

In the education system and other social systems in which children with migrant background and their families are involved, problems of language proficiency can arise, preventing their participation and thus their exercise of agency. In this case, public services of interpreting or mediation can be activated to help children and their families to participate in communication. Thus, interpreters and mediators can be considered as facilitators of exercise of agency in dialogic communication.

Since the end of the Nineties, Public Service Interpreting has been analysed as an interactional achievement (Wadensjö 1998). Public Service Interpreting is a form of mediation (Baraldi 2017), which may include intercultural adaptation (Baraldi & Gavioli 2017). However, mediation as coordination of the interaction between participants who speak different languages does not necessarily deal with the interactional manifestation of participants’ cultural identities. In a much broader view mediation means *language mediation*, i.e. mediation between participants speaking

different languages but not necessarily manifesting different cultural presuppositions or identities in the interaction.

According to Wadensjö (1998), language mediation includes implicit and explicit coordination of institutional interactions. Implicit coordination is achieved through interpreter's renditions, which may modify, i.e. expand, reduce, substitute, or summarise the content of previous utterances. Explicit coordination is carried out through actions focusing on the organisation of the interaction, especially on "non-renditions", such as requests for clarification or comments on translations. In order to coordinate an interaction, interpreters need to exercise agency (Baraldi 2019), which is produced within the interpreter-mediated interaction and depends on the interplay of the conversational moves of all participants (Mason 2009). Several studies show that interpreters' exercise of agency empowers migrants' active participation (Angelelli 2004; Inghilleri 2005; Mason & Ren 2012). Mediators' agency needs to be recognised and legitimised by institutional providers (Tipton 2008). Recognition means acknowledging that interpreters' agency is based on other participants' attribution of rights and responsibility of access to and production of knowledge, i.e. attribution of epistemic authority (Baraldi & Gavioli 2020).

Language mediation is based on a reflexive form of coordination (Baraldi 2017). Reflexive coordination means that the interpreter's utterances focus on the conditions of the communication process, thus paving the way to alternative communications (taking opportunities, resolving problems, clarifying doubts). Reflexive coordination therefore describes what interpreter's agency means in terms of mediation as coordination of the interaction. Baraldi and Gavioli (2015) show that reflexive coordination may be provided through renditions and non-renditions in dyadic sequences. Renditions provide the gist of what has been said by one participant, adapting or re-contextualising it for another participant. Non-renditions are produced may clarify ambiguous, complicated or incomplete utterances, which may make it difficult for the mediator to choose an appropriate rendition to clarify/explain what has been said.

In educational contexts, language mediation often occurs in teacher-parent interactions, parent-teacher conferences or meetings on a one-to-one basis. Studies on interpreter-mediated interactions between teachers and migrant parents are rare in the context of education. Davitti analyses conversations during mediated interactions in English and Italian, between teachers and mothers in Italy and the UK. She concludes that "interpreters' upgrading moves, by trying to elicit understanding in a context of minimal or absent uptake from the mothers, do not create any effective opportunities for the latter to express their thoughts and opinions" (Davitti 2013: 190). Vargas-Urpi and Arumi Ribas (2014) show that that quasi-pedagogical intentions seem to emerge from the interpreter's expanded renditions. Vargas-Urpi (2015, 2017) demonstrates that interpreters' actions tend to exclude parents, either by substituting their possible answers to questions or by engaging in dyadic sequences with teachers, without providing renditions of what has been said in these dyadic sequences. Both Davitti (2013) and Vargas-Urpi (2015, 2017) suggest a negative impact of language mediation which may lead to migrant parents' becoming assimilated rather than empowered, although Davitti (2015) also suggests possible empowerment of parents in a later paper.

The CHILD-UP project has investigated the ways in which language mediation can (or cannot) support children and their families in the exercise of agency in teacher-parents interactions. This analysis however has been possible only in Italy since the conditions of pandemic created serious obstacles in the other countries. The analysis of language mediation was not foreseen in the United Kingdom, since the use of English language is widespread in schools and children are proficient in this use.

## **7. Gender as social construction and gendered agency**

According to Connell (2009), gender is a structure of inequality, which is constructed and embedded at the institutional, individual, and interactional levels of every society. In this perspective, gender is a set of lasting and widespread patterns, norms, values, expectations, discourses and narratives for identities and relationships. This determines a gender order, that is a specific system of relationships, characterised mostly by binary identities and hierarchical relationships between men and women.

The CHILD-UP project has interpreted gender differences and identities as produced in communicative processes, and in a situated way: through their participation and in particular, through their exercise of agency in interactions, children may stress differences and construct gendered identities, but sometimes they do not. Gender is interpreted as an ongoing accomplishment, displayed, performed, “done” in social situations and everyday interactions (West & Zimmerman 1987). Under the influence - in terms of constraints and opportunities - of gender structure, in social interactions children can ignore, or reproduce, or negotiate gender. While constructing their gendered identity, they can adapt, “redo”, and “undo” gender, they can reject and try to subvert gender dichotomy and hierarchy (Butler 2004; Connell 2009, 2010; Deutsch 2007; West & Zimmerman 2009). Thus, the CHILD-UP project did not take for granted that gender counts; rather gender was investigated as an empirical phenomenon which may be (or may not be) evident in social situations of hybrid integration.

Adult-child interactions are particularly important in the process of gender construction. On the one hand, they can empower children and support their agency in negotiating meaning, actions, and power. On the other hand, they can reinforce gender stereotypes and roles, also leading to gendered forms of exploitation and abuse.

## **8. Narratives as expressions of agency**

Children’s agency can be shown through narrative production if and when children can choose the ways and contents of narrating their perspectives and experiences, thus influencing the social situations in which they are involved (Baraldi & Iervese 2017). The concept of agency as production of personal narratives draws on two perspectives. Firstly, narratives are produced in the context of interpreting and assessing communications and identities (Fisher 1987; Somers 1994). Secondly, narrative are produced as storytelling in specific interactions (Norrick 2007).

Both perspectives converge in considering narratives as produced in communication processes. According to Fisher, all forms of communication are stories, situational, as well as historically and culturally grounded. He suggests that “narration is the context for interpreting and assessing all communication” as it is omnipresent in communication (Fisher 1987: 193). Narratives are social constructions in which the observed reality is interpreted and ‘storied’ in different ways. Narratives are plural and competing, as the same events and phenomena can be narrated from different points of view and through different sets of categories. Somers (1994) describes ways of narrative construction, differentiating narratives of the self (ontological narratives), public narratives, conceptual narratives (including scientific concepts), and metanarratives concerning “the epic dramas of our time” (Ibid.: 619), for instance migration.

Facilitation of construction of narratives can provide the opportunity to highlight meanings/types of narratives and identities of the narrating participants (Bamberg 2011), thus enhancing and supporting their agency. In the interaction involving children, for instance interviews and classroom activities, facilitation of narratives can include any type of information (e.g., about facts, events, situations, ideas, experiences, emotions, expectations), concerning past experiences or events, present life, future projects and expectations. Narratives do not only concern story content but also concern the rights and responsibilities associated with the activity of narrating (Norrick 2007), thus showing children’s agency as authority in producing knowledge (epistemic authority). In particular, facilitation can enable the construction of new narratives (Winslade & Monk 2008; Winslade & Williams 2012) by enhancing dialogue and children’s agency.

Through facilitation, children can produce different types of narrative: (1) narratives of the child’s self (ontological narratives); (2) family narratives (concerning parents, grandparents, siblings etc.); (3) narratives about events, relations and places (e.g. family, school) having particular relevance for the child; (4) narratives about personal cultural trajectories and cultural identities (narratives and metanarratives of migration) (see section 5). Moreover, a narrative can display the teller’s identity. For example, it may highlight (1) personal identity, when it concerns personal experiences, ideas, emotions and the teller’s rights, responsibilities and choices; (2) gendered identity; (3) family identity, when it concerns the meaning, the importance and the (positive or negative) value assigned to family relationships, (4) cultural identity - when it concerns membership of a group, e.g. national or ethnic group - or hybrid identity.

Investigating children’s rights of narrating, i.e. rights and responsibilities of producing knowledge (epistemic authority) means observing the following important features (Norrick 2007, 2013):

1. Each participant contributes to constructing and negotiating a narrative in interactions as teller, co-teller, listener, or elicitor of new narratives.
2. Narratives can receive different comments from different participants; in particular, each narrative can be followed by response narratives that refer to it, and this enhances the production of interlaced stories.
3. The interactional production of narratives can present problems of tellability, for their transgressive contents, and reactions to these problems.

## **9. The analysis in CHILD-UP**

The CHILD-UP project aimed to analyse facilitation (and mediation) of dialogue, children's agency, narrative production of small cultures, and their results in terms of construction of identity, in particular for what concerns children with a migrant background and gender. Against this background, the CHILD-UP research concerned the following general aspects:

- (1) Conditions of hybrid integration as realised (or not realised) through the exercise of agency of children with migrant background
- (2) Facilitative (and non-facilitative) actions promoting dialogue and agency in the adult-children interactions and through narratives of personal cultural trajectories, specifically for what concerns CMB
- (3) Possible gender differences in the exercise of this agency

This research implies four levels of investigation: (1) the conditions of children's lived experience in family, school, peer relations, and other possible social contexts; (2) the use of language in social interactions involving children; (3) the production of narratives through interviews with children and professionals, and during activities with children; and (4) the forms of facilitation of children's agency.

This investigation is based on a multi-method approach to field research, including quantitative and qualitative analyses, which is explained in Chapter 2. In the following chapters, the results of the mentioned four levels of investigation will be described, explained and commented.

## Chapter 2. Methodology

### 1. The research design

First, the project addressed the target group of CMB including (1) first and second generation long-term resident children, (2) newcomers, including refugees and children recently arrived through family reunification, (3) unaccompanied children, both long-term residents and newcomers. The research involved CMB and native children belonging to nursery schools or preschools (ISCED 0, aged 5-6), primary schools (ISCED 1, aged 9-10), lower secondary schools (ISCED 2, aged 12-13) and higher secondary schools (ISECD 3, aged 15-16).

In each country participating in the project, the research was implemented in **specific areas**, chosen to analyse a large variety of conditions of CMB's hybrid integration. These areas are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Research areas

Country	Location
Belgium	Wallonia and Flanders
Finland	Tampere region and South Ostrobothnia
Germany	Saxony and Hamburg
Italy	Modena, Reggio Emilia and Genoa
Poland	Kraków and Łuków (region of Małopolska)
Sweden	Malmö
UK	Boroughs of Barnet, Bromley and Merton (Greater London)

The research plan was divided into four parts. The **first part** was a background research on migrant children's condition of hybrid integration in Europe and in the seven countries involved in the fieldwork. The **second part** was a survey on the local schools, protection services, educational and mediation agencies and families. The **third part** was a qualitative research on the perspectives of professionals (i.e. teachers, educators, social workers, interpreters/mediators) and children. The **fourth part** was an evaluative research on relevant examples of school activities.

The survey was the basis for understanding the context in which qualitative data were collected, facilitating the comparison of the different conditions in which hybrid integration is promoted in the selected areas. The survey allowed the connection of the knowledge of the context with the qualitative analysis of the process of hybrid integration, in order to understand to what extent this integration may depend on the context and on the process. The different effects and the connections between context and process were very important to understand hybrid integration.

The qualitative part of the research also allowed for the understanding of some relevant forms of learning achieved through active participation in classroom activities. First, **intercultural learning**, based on understanding and awareness of plural perspectives, relations among perspectives, mutual enrichments, equality and cooperation. Second, **learning to construct meanings in social interactions**, i.e. to produce texts and oral stories, compare different materials and stories and give them a shared meaning, share the outputs of activities. Third, **learning to use multimodality**, i.e. learning to combine written, oral and visual forms of communication, and to manage different media; this type of learning was both hindered and emphasized by the pandemic.

## 2. The background research

The background research was a desk research and analysis of existing data on CMB's lives in Europe and evaluation of practices of hybrid integration. This research was based on both scientific and grey literature, including available data on unaccompanied migrant children, children with families who are documented or undocumented and refugees. It concerned assessment of wellbeing of CMB and their families as evaluated through available data on legislation, integration policies, support programs, educational practices. In particular, some data were gathered through a template which was completed by the research partners and then reviewed to find key information. The most important results of this background research are summarised in Chapter 3.

## 3. The survey

The survey was mainly conducted in schools and involved all children, their parents/guardians and teachers. Moreover, it involved social workers, professionals in reception centres and interpreters/mediators working in schools. The objectives of the survey were the following four:

- To gain a detailed and multi-angled understanding of the conditions of CMB's hybrid integration.
- To focus on CMB's participation and agency in schools from the viewpoint of children, their parents/guardians and professionals working with them (teachers, social workers, interpreters/mediators working in schools).
- To investigate essential factors influencing children's hybrid integration, i.e. gender, age, country of origin, language skills, family composition, length of stay<sup>1</sup>.
- To study how the education and social protection systems enhance or hinder CMB's agency, conditioning hybrid integration.

The survey included three main types of variables. First, it included data regarding **children's experience** of everyday life and education. Second, it included data on **parents' perceptions** of their social and cultural background, involvement in school activities and education of children. Third, it included data on **teaching, social services and interpreting services**.

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, countries of origin were very fragmented and could not be used, while family composition and length of stay did not provide relevant information.

The schools participating in the research were identified for ISCED 0-3 (age 5-16), in relation to the rate of CMB (at least 20% of children in the classes). The choices in the seven countries depended on specific local conditions. The focus was primarily on ISCED 1 and ISCED 2, which are crucial for the integration of most CMB in these countries, although higher secondary schools were also selected, above all in Italy and Belgium. In Finland, Germany and Italy the research also focused on ISCED 0 (aged 5-6). In Greater London, the research only focused on ISCED 1, as this is the only stage at which schools are free to plan activities concerning inclusion, dialogue and cultural awareness.

The main questionnaire was created for secondary schools, then adapted to the age of children. For ISCED 1 children, there were only small adaptations. For ISCED 0 children, simple questions were formulated in a specific type of questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the whole class. CMB were identified through a question about the origin of their parents and their place of birth. There are two reasons for this procedure. First, this type of sampling allows for the comparison of levels of integration of CMB and national children. It is therefore important to compare data from migrant and non-migrant children and parents. Second, it avoids the possible labelling of CMB as selected for research activities.

Table 1 presents the number of collected questionnaires. The total number was over 7,000 and the children were almost 4,000. However, the numbers vary across different research areas. In particular, the number of children was very high in Finland, Poland, the UK and above all Italy. In Italy, the number of parents was also very high, while it was particularly difficult to involve parents in Sweden and Finland. Teachers and educators, as well as social workers, were very numerous in Germany. Interpreters/mediators were numerous in Italy and Sweden (in the UK this category was not included since there was no need of interpreting in schools). In total, the highest number of questionnaires was collected in Italy, the lowest number in Sweden.

**Table 1. Number of questionnaires collected.**

Country	Children	Parents	Teachers. Educators	Social Workers	Mediators/ Interpreters	Total
Belgium	385	128	29	2	1	547
Finland	655	164	59	37	20	891
Germany	556	172	139	139	20	1,152
Italy	856	829	84	83	36	1,888
Poland	673	621	35	21	10	1,250
Sweden	194	33	39	39	36	327
United Kingdom	640	394	36	11	-	1,082
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,959</b>	<b>2,341</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>7,176</b>

Table 2 shows the distribution of children and parents in the different types of schools: preschools and nursery schools (ISCED 0), primary schools (ISCED 1), lower secondary schools (ISCED 2) and higher secondary schools (ISCED 3). The table shows that primary schools were the main target (46.5% of children and 51.9% of parents) also because in the UK all respondents were included in

this type of school. The numbers are much lower for ISCED 0 and ISCED 3 children.

**Table 2. Distribution of children and parents for ISCED**

Country	ISCED 0		ISCED 1		ISCED 2		ISCED 3		Total	total
	child	par	child	par	child	par	child	par	child	par
Belgium*	-	-	150	*	163		72	*	385	128
Finland	74	32	202	58	228	44	151	30	655	164
Germany	185	59	170	38	126	58	75	17	556	172
Italy	141	176	323	301	200	184	192	168	856	829
Poland	-	-	289	348	384	273	-	-	673	621
Sweden	-	4	66	10	56	9	72	10	194	33
United Kingdom	-	-	640	394	-	-	-	-	640	394
Total	400	271	1,840	1,149	1,157	568	562	225	3,959	2,341
<b>Total %</b>	10.1	12.2	46.5	51.9	29.2	25.7	14.2	10.2	100	100

\*Parents in ISCED 1 and 3 were not distinguished in Belgium due to the way of collecting the data

Table 3 shows the share of CMB and their parents in the survey sample. This share is also different in different research areas; this depends on the schools and centres which were involved in the survey. Percentages are very high in Belgium and Sweden and much lower in Finland, Germany (in particular for parents) and Poland. In the whole sample, more than one third of children and about one third of parents have a migrant background.

**Table 3. Distribution of CMB and their parents (% on the total number)**

Country	CMB		parents	
	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	221	57.9	94	74.0
Finland	122	21.0	26	25.5
Germany	127	22.8	24	8.1
Italy	334	46.7	255	39.0
Poland	152	22.6	137	26.8
Sweden	144	77.0	9	47.4
United Kingdom	203	32.2	156	39.6
<b>Total</b>	1,303	<b>36.7</b>	701	<b>33.3</b>

Table 4 shows the distribution of gender. The gender balance of girls and boys among child respondents is almost fifty-fifty. Concerning professionals' and parents' gender the situation is the same in all countries: most professional and parent respondents are female and between 70-80% of

parent respondents are mothers.

**Table 4. Sex /Gender**

	Males		Females	
	n.	%	n.	%
Children	1,932	49.5	1,968	50.6
Parents	508	22.9	1,708	77.1
Teachers	65	15.7	350	84.3
Social workers	93	29.1	226	70.8
Interpreters/mediators	31	25.8	89	74.2

Gender was not restricted to a binary variable. Implementing this principle in practice was not as easy, however. For instance, due to the upswing of anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment in Poland, the question concerning gender did not include the choice “other” but an open-ended question for respondents to indicate what their gender is. Anyway, the number of “other” was very low, thus this category will not be considered in the tables.

#### **4. Individual and focus group interviews**

The qualitative research was based on individual and focus group interviews addressing professionals and children’s perceptions. This research aimed to provide qualitative, reliable local data in different local contexts. This research captured the attitudes and values of the respondents, seen through the prism of their subjective experiences. The individual and focus group interviews promoted perceptions of difficulties at school together with potential and opportunities which school brings, the impact of policies and the support offered to CMB and professionals working with them.

First, the research addressed the ways in which professionals enable children to learn and motivate them to participate in the social processes in which they are involved. Professionals who were interviewed were (1) teachers, community educators and facilitators; (2) mediators/interpreters; (3) social workers and guardians in reception centres. Second, the research addressed children’s expectations, activities and desired future activities, relationships with the school system and the protection systems (where existing). The interviews to children concerned: (1) the overall degree and the specific aspects of (dis)satisfaction concerning education and social relations in the community, and (2) the assessment of meanings of agency and hybrid integration in school and community. Children’s experiences were explored with regard to schools as learning, emotional and relational spaces, shedding light on children’s aspirations, peer relationships and cooperation with parents, as well as the gender and intercultural dimensions of social relationships. Thus, this qualitative study expanded the findings from the quantitative survey, showing a more detailed and nuanced picture of the levels of participation, agency and hybrid integration of CMB.

The qualitative study was conducted on the same guidelines for the interviews in all countries. The interviews were adjusted to the local context and to the interviewees. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the fieldwork was either entirely postponed or interrupted and only resumed when the pandemic regulations were relaxed. The schools which took part in the survey were invited to participate in this qualitative research. Although all of the invited schools recognised the importance of the topic and the potential of the CHILD-UP project, it was not always possible to involve them in the study. The research sample was modified in Belgium, Germany and Poland, where some schools refused to participate further, citing the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased workload faced by professionals. To cope with the situation, new institutions were successfully approached. Additionally, it was not possible to carry out interviews in reception centres in Germany because the pandemic regulations imposed many limitations within the scope of the project. In Finland, the UK and Italy the study was conducted mostly in schools which had already participated in the quantitative part of the project, with only a few additional interviews conducted with newly recruited schools.

The interviews with professionals were conducted between early March 2020 and lasted for a year (until March 2021). Table 5 shows the number of professionals (284) who took part in the research and their distribution among categories and countries. All professionals worked at all ISCED levels and had regular contact with CMB. The largest number of interviewed professionals were teachers, followed by social workers. Respondents included class teachers, subject teachers, teachers of a local language as a second language, school assistants, and youth and leisure instructors. As for the social workers, the sample included both social workers working in the school and in a reception centre as well as those working directly with CMB and those working primarily with the entire family. Some of the professionals (e.g. in Germany) also had a migration background.

**Table 5. Interviews with professionals**

Country	Teachers/educators		Social Workers	Mediators/interpreters		Professionals in reception centres		Total participants
	Interviews	FGI/FGI participant	Interviews	Interviews	FGI/FGI participant	Interviews	FGI/FGI participant	
Belgium	10	-	2	1	1/4	-	-	17
Finland	13	-	7	4	-	-	3/10	34
Germany	8	4/14	9	2	1/3	-	-	36
Italy	43	-	6	1	8/21	6	-	77
Poland	17	1/5	8	-	1/7	2	-	39
Sweden	12	-	8	5	-	-	-	25
UK	42	-	14	-	-	-	-	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>5/19</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11/35</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3/10</b>	<b>284</b>

In Chapter 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9, quotes from the interviews will be presented with the following codes: PL\_SW1\_F where PL is country, SW is interviewed (e.g. SW - social workers, T-teachers, M- mediators/translators, CH - children), 1 - interview number, F/M - female/male.

Interviews with children were conducted between February 2020 and June 2021. The focus group interviews were 103 and the individual interviews (in Belgium, Germany and Poland) were 65. The total number of involved children was 1305. In the case of FGI with children, the sample included both CMB and native children. In some countries – such as Belgium - questions concerning CMB were not asked as this would mean revealing personal data as well as sharing information which children may not have wanted to reveal to their colleagues. The group sizes of the FGI with children varied between countries and schools – from 2 people (in Finland or Germany) to 24 children (in Belgium).

**Table 6. Interviews with children**

Country	FGI	FGI participant	Individual interviews	Total number of participants
Belgium	4	89	11	100
Finland	7	16	-	16
Germany	23	52	27	79
Italy	33	513	-	513
Poland	6	40	27	67
Sweden	10	30	-	30
UK	20	500	-	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>1240</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>1305</b>

Quotes from the individual and focus group interviews are presented In Chapters 4, 5 6, 8 and 9. The following codes are used:

BE, FI, G, IT, PL, SWE, UK	countries
FGn	focus group interview followed by number of the FG
CHn, Tn, Mn, SWn	Respondents (children teachers, mediators, social workers) in individual interviews, followed by the number of interview
FGn_CH (etc.)	Focus groups followed by identity of respondents
B, G	boy or girl in the individual or FG interviews with children.
F, M	females of males in individual or FG interviews with adults

## 5. Analysis of activities

This research concerned activities in schools. This was an evaluative type of research, taking into account both the processes and the results of the activities and aiming to assess their effectiveness. The research paid attention to the ways of enhancing agency and hybrid integration. The collection of data was based on the use of **mixed methods**: video-recording and audio-recording of activities, questionnaires and focus groups with children for their assessment. Video-recording and audio-recording were used to document if and in which ways hybrid integration was based on agency during the activities. They provided indicators to check: (a) relevance, forms and problems of

interactions; (b) narratives produced in interactions; (c) possible gendered differences in participation and interaction (see Chapter 5 for more information).

Video-recording was particularly important in this research. This is a technique which allows the researcher's observation of the classroom interaction directly. This observation can capture the complexity of both verbal and non-verbal actions, registering anything that happens in the classroom, including the physical environment of the interaction. The researcher can re-consider the recorded data many times, thus being able to accurately reflect on their meanings. The transcription of video-recordings is an important additional tool, which can improve the reflection on the data, as they are available for further management, and improve the discussion between more researchers. The transcriptions may be either complete or selected after an accurate observation of the interaction. The decision is taken after the first analysis of the video-recorded activities.

There are also some limitations of video-recording. First, it can enhance lack of spontaneity. However, the coordinator's long experience shows that the children tend to quickly forget the presence of the video-recorder. Second, as the machine registers anything that happens, some parts may be irrelevant or redundant for the analysis. However, redundancy can be a resource for further analysis and different research interests in future. Third, working with one recorder means only registering what happens in front of it. This prevents from seeing everything happening in the classroom and invites the researcher to be very careful to choose the way of using the machine. In particular, the researcher must know very well the meaning of what s/he is observing. Thus, in this research it was necessary to use the technical resources very carefully, at the same time avoiding to be too much invasive and therefore to inhibit participation.

The use of video-recordings depended on the local context, for example on the type of activity, the spatial disposition of the children, the dispositions of the light sources, but also the way in which children reacted to video-recording. When video-recording was difficult or impossible, audio-recording was used. Audio-recording is not effective in capturing non-verbal and contextual situations, but it can be anyway effective in understanding and analysing communication.

The recordings were transcribed and analysed to understand the efficacy of the activities in facilitating and mediating children's agency (and parents' agency in case of language mediation. Video-recording and audio-recording (and their transcriptions) can document if and in which ways facilitation of dialogue and exercise of agency is achieved. They provide qualitative indicators to check relevance, forms and problems of interactions, production of narratives and differences in participation in interactions.

Pre-tests and post-tests, both delivered through questionnaires, allowed the understanding of children's perception of the activities. The pre-test included information on the perception of objectives of the activities and the expected outcomes. The post-test checked if objectives and outcomes were achieved, providing information about the short-term results of the activities. In several countries, the post-test was followed by a focus group to understand, by qualitative means, children's perspectives on the activities.

This research allowed for the comparison of the participation of CMB and native children, and thus for the assessment of hybrid integration through agency, possible gender biases, functioning of dialogue. We collected data in ISCED 0, ISCED 1, ISCED 2 and ISCED 3 classes and groups. The project planned to collect data about:

1. Practices enhancing **second language learning**. Participation and hybrid integration of CMB who do not know their second language is a main concern in schools. CHILD-UP aimed to analyse if second language learning is based on **dialogic methods** improving children's agency and hybrid integration.
2. Practices of **intercultural education**. CHILD-UP aimed to analyse effective dialogic practices of intercultural education, observing if this education enhances fluid and malleable hybrid identities as contingently constructed in communication, leading to intercultural sensitivity and intercultural learning.
3. Practices of **language and cultural mediation**. Language and cultural mediation is considered a culturally sensitive activity which can ensure the achievement of multilingualism. Through language mediation, migrants' agency can be enhanced, thus language mediation can create the conditions for cross-cultural adaptation.
4. Practices of **dialogic facilitation of interaction**. CHILD-UP aimed to analyse how facilitation is achieved through different ways of supporting children's agency, encouraging their personal expressions and involving them in a variety of conversations about their interests and needs.

In fact, collection of data included prevalently cases of dialogic facilitation of interactions, second language learning and language mediation with parents (and sometimes children), while intercultural education was infrequent.

### ***5.1 General overview on the activities***

Table 7 presents the collected data. The pandemic had a very relevant impact on the quantity of collected data. However, the big effort of the researchers produced a very important result in terms of quantity and quality of data, with 103 classes involved and 207 recordings of activities. The most relevant difficulty concerned mediation in almost all areas, since during the pandemic external professionals were not admitted in several schools, while recordings could be done directly by teachers and facilitators. More specifically, it was not possible to conduct focus group interviews with the involved classes in Poland and Sweden. In Belgium and Germany, the number of FGI was reduced. The table shows that almost everywhere (with the partial exception of Belgium) an equivalent number of pre-tests and post-tests was collected. What is important here is not the number, which was reduced by the impact of the pandemic and in some cases by the reluctance of parents in giving permission to record the activities. It is important that all participants could evaluate the activities. The table shows that the research was very successful in Italy and the UK. In particular, despite the frequent closure of schools, success in Italy was based on two important factors: (1) schools were strongly committed to collaborate; and (2) remote activities were promptly and effectively organised in schools.

**Table 7. Collected data**

	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Recordings</b>	<b>mediation</b>	<b>Focus group interviews</b>	<b>Pre-test</b>	<b>Post-test</b>
Belgium	16	23	1	6	353	379
Finland	7	26	-	7	13	9
Germany	10	26	8	5	154	154
Italy	33	68	18	33	559	513
Poland	13	13	-	-	145	140
Sweden	4	11	1	-	32	30
UK	20	40	-	20	428	376
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>1684</b>	<b>1601</b>

Table 8 shows the distribution of the collected data according to the type of ISCED. The distribution shows that ISCED 1 and ISCED 2 are the most frequent in the research and ISCED 0 the less frequent since it was only included in Germany and Italy. ISCED 3 was only numerous in Belgium and Italy. This is not surprising since in general it is more difficult to involve higher secondary schools in activities for CMB.

**Table 8. Distribution for ISCED**

	<b>ISCED 0</b>	<b>ISCED 1</b>	<b>ISCED 2</b>	<b>ISCED 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
Belgium	-	5	4	14	23
Finland	-	15	11	-	26
Germany	10	6	8	2	26
Italy	17	15	19	17	68
Poland	-	1	12	-	13
Sweden	-	2	7	2	11
UK	-	40	-	-	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>207</b>

Table 9 shows numbers and percentages of the pre-test and post-test questionnaires, which reflects the number of participants in the activities. As mentioned above, the number of participants was influenced by several factors, including parents' consent and the impact of the pandemic. The highest number of participants was recruited in Italy, the UK and Belgium. In Belgium, participants in the post-test were more numerous than those who compiled the pre-test questionnaire. Moreover, in Belgium, 72 ISCED 1 children (more than half of the total) compiled the questionnaires prepared for ISCED 0 since they were not considered competent for ISCED 1 questionnaires by the teachers. The other partners involved a much lower number of children. In the Finnish case, there were few activities which could be realised and also children were few. This is also true for Sweden, where few children were involved. Apart from the case of Belgium, participants in post-test were a bit less numerous than in pre-test, in particular in the UK.

**Table 9. Participants by Country**

	Pre test		Post test	
	N.	%	N.	%
BE	353**	20,96	379**	23,67
DE	154*	9,14	154*	9,61
FI	13	0,77	9	0,56
IT	559*	33,19	513*	32,04
PL	145	8,61	140	8,74
SW	32	1,90	30	1,87
UK	428	25,41	376	23,48
Total	1684	100	1601	100

\* Including ISCED 0

\*\* Including questionnaires ISCED 0 administered to ISCED 1

Table 10 shows that the majority of questionnaires was collected in ISCED 1 classes/groups, while ISCED 0 classes/groups and ISCED 3 classes/groups were less involved.

**Table 10. Participants by ISCED**

	Pre test		Post test	
	N.	%	N.	%
ISCED 0	160	9,50	158	9,86
ISCED 1	786*	46,67	707*	44,15
ISCED 2	422	25,05	435	27,17
ISCED 3	316	18,76	301	18,80
Total	1684	100	1601	100

\* Including questionnaires ISCED 0 administered to ISCED 1 in Belgium

Table 11 shows that girls were a bit more numerous than boys. In the post-test, the difference between girls and boys slightly increased, because fewer boys responded to the post-tests. Moreover, 0.8% of respondents in the pre-test and 1.11 % in the post-test declared themselves other than male or female. Those who did not declare neither females nor males are thus very few; therefore, it is impossible to use this data for the analysis.

**Table 11. Participants in pre-test by GENDER**

	Pre test		Post test	
	N.	%	N.	%
Female	864	51,30	857	53,52
Male	792	47,03	706	44,09
Other	17	1,00	21	1,31
Missing	11	0,65	13	0,81
Total	1684	100	1601	100

Table 12 shows that the percentage of girls is higher for ISCED 2 and ISCED 3 and lower for ISCED 1. ISCED 0 is not shown in this and the following tables, since data were not collected in the same way.

**Table 12. Gender distribution among ISCED (%)**

	Pre test			Post test		
	Female	Male	Other	Female	male	other
ISCED 1	47,42	<b>55,93</b>	52,94	45,58	<b>53,05</b>	47,61
ISCED 2	<b>29,25</b>	26,24	17,64	<b>30,90</b>	28,95	33,33
ISCED 3	<b>23,32</b>	17,81	29,41	<b>23,50</b>	17,99	19,04
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 13 shows that there are not relevant differences among the countries for what concerns gender distribution.

**Table 13. Gender Distribution among countries (%)**

COUNTRY	Pre test		Post test	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
BE	20,38	18,09	22,99	21,12
DE	5,40	5,50	5,58	6,11
FI	0,94	0,72	0,82	0,17
IT	32,79	31,98	30,75	31,52
PL	9,72	10,56	9,93	11,06
SW	2,02	2,46	2,04	2,48
UK	28,74	30,68	27,89	27,56
<b>Total</b>	741	691	735	606

%	100	100	100	100
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Table 14 shows that foreign born migrants are few. The percentage of foreign born males is slightly higher than that of females.

**Table 14. Origins of participants in pre-test**

	Pre test		Post test	
	N.	%	N.	%
Native	1278	83,85	1223	84,75
Foreign	235	15,41	198	13,72
Non valid	11	0,72	22	1,52
Total	1524	100	1443	100

Table 15 concerns CMB, who can be foreign born children or second generation children. CMB are almost half of the total number of children participating in the activities. There are bit more boys (pre-test 51.6%; post-test 49.7%) than girls (pre-test 47.3%; post-test 47.7%). **This data shows that the objective of involving CMB together with native children was completely reached.**

**Table 15. Children with Migrant Background (CMB)**

	Pre test		Post test	
	N.	%	N.	%
CMB	718	49,45	666	48,58
Native	728	50,14	687	50,11
Non valid	6	0,41	18	1,31
Total	1452	100	1371	100

The percentage of CMB is particularly high in ISCED 3 schools (66.4%), followed by ISCED 1 schools (50.5%) and by ISCED 2 schools, where the percentage is rather low (34.3%). However, since the number of classes/groups involved in the activities is much higher in primary schools, the majority of CMB attend these schools (see table 16).

**Tab 16. Distribution of CMB according to ISCED (%)**

	Pre test	Post test
	CMB	CMB
ISCED 1	<b>50,56</b>	<b>45,35</b>
ISCED 2	20,19	24,62

ISCED 3	29,25	30,03
<b>Total</b>	718	666
%	100	100

Table 17 shows that CMB were prevalently involved in the UK, Belgium and Italy. Where the number of involved children was low, the percentage of CMB was also low (particularly in Finland).

**Table 17. Distribution of CMB according to the country (%)**

	<b>Pre test</b>	<b>Post test</b>
	<b>CMB</b>	<b>CMB</b>
BE	<b>26,32</b>	<b>31,23</b>
DE	2,65	2,85
FI	<b>0,84</b>	<b>0,15</b>
IT	<b>26,04</b>	<b>24,92</b>
PL	3,48	3,45
SW	4,46	4,35
UK	<b>36,21</b>	<b>33,03</b>
<b>Total</b>	718	666
%	100	100

Table 18 shows that CMB are a low minority in Poland and Germany, they are a numerous minority in Italy and the majority in Belgium and the UK and the totality in Sweden. In Finland, the situation changed dramatically from the pre-test to the post-test since very few CMB participated in the post-test.

**Table 18. Distribution of CMB inside countries (%)**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>Pre test</b>			<b>Post test</b>		
	<b>CMB</b>	<b>Natives</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>CMB</b>	<b>Natives</b>	<b>Total</b>
BE	67,26	30,96	100	67,75	27,36	100
DE	<b>21,84</b>	77,01	100	<b>21,84</b>	74,71	100
FI	46,15	53,85	100	<b>11,11</b>	88,89	100
IT	40,13	59,87	100	39,34	60,66	100
PL	<b>17,24</b>	82,76	100	<b>16,43</b>	83,57	100
SW	100	0,00	100	96,67	3,33	100
UK	60,75	39,25	100	58,51	41,49	100

<b>Total</b>	718	728	1452	666	687	1371
%	49,45	50,14	100	48,58	50,11	100

## 6. The impact of the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic led to widespread school closures or alterations to their operations. The outbreak was unexpected and unpredictable, and the educational institutions faced numerous challenges in responding to the situation. Apart from very few recordings in Italy, the qualitative phases of research were done during the pandemic. The fieldwork coincided with the outbreak of the pandemic and continued throughout, which in all countries gave rise to continuing uncertainty regarding the possibility and the extent of research. In all countries new regulations made access to schools much more difficult, leading to delays in the recruitment process and carrying out interviews and recordings of activities, to changes in planned activities and even the manner in which interviews were conducted and activities were facilitated.

### 6.1 *The impact of the pandemic in the countries participating in research*

In **Belgium**, after the initial period of lockdown (spring 2020), schools attempted to implement emergency distance learning and then moved to a hybrid system, with some children being physically present in class and others learning from a distance. Strict rules were imposed around non-staff visitors entering the premises, meaning the researchers were often unable to be physically present in the schools. It was also impossible for the researchers to join the online classes. When these rules concerning visitors were finally relaxed it was nearly impossible to find teachers who were willing to give up any class time for focus group interviews. They cited the lost class time and the fact that they had too much material to cover before the end of the school year. This is why the focus group interviews were only conducted in one ISCED 1 school, while video-recordings of activities and pre- and post-tests also involved ISCED 2 and ISCED 3 classes. All the video-recorded activities and focus group interviews with children were conducted in-person at the school. Children and teachers mostly did not wear masks or keep distance during the recordings. Pre and post-tests were distributed, in paper form, to all the children who attended the activities just before and after these activities. Researchers took small groups out of the classroom (5 to 7 children at a time) and went either to an empty classroom or outside to the playground to conduct the focus group interviews.

In **Finland**, the national school lockdown was between March 2020 and May 2020 while between August 2020 and May 2021 individual schools and classes closed for quarantine when needed. The state of emergency caused by the pandemic stopped fieldwork for some time in spring 2020 and during August 2020-May 2021 researchers and other outsiders were still not welcome into school premises. Teachers were not willing to facilitate the interviews with children as they found the process of organizing interviews to be too demanding (e.g. getting consent forms from guardians) and time-consuming as well as distracting the children from their safe routines and learning. Eventually, some classes were reached towards the end of the academic year after persistent requests and negotiations. Concerning pre and post-tests, the researchers submitted the tests to the teachers in digital form via e-mail. Although teachers were provided with the opportunity to use an online

version of the tests, they said it was easier to work on paper for several reasons (e.g., not all pupils carried a mobile phone at school; it was not possible to take pupils to a computer class; it was easier for the teachers to help the pupils in case they need help in navigating the questionnaire). During video-recordings and focus group interviews teacher and children were in class while the researcher was online. Some school equipment did not co-operate cross-organizationally in the use of software and applications; if they did, sound quality tended to be poor because of the non-portable built-in microphone. However, the pandemic did not influence the activities as such. It did make ISCED 2 pupils wear a mask, but this did not cause problems to carry out activities, either.

In **Germany**, respectively in the federal states that were selected for the survey (Saxony and Hamburg), there were two general lockdowns, one from March to May 2020 and the second one from November 2020 to February 2021. Schools needed to catch up the schoolwork, therefore video recordings of activities and focus group interviews could only start after the summer holidays in September 2021. Since September 2021, the framework conditions in schools was the following: (1) people get tested at least twice a week; (2) school attendance policy applied to all pupils; (3) masks were compulsory for all pupils, teachers and external persons with a city-wide incidence of 35 or more; (4) classroom teaching was to be maintained as long as the bed occupancy rate in the hospital did not exceed a certain factor; (5) vaccination for pupils and teachers was offered. School restricted certain areas in the outdoor area/schoolyard to certain groups at a time, limited the number of teachers who were assigned to teach a particular class and scaled back parental engagement to only picking up and dropping off children. The children interviewed said that their classroom activities did not change during this period, except that they had to wear masks and that most of the teaching was done in one classroom.

In **Italy**, traditional in-class teaching was essentially written off from March 20, with the main strategies focused on improving the delivery of remote teaching: providing better equipment and the smoother organization of classes. In the 2020/2021 school year, measures were implemented to ensure a safe educational environment in addition to the option to switch to remote teaching when required. Some recordings were conducted with researchers and recorders in the classroom, others were conducted in two ways: (1) with researcher and facilitator(s) on a digital platform and children in class; (2) with all participants on a digital platform in different locations. In Genoa, all focus group interviews were online, while all activities were in presence. Sometimes, when the focus group interviews were conducted with the researcher connected remotely, and children in the class, children were asked to get closer to the computer when they had something to say, in order to avoid difficulties of understanding due to the connection or to children wearing the masks. In other cases, the teacher repeated the students' contributions for the researchers. Despite the difficulties due to the pandemic, children and teachers expressed their commitment and willingness to continue to take part in the project. However, it was very difficult to organize activities both remotely and in-person, to have the permission of head teachers, and to collect parental consent online. Therefore, even when the activities were carried out remotely the research team waited until a period in which the children were in school to distribute and collect the consents in paper form. The researchers negotiated with the teachers when and how conducting the activities that needed to be video-recorded and the focus group interviews, given the different possibilities and regulations in the involved schools. The influence of the pandemic on the activities was different for those who participated in remote activities and those

who participated in activities in presence. According to participants in remote activities, the activities would have been better without the pandemic because there would have been more exchange with peers (ISCED 0) and with facilitators (ISCED 1 and ISCED 2). Moreover, face-to-face workshops would have been more engaging, with the support of objects and the organisation of trips (ISCED 2). Among participants in activities in presence, UAMs pointed out that the Italian L2 school before the pandemic was always open, whereas now it was limited, as well as many other activities and opportunities. Children in ISCED 0 highlighted that the use of the mask was negative since it reduced affective communication. In Genoa, children stressed that they were not able to get closer to each other, to exchange materials, to touch each other and in this way to understand each other better. Masks were seen negatively because they limited non-verbal language and fun. According to some ISCED 2 children in Genoa, however, the pandemic did not affect the activities much because they were able to talk and express their opinions.

In **Poland**, the pandemic revealed the structural inequalities and problems within the existing educational system. It showed how both teachers and students alike had to tackle poor infrastructure, technical barriers, digital illiteracy or, in the case of the children, a lack of support. The organization of schools was fluctuating from remote, face to face or even mixed forms of education in the different grades of school and with different length. Children were assisted by their parents, siblings, and cultural assistants, who were present when the interviews were conducted at school to ensure child safety. The closure of schools meant that research in schools could not be carried out until June 2020, when schools were opened. The study dates were renegotiated in first days of June and the main research began. However, the research was conducted under conditions that differed from the routine operation of schools - due to the long period of absence, teachers focused on the relational aspect of schoolwork. In addition, it was the time of final assessments, which also affected some lessons. Thus, the Polish team did not have the opportunity to conduct the focus groups after the observation because it was not possible to extend the research. Pre- and post-tests were distributed just before and soon after the activities by the researchers. Tests were in paper form and were given to all the children participating in the activities. Unfortunately, these were the last weeks of the school year therefore the attendance was not very high, and in Bezwoli's school (refugee children) there were only a few children at all.

In **Sweden**, the schools were closed for outsiders (including researchers) and hence researchers could not come there, and ISCED 2 and ISCED 3 had online teaching at home in periods. Overall, the situation in school became strained and the teachers and other personnel could not prioritise research collaboration. The team realized that it was difficult to return to the children repeatedly for data collection, and that they needed to organize it to collect all data once a meeting with the children was set up. Hence, in order to facilitate, but also to speed-up the data collection, all research parts were conducted in one and the same day.

In the **UK**, all research activities in the classroom were planned for the autumn term 2020-2021. However, between September and November 2020 the schools were closed at different times, in a case for several weeks. The stress on teaching staff, children and parents was so high that it would not have been ethically sound to push for research activities even when the school were precariously open. When all schools re-opened with some stability in December 2020 in the proximity of the

Christmas holidays, it was possible to deliver some of the planned focus groups and undertake the great majority of the planned observations of activities. However, a second national lockdown immediately after the Christmas break in January 2021 resulted in the closure of all schools in England until March 2021. The remaining focus groups took place after the Easter holidays, along the observations of some residual activities. All focus groups were conducted face-to-face, with both researcher and recorder in the schools' playground, where it was possible to maintain social distancing as prescribed by current legislation at the time, involving all children in a cohort (class) at the same time, as it would not have been practical to interview them in separate groups. The teachers were not present during the focus groups. All classroom activities took place during in-person teaching and they were audio-recorded. As for focus groups, all data concerned face-to-face interactions. Schools' leadership and teachers proved to be very cooperative in supporting the research throughout the disruption caused by the pandemic.

## ***6.2 The impact of the pandemic on the research methodology***

Face-to-face interviews were not allowed, due to social distancing requirements and to ensure the health and wellbeing of both the children and professionals. As a result, individual interviews had to be substituted (entirely or partially) online. Even more difficulties arose in case of focus group interviews which were partially replaced with individual interviews (e.g. in Poland and Belgium), and recording of activities, since in some cases (in Finland, the UK and partially in Italy) the researchers were not admitted in schools. Special attention was also focused on protecting the interviewees and the participants in the activities. The pandemic was difficult and stressful for professionals and children, who had to quickly reorganize their work and adapt to remote work. Despite the increased workload of professionals and children, they appreciated the research and perceived it as a way to reflect on their practices, as well as the tools and programmes they used.

The use of digital platforms was an important innovation for the CHILD-UP research. In Italy, for example, the use of digital platforms became an important opportunity to do research during the school closures, both for interviews and for recording classroom activities. Video-recordings were conducted in three conditions, in different phases of disease prevention: (1) with researchers and facilitators in the class; (2) with researchers and facilitators on a digital platform and adolescents in the class; (3) with all participants on a digital platform in different locations.

Limitations to online research were experienced in all countries, including transmission delays, distractions, connection problems or difficulties in reading and assessing body language, use of non-verbal communication strategies such as eye-contact or smiles, which are usually adopted to involve participants in the discussion. The choice of children to switch cameras off added further problems of relational contact. Clearly, those activities which included children's use of the body as a way of self-expressions could not be realized either through a digital platform or in presence. However, digital platforms were in some cases important for research purposes.

More concretely, digital platforms provided the opportunity for children to share their views with the researchers, the facilitators and their classmates. Digital platforms enabled classroom activities respecting physical distance and lack of access to the classroom. Some new communication channels

could be activated as resources for the interaction with children. A good example is the chat function, which was an opportunity for hesitant students to share views without taking the floor orally during an activity. Remote activities also included the use of drawings and images. In “mixed” conditions, i.e. when children were in the classroom and researchers and facilitators were online, some strategies could ensure children’s participation. For example, during a focus group in a nursery school, children were asked to express their opinions by moving through different areas in the classroom or showing objects having certain colours, where each area or colour corresponded to a preference. In another case, during a focus group, children who wanted to take the floor moved in front of the camera and talked directly to the researcher. Although this might apparently compromise dialogue among children, it enhanced each child’s participation. Finally, video-recordings on digital platforms was more discreet compared to a camera in front of children in the classroom and when participating children were at home, they seemed to be more confident for a reduced perception of performance, which enhanced richer personal expressions.

## 7. Ethical issues

The CHILD-UP project implied several ethical issues. First, it involved **volunteers for social science research** (children, parents and professionals), **persons unable to give informed consent** (children), **vulnerable individuals and groups** (migrant children and their parents), **children** (ISCED 0-3, from 5 to 16 years old). Second, it provided **collection and processing of sensitive personal data**. Third, it required **tracking and observation of participants**. For this reason, ethics was an important issues during the research. Ethical guidelines were provided at the beginning of the project and all research partners provide authorisation from ethical committees. Moreover, an ethics advisor was appointed.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679) of the European Union, accurate information sheets and consent forms were distributed to all the participants, and the parents of minors. Information was provided about the meanings and methods of the research, the rights of the participants, the processing of the data. Thus, throughout all its phases, the research followed the key-principles of ethical research, securing the emotional well-being, physical well-being, rights, dignity and personal values of research participants, according to the ethical guidelines which were provided at the beginning of the project and with the supervision of the ethics advisor, who was consulted about the most relevant ethical issues.

The pandemic determined different research conditions in different countries participating in the CHILD-UP project. In particular, it did not change the ethical conditions of field research in Poland, the United Kingdom and in Sweden, while changes affected the other countries. The synthesis of these problems can be found below. To support the consortium in new conditions, new information sheets and consent forms were delivered.

### Belgium

When the Belgian government closed schools due to the pandemic, and then later moved to a hybrid system, the research team began to conduct remote interviews. The team was careful not to pressure

participants when asking for interviews, being always mindful of the stress and anxiety that were rampant during this unprecedented time. Researchers checked with the data protection officer at the University of Liège to ensure that they could conduct these interviews on various platforms and still remain within the GDPR guidelines. While researchers always shared the consent form with participants, participants did not always have access to a printer and scanner, and in these cases, only oral consent was obtained. When researchers had access to schools in-person, it was under new governmental regulations and these regulations were quickly changing. During one period, visitors were only allowed in the school if they were part of the curriculum. In one class, researchers were part of the teacher's non-violent communication unit. In other instances, the researchers turned down the invitation to access the school in-person. In another period, visitors were not allowed in the schools under any circumstances. Some schools told the researchers there was no need to respect this rule, but the researchers declined. In another period, when infection rates were very high, but schools were open, the researchers decided it would not be ethical to add more people to already crowded classrooms. A group of secondary school students (all of whom were interviewed remotely during some stage of lockdown or partial lockdown), told the researchers that they felt their mental health was suffering and that their teachers, the school administrators and social workers were not listening to them. They wrote a letter as a group expressing their concerns and sent it to these actors. They complained that: (1) their teachers often did not show up for remote lessons; (2) there were no remedial services offered during this period; (3) teachers did not adjust to their needs when they had limited access to technology; (4) some adolescents were struggling with being isolated as well as falling behind in their classes. As of the closing of the field research, the students had still not received any responses to their letter. They said that their parents were listening to them and supporting them and that they had found at least one teacher who was helping them to get their message across to the school administration.

## **Finland**

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged, limited and modified the methodology and schedule. Researchers were obliged to follow national and municipal restrictions on accessing schools for data collection. In mid-February 2020, schools were first closed for everyone but pupils and school staff, and later, with a broader societal lockdown from March 2020 onwards, teaching and learning started to take place in a distant mode through different IT and communication channels. As the state of emergency continued and evolved, it became clear that the plans for data collection needed modification. As remote activities were not listed in the original research plan, a fair amount of time was dedicated to the revision of documents, including (1) **ethical statements** required at the levels of both CHILD-UP consortium and the Finnish partner organisation, (2) **information sheets and consent forms** for professionals and pupils with their caregivers stating that interviews and observation are carried out *face-to-face or in a remote mode* because of the state of emergency caused by COVID-19. The revised versions of these were also translated into migrant pupils' home languages as requested by teachers in respective groups. The possibility was open for participants to also give their consent electronically while it was still possible to return a signed paper form. The modification of data collection methods and the reconsideration of ethical aspects ensured that remote data collection could take place. Thus, most interviews and all observations were conducted remotely, using digital platforms. In remote research settings, participant(s) needed to be properly informed

before asked to give their consent, not only about research as such but also about the practicalities of interaction and about the storage and access to the recording possibly made. This enhanced participants' trust in the situation. In practice, before starting to record an interview session, the researcher greeted the participants and ensured they were ready to talk and to be recorded as agreed earlier in a written form. They were also reminded about the confidentiality of the interview contents as well as of the fact that the aim is to discuss and that there are no wrong answers. The participants were further informed about the moment when the recording starts. As to remote "in-class" data collection (observation and video recording), the teachers helped to make sure only those granting research permission were visible on screen. This was possible by placing the laptop camera in a particular place in the classroom and, in one case, by reorganising the seating order.

## **Germany**

The original sampling strategy was to ask schools that had already participated in previous phases of the research. However, this intended continuous participation could not be realized due to COVID-19-related hygiene regulations, distance bans and school closures. An online version of the interviews was set. Thus, a new proposal was written for the Saxon Ministry of Education to engage with students online within the school context. The online research took place via a secure server provided by the university. Parents and students were informed in advance about the possibility of the online research and had to give their written consent to participate. Due to the fact that interviews and focus groups had to be organized and conducted online, and the consideration of hygiene rules in the case of face-to-face interviews, corresponding adjustments to project information and informed consent were necessary. Regardless to the fact that in case of interviews with children informed consent of both, parents and children, is mandatory, this aspect was highlighted with regard to the opportunity of online interviews. Participants were informed that in case of online group interviews, as in those are conducted face to face, the informed consent of all participating children and their parents is mandatory. Parents as well as children were informed about the possibility to participate online and that they had a choice in case of being interested in participating in the study. Accordingly, further information addressed the used video conferencing software and its hosting as well as information regarding contacting and receiving access and password for the interview session. Parents and children were informed that online-supported conversation and data collection took place without the involvement of third parties, especially external online services or online platforms, both technically and in term of involved persons. Parents and children were asked for a valid email address to get access to the remotely conducted interview session, when this option was chosen, and the way the receive the respective information. Parents and/ or participating children received the access data and the corresponding password in two separate emails. In one preschool, instead of giving consent to the parents directly, there was a cooperation agreement with the school, which specified the data protection regulations, the voluntary nature of participation and the use of the data. Since the school itself had already concluded consent forms with the individual parents for research surveys at their school, this cooperation agreement, the information letter about CHILD-UP and the transparency of the research project were sufficient.

## **Italy**

In Italy the pandemic had two main phases which impacted differently on research and ethics. In the first phase (March-June 2020), the general lockdown forced research activities to move entirely online. Parents' information sheets and consent forms were sent by email to teachers, who in turn sent them to parents. The signed and scanned sheets were then collected by the teachers and sent to the researchers or returned directly to the researchers by email from the parents themselves. An easier procedure was also created to allow those who did not have printers and scanners at home to send the consent, using a formula inserted in the body of the email. The students' consent was collected orally during the registration itself and the teachers' consent was collected remotely. Obtaining the parents' consents entirely remotely was considerably difficult, which is why only a few classes were interviewed (WP5) at this stage. This could be significant in that it indicates how much improvement can be made in teacher-parent communication via web/email. During a second phase of the pandemic (September 2020-June 2021) there were partial re-openings alternating with partial closures limited to certain regions, classes or institutions. Research activities resumed regularly but adapted to the existing modalities in the specific local and time contexts. Thus, research was carried out both in presence, remotely and in mixed mode (class in presence and facilitator and researcher remotely). After a further attempt to collect parents' consents online, and given the low response rate, the researchers waited until periods in which students were in school to distribute and collect the consents on paper. However, the consents were partially modified to include the remote mode in which the research activities could be carried out in the event of a partial lockdown. As for the consents of teachers and facilitators, they were collected partly in presence and partly online according to the restriction measures of the class or school involved. The students' consents were collected either on paper or orally at the beginning of the registration itself according to the restriction measures in place during the research activities.

## **8. Conclusions**

This chapter has summarised the most important methodological aspects of the research project, including the impact of the pandemic on it. The chapter has also shown the complexity of the research activities, which was increased by the pandemic. This unpredictable increase of complexity did not allow the completion of all the research activities foreseen in the project. However, the chapter has shown that anyway the amount of research activities has been impressive.

Apart from the number of questionnaire collected through the survey, including almost 4,000 children and among them 1,300 CMB, what is impressive is the number of participants involved in the interviews (284) and recordings of classroom activities (207) which were completed in the second part of the project, under the constraints of the pandemic. In particular, it is important that half of the participants in the classroom activities (about 700) were CMB. This is not only an important research results, but it also show the successful potential to analyse hybrid integration. The qualitative research was the core of the CHILD-UP project and its success, despite the very complicated and unpredictable conditions determined by the pandemic, is very important for the

production of knowledge about CMB's agency and hybrid integration and the production of guidelines and suggestions about these aspects.

This massive, theoretically and methodologically guided, research activity will be summarised in the following chapters, in which quantitative and qualitative data will contribute together to show the most important results of the CHILD-UP project.

## Chapter 3. The legal, political and educational background

### 1. Introduction

Before showing the results of the field research, it is useful to understand the background of this research. This chapter offers an overview of the condition of children with migrant background (CMB) in the seven countries in which the CHILD-UP project was realised. There is a paradox in regards to treatment of CMB. International agreements treat CMB as vulnerable while at the same time stressing that children's agency be respected and calling for children's point of view to be considered in decisions about their lives. This chapter shows both the international legislation and what happens at national and local levels. In particular, local level initiatives remain key and have an important impact on the lives and wellbeing of CMB. However, the efficacy of efforts to improve CMB's hybrid integration may be hindered by strict measures and lack of support in areas that are critical to the wellbeing of CMB.

### 2. The international and European legislation

Due to the progressively large presence of migratory flows<sup>2</sup> and the consequently greater risk for migrants to see their rights violated, it has become essential to provide for special systems to protect their rights.<sup>3</sup> Dialogue and cooperation among States is the key for an effective migration management, and it is translated into binding agreements and informal *fora* of discussion. National instruments and policies devoted to the management of migratory flows are, for the most part, the outcome of the implementation of international and supranational legal instruments. Within the broader category of "migrants", migrant minors bear a double degree of vulnerability, as they are "minors" and "migrants", and unaccompanied minors (UAMs) bear a third vulnerability, as they do not have any adult responsible for them.

At the international level, the protection of children in migration sits at the intersection of an individual human rights-based approach and of a public approach protecting States'. The twofold approach to the migratory phenomenon partly explains why the legal scenario related to the protection of the rights of children in migration is fragmented. To the general category of "children on the move" apply binding international instruments – mainly regulating the protection of human rights in general<sup>4</sup> – and soft law measures, generally regulating migrant rights' protection. However, such instruments are intended to specifically protect "adults", and apply to children only indirectly, them being human beings.

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<sup>2</sup> See Flow Monitoring Europe at <https://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals>.

<sup>3</sup> See the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions «A European Agenda for Migration», available at [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication\\_on\\_the\\_european\\_agenda\\_on\\_migration\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> I.e. the 1953 European Convention on Human Rights, available at [https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf); the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/4ca34be29.pdf>; see also the Global Compact for Migration at <https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration>.

The general instrument to be considered the core of children's rights is the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC sets forth children's civil, political and social rights, and is built around four main principles: the prohibition of discrimination (Article 2); the right to life, survival and development (Article 6); the right of participation (Article 12) and the principle of the best interests of the child (Article 3). The "best interests of the child" is a dynamic concept that encompasses various issues which are continuously evolving. In the context of migration, the principle coming into play also with regard to the protection of migrant children, in particular refugees, is the principle of *non-refoulement*,<sup>5</sup> i.e. the prohibition to push migrants at the borders back to his/her country of origin. The prohibition of the rejection of a minor applies to all those cases in which there is even a possibility of irreparable damage potentially caused to the child him/herself (Farmer 2011).

State parties should ensure the protection of migrant children's rights, as the identification of the minor with the support of identity documents, whenever possible, or through an age assessment procedure. However, age assessment procedures are currently undergoing a lively international debate around the different methods used as some might violate UAMs' fundamental rights. Any child who is deprived of his or her family environment is entitled to special protection measures by the State, which must provide him or her with protection in place of parental protection. The role of the guardian, which should be linked to the child until the age of majority, can be institutional (public) or voluntary (private). Legal instruments and policies taken at the national level by States, in seeking to protect the rights of migrant, and among them, unaccompanied minors, shall consider both the UNCRC and the General Comments adopted by the UN Committee.

The UNCRC is of utmost importance within the European legal framework: it is of great inspiration for the EU legislator but also for the Court of Justice of the European Union in its "quasi-legislative" activity of interpretation of EU legal instruments. The rights and principles enshrined in the UNCRC have been taken over by the Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union (hereinafter also "the Charter") and in its regulatory instruments. The European Union also recognises the principles deriving from relevant human rights conventions, also devoted to the protection of migrants: among them, the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees. The EU has progressively adopted a corpus of rules aimed at protecting migrants' human rights, through the management of migration flows, including children's rights.

The Charter is based on the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and contains rights that have a particular impact on the protection of migrant children, including the prohibition of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment (Article 4), the right to life, survival and development (Article 6). The Charter contains an article specifically devoted to the protection of children (Article 24): its introduction marked a fundamental step in the process of recognition of specific rights to children within the European Union. It ensures the right to protection of children's well-being, the right to see their best interests as the primary consideration and the right to have relations with their parents. The Charter also establishes the right for private and family life, which

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<sup>5</sup> Article 33 of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

has a particular impact on the protection of migrant children, especially on UAMs (Article 7), and it is recognized as a general principle of the EU by the Court of Justice.<sup>6</sup>

The EU protects the right to family reunification through two instruments of secondary EU Law: Directive 2003/86/EC (“family reunification directive”), which recognises the obligation for States to take particular account of the principles governing the protection of the weaker parties, and this includes children. In particular, it recognises the need to ensure more favourable conditions for the family reunification of refugees, as a result of their particular situation. The Directive recognises the status of UAMs (Article 2(f)) and, in the case of refugees, it obliges Member States to ensure the entry and residence of first-degree relatives in the ascending line (parents, brothers and sisters) for the purpose of reunification (Article 10(3)). The latter is considered, in many cases, to be fundamental for UAMs full recovery and integration into the society. The specification “first-degree relatives” implies that the Member States are not obliged to admit a relative who is not among these relations, for the purpose of reunification. The so-called Dublin III Regulation<sup>7</sup> states that if an UAM seeking international protection has one or more relatives legally resident in another Member State of the EU, other than the State of arrival, the jurisdiction to examine the application for protection and the task of reuniting must be transferred to it (Article 8). Although this right is only granted to UAMs seeking international protection or refugees, the definition and rights related to “family” are still more generous towards them than to most other categories of migrant minors. Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the EU and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States also comes into play.<sup>8</sup>

The EU also offers the so-called Common European Asylum System (CEAS)<sup>9</sup> framework, which includes five legal instruments aimed at the protection of children’s rights in the area of migration and, among others, concerns reception conditions, integration measures and the processing of asylum applications. In May 2010, the EU Commission adopted the Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014).<sup>10</sup> This Plan proposed an EU approach identifying the main lines of action concerning

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<sup>6</sup> See Court of Justice, 18 May 1989, *Commission v. Federal Republic of Germany*, case C-249/86, par.10 and sentence of 11 July 2002, *Carpenter*, case C-60/00, par. 38.

<sup>7</sup> Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person.

<sup>8</sup> Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the right of citizens of the EU and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC.

<sup>9</sup> The CEAS legal framework covers all aspects of the asylum process on the basis of the principles of solidarity and mutual trust between Member States. The purpose of the CEAS is that similar cases be treated in the same way and produce the same result irrespective of the Member State in which international protection is claimed. There are five legislative instruments on which the EU asylum policy is based. Three of them are directives of the European Parliament and of the Council: directive 2013/32/EU on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection status; directive 2013/33/EU laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection; directive 2011/95/EU on standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted. The other two are Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 603/2013 concerning the establishment of «Eurodac».

<sup>10</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council «Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010 – 2014)», COM (2010) 213 final.

UAMs, such as the prevention of unsafe migration and trafficking, the reception and procedural guarantees in the EU and the identification of durable solutions. In 2017, considering the results of the plan, the Commission made the above-mentioned Communication in order to analyse the current state of protection of UAMs' rights in the EU. The Communication recognized the progress made both on the Action Plan and on good practices in Member States.

The aim of the Communication was to provide a series of coordinated and effective actions to fill the protection gaps, considering the needs that children have once they reach Europe, ranging from their identification, reception, implementation of procedural safeguards, as well as that of durable solutions. The Commission recommends to improve the external relations of the EU, giving priority to actions aimed at strengthening child protection systems along the migratory routes and supporting partner countries in developing strong national child protection systems, even supporting their projects in this field. It also highlights the need for swift and comprehensive identification procedures and protection, facilitating the cross-border tracing of missing children, the verification of family links and finding better age assessment procedures. Member States, according to the Commission, should also provide adequate reception, taking into account the special needs and vulnerability of migrant minors. The Commission finally recommends the improvement of guardianship mechanisms and age assessment procedures and urges to ensure durable solutions through the integration of the child, which means faster access to education and health care, assisting minors once they reach the age of majority. In order to achieve such goals, cooperation is needed not only between EU Member States, but also between Member States and external actors, like UN agencies and civil society organisations active in the field.

Fundamental rights constitute a “hard core” of Member States’ legal interventions and policies. The human rights at stake are those enshrined in the UNCRC: the right to health and the right to education (Articles 28 and 29), the right to an adequate standard of living (Article 27), which is strictly linked to the problem of child poverty, the right to rest and leisure (Article 31). Even if not directly targeted at migrant children, they assume a remarkable importance for them. Member States may decide mechanisms and procedures which might effectively grant children the rights enshrined in the UNCRC: for example, among the selected Member States, some have adopted legislative measures specifically dedicated to the protection of unaccompanied and separated minors, or specific provisions integrating already existing legislative measures,<sup>11</sup> while others provide for a general framework addressed to minors in general.

### **3. Political climate and integration policies**

#### ***3.1 Political climate***

Across Europe, and certainly in the seven countries involved in CHILD-UP, immigration and integration are entangled with the security concerns of local populations and the security discourse of national governments. The inflow of refugees to Europe in 2015 coincided with several significant terrorist attacks in Europe which offered fertile ground for anti-immigrant parties to promote fear of migration. Discourse used by these parties have highlighted instances of sexual assault and terrorism

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<sup>11</sup> It is the case of two Member States, among the ones selected, which adopted specific laws on unaccompanied minors: Belgium (Law 24 December 2002 - *Guardianship Law*) and Italy (Law 21 April 2017 n. 47 on the protection of UAMs).

as reasons to stem immigration (Wike et al. 2017). The criminal acts attributed to migrants remain in the news and the public eye for a long time (Berry et al. 2015). Additionally, migrant children are perceived to have a great deal of potential for criminality and negative impact on society. While the voice of the child principle is laid out in the UNCRC, children's agency in their integration is sorely neglected. It is important to stress that this climate has recently changed for what concerns the crisis determined by the war in Ukraine, but the risk is that all other mentioned problems are simply forgot while the attention in Europe is exclusively paid to Ukrainian children and their mothers.

The fear, both for their safety and of their potential to create problems in society (Comaroff & Comaroff 2005), places CMB in a difficult position. They are considered vulnerable and in need of special treatment, but they are also considered most likely to create subcultures. This fear goes hand in hand with the increased discourse around security and creates turbulent circumstances for CMB. For instance, in the UK, there is a great deal of suspicion and negative rhetoric around the reception of the so called 'Dubs children', a section of the 2016 Immigration Act under which a number of UAMs from European countries will be transferred to the UK. This is influenced by a large part of mainstream media whose narrative shifted away from a narrative of protection, moral and humanitarian responsibility to a narrative of 'fake' childhood and childhood adultization (McLaughlin 2018). These perceptions of CMB do not fit with mainstream representations of childhood, as a period characterised by innocence and vulnerability (Burman 2008), leaving people wondering if these young people are truly in need of protection. Discourses around the link between migration and criminal activity are also present in Italy (Caritas Italiana 2017). The perpetrators of the terrorist attacks in Brussels in 2016 were young Belgians with migrant backgrounds. The subsequent portrayal in the press of these young people painted them as ripe for radicalisation and resentful of their treatment by white Belgian society. Teachers may also treat young migrants as trouble-makers and "problematic" pupils (Januszewska 2008; Klaus 2011).

Young people's integration, and whether or not it is deemed successful, is sometimes suggested to be the *reason for* radicalisation. There is, however, little evidence to support the assertion that migrant children and youth are more prone to criminality, delinquency, or misbehaviour, and the evidence that does exist is rarely contextualised in a way that includes the obstacles faced by young migrants (Peguero 2011; Chen & Zhong 2013; Sohoni & Sohoni 2014).

### **3.2 National policies**

Several of the countries involved in the project were traditionally countries of emigration (Finland, Poland, Italy) while the rest are countries with longer histories of immigration (Belgium, Germany, Sweden, the UK). Thus, integration policy can vary based on different histories and philosophies. In some countries (Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Finland), integration policy and official programmes are relatively new, having only come into play in the 1980s and 1990s, whereas in the UK and Sweden, integration policy has a much longer history. In general, immigrants are entitled to certain support and also have obligations. One obligation is typically that they participate in some type of

education about the host country and learn the host country language(s). While CMB are typically exempt from these proceedings, integration measures still affect their lives in various way, since children's families are often required to complete integration programmes.

For many years, **Poland** had a very low number of immigrants, so the need for a robust integration programme is new. Most of the support is short term monetary support one receives after leaving a reception centre and some vocational/job seeking support. The recipient of this support is required to learn Polish – with language courses provided as part of the integration programme - look for a job, and be in regular communication with a local family assistance office (Poviat Family Assistance Centre). Integration support measures are shared by the state and NGOs. NGOs play a critical role in integration and in filling the gaps between the state and immigrants, and the gap in services/support for newcomers. There are no systemic solutions for UAMs; the same regulations are applied for all foreign minors. The inflow of refugees to Europe in 2015 induced public discussions on the subject of how to cope with newcomers, especially Syrian refugees. The terrorist attacks in Europe also overlapped with the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2015, during which the topics of immigration and the preservation of national security became intertwined and intensified. The party *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (Law and Justice, PiS), holding both executive and legislative power since 2015, backed out of all refugee acceptance quotas negotiated by the previous government and showed a hostile attitude towards asylum seekers. This attitude has changed with reference to the recent, exceptional flow of Ukrainian refugees.

In the shadow of Brexit, public discourse in the **UK** is that the EU system of immigration makes British people unsafe (Marzocchi 2019). In this context, the UK has created a 'hostile environment' in order to encourage undocumented migrants to leave the country. Berry et al. (2015) argue that the rising popularity of strong anti-immigrant rhetoric was one of the main contributing factors that has influenced mainstream political negative discourses on migration (see also Berry, Garcia-Blanco and Moore, 2015). Moreover, dominant media narratives reproduced the perception that migration is a 'crisis' for British society threatening its social cohesion and draining social welfare, education, housing and healthcare (Cohen 2006; Jordan & Brown 2006). Even before Brexit, however, opinion polls have consistently revealed a mostly negative and hostile attitude towards immigrants (Crawley 2009). The Immigration Act of 2016 sought to institute measures that would encourage those without permits to leave the country 'voluntarily'. Safeguarding and welfare provisions are outlined in the 'Putting children first' policy (2016) and the Children and Social Work Act of 2017. In 2017 the Department for Education and the Home Office created the safeguarding strategy for UAMs and refugee children. Detention of UAMs for more than 24 hours is prohibited by the Immigration Act 2014, but detention still occurs during age determination proceedings, criminal cases, and when children will be returned. There is not an integration programme, but people applying for 'indefinite leave to remain' must pass the 'life in the UK Test' and prove English language proficiency.

In **Italy**, anti-EU sentiment has increased in recent years and this can be attributed to the inflow of new migrants and to the EU policy that has left Italy to 'fend for itself' as a country of first arrival. The Dublin convention, which requires migrants to lodge their asylum applications in the first country of arrival, has left Italy's reception system overtaxed and has damaged public opinion of the EU. Entry into Italy for labour, including seasonal work and self-employment, must take place within the

entry quotas established in the periodic decrees, issued on the basis of the criteria indicated in the three-year programme document on immigration policies. However, a law in 2017 strengthened support and rights for UAMs stating that they cannot be rejected at the border unless there is deemed to be a security risk or it is in the best interest of the child they not be permitted to enter. The National Integration Plan (2017) is meant to ensure adherence to the ‘best interest of the child’ principle and the cooperation of initiatives to support UAMs at the local and national levels. It aims to standardise age determination procedures, improve the family reunification process, guarantee the timely appointment of guardians, provide support for foster families/guardians, and ensure school integration. Reception centres are managed by local authorities and NGOs. “Extraordinary reception centres” (CAS) are long-term accommodation as asylum processes are long and systems are overwhelmed. Immigrants entering Italy for the first time must sign an integration agreement with the State when they apply for a residence permit allowing them to remain in Italy for one year or more. This agreement is based on credits that are confirmed after the successful completion of a civic information session. If migrants do not attend this session they will be at risk of expulsion. Migrants are given two years (with the possibility of an extension of one year) to complete the programme. Knowledge of Italian language and culture is the core element of the integration agreement. Children as young as age 16 are required to complete the integration programme and in this case a parent/guardian must sign the agreement.

**Germany** has devoted a great deal of funding to integration programmes. There are numerous and diverse integration and language courses, which are funded by the states, and opportunities for immigrants to access education and occupational trainings. In 2015, the Dublin convention was suspended for one year and regulations on hiring asylum seekers were relaxed. The integration Act of 2016 was an initial reaction to the large influx of refugees. The act aims to facilitate the integration of refugees through courses, training and employment opportunities, and offers regularisation possibilities (Kluth 2018). The national/federal, state, and local governments along with NGOs are responsible for integration. There is a much greater focus on what the migrant should do and very little emphasis placed on to how the host country and/or state must adjust to newcomers (integration as a two-way process). The integration pathway includes required coursework with information on German culture, history, and politics; language lessons and a final examination. A key component of the integration of children is the federal government’s offer of linguistic education in day cares. The Children and Youth Migration Service (JMD) supports young migrants through the transition from school to the workforce until age 27. It is funded by the state and its work is carried out by charities and NGOs. The Federal Family ministry also promotes the integration of refugee children. According to the federal law, asylum seekers and UAMs are not sent to asylum centres. However, public opinion is characterised by contradictory discourses, political discussions and strategies, political fractions, etc. and by a rise in racism and xenophobia.

In **Finland**, there is mixed discourse around migration and it is characterised by a contrast between the recognised growing need for people to enter the labour market and the fact that humanitarian migration is being further restricted (Wahlbeck 2019). Integration policy states that migrants can maintain their own culture and language. Integration policy is legislated at the national level and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is tasked with implementing integration, but local responsibility rests with the Public Employment Services (PES) and the municipality. In 2019 the

parliament demanded an exam requirement for asylum seekers. For naturalisation, one must attain level three in the European framework of language in Finnish or Swedish. Priorities include assisting migrants in quickly entering the labour market, changing settlement procedures, and managing diversity in the workplace.

Recently **Sweden** limited immigration and increased integration requirements. This occurred despite public opinion in Sweden being relatively positive towards migration, and the media coverage on migration being mainly positive as well (Dennison & Dražanová 2018). In 2015, the government and the opposition in Sweden reached an agreement that limited the number of asylum applications and adjusted the minimum number of accepted applications to come in line with the EU regulations. Moreover, ID controls were instituted at the borders with Denmark and Germany which resulted in a dramatic decrease of the number of asylum applications. The government committee on ‘orderly reception’ was created, but there was no agreement on the rights and obligations of refugees and how responsibility should be divided between the national and municipal levels. The National Migration Agency is responsible for the reception of asylum seekers, and asylum seekers can choose to live in agency-run accommodation or to immediately arrange their own accommodation. This is a contentious issue, however, with some arguing that it is better for asylum seekers to be required to spend a period of time in reception centres while they go through the vetting process. Asylum seekers can work under certain conditions, but have no access to Swedish language classes. There is an Introduction Programme available to refugees which is run by the National Employment. A key part of this programme is language education which is run by municipalities.

**Belgium** is a federal system and has three linguistic communities and three regions. This make-up has resulted in a weak overall national identity amidst calls for separation from various nationalist parties in different regions (Lafleur & Marfouk 2019). The elections in 2019 saw right-wing parties, who engage in anti-immigrant discourse, make substantial gains in Flanders while left and green parties made gains in Wallonia and the Brussels Capital Region. It cannot be said, however, that anti-immigrant sentiment is exclusively found in Flanders, but it is indeed an issue that divides the country. Integration is a regional level competence and there is a great deal of difference between the Flemish region, the Brussels Capital Region, and the Walloon region. There is also a great deal of variation between local level policy/practice. Flanders’ integration pathway has been in place since 2004 whereas the integration pathway in Wallonia did not become obligatory until 2016. The recognition of foreign qualifications in the Flemish Community has recently been simplified and the process is now free, though experts stress that it remains a barrier to labour market entry that is difficult to overcome.

#### **4. Rights to education**

Education is recognized in Articles 28 and 29 of the UNCRC. The provisions of the UNCRC oblige States to make part of the educational pathway compulsory, as well as the obligation to make every level of education accessible to all minors. In this context, the access to education for CMB becomes of utmost importance, in particular for their hybrid integration into the host society. Within the EU, the right to education is guaranteed by Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which attributes this right to CMB, in particular to refugees and to the children of asylum seekers. The directive calls on States to ensure that CMB have access to education under the same conditions as

their own nationals, which should take place within the first three months after applying for asylum and which may be supported by language lessons in the language of the country of arrival. Although, in general, all the countries guarantee access to education for CMB, there are some differences among their strategies for their integration in the school systems.

In **Belgium**, all children up to the age of 18 are required to attend school. All CMB must be registered by the person who has parental authority over them at an educational establishment within 60 days of registration in the register of foreigners. Before attending secondary schools, UAMs participate in preparatory lessons of a maximum of two years of duration, including basic language courses. After these preparation lessons, children attend secondary school, always followed by a coach. 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 & Poeze 2018). In the French Community, there is a problem of grade repetition, where CMB do not pass a grade level and must repeat the level. This often means CMB are more likely to leave school early.

In **Finland**, municipalities are obligated to provide compulsory education from age 7, one-year of pre-primary education and early childhood education also for CMB and asylum-seeking children. Municipalities can also provide preparatory education, which covers one year's syllabus. UAMs have the right to receive pre-primary and basic education and are motivated to achieve secondary education and vocational training. At the end of compulsory education, an integration plan of the child can be drawn up, through an Employment and Economic development office, of a maximum duration of three years, to promote integration and social inclusion (Björklund 2015). This plan can be done together with the integration plan for the family, taking into account the child's opinions.

In Germany, all children, regardless of their nationality, have the right to attend school from the age of 6. In addition, there is compulsory schooling, which also generally begins at the age of 6 and comprises 9 to at least 10 school years, depending on the federal state. Afterwards, pupils can continue to attend secondary schools full-time or part-time in combination with vocational education. Access to compulsory education for CMB who have just arrived in the territory is generally regulated differently between *the federal states (Bundesländer)* and sometimes even between municipalities. CMB are admitted to regular classes as quickly as possible and, if necessary, receive lessons adapted to their language skills. Generally, access to it depends on the length of residence and the type of accommodation. There are no measures specifically designed for UAMs, but they can still access preparatory or transitional lessons in schools or vocational training support, as well as language courses outside state schools. Once they have reached the age of majority, education is no longer compulsory and attending school does not preclude removal when the right of residence or suspension of removal expires. CMB experience delays of varying lengths in different federal states. 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. Most states only provide placement in schools if the families have their habitual residence. While there is mandatory school attendance, it is also required that children attend schools, which are not segregated: this is problematic both when children attend school in reception centres and for the second language classes since children are separated from mainstream classrooms. 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.

In **Italy**, CMB, regardless of whether they reside legally or illegally within the territory, are subject to compulsory schooling and have the right to education, in the forms and manner provided for Italian citizens. The child has the right to a residence permit until he/she reaches the age of majority. UAMs have the same right as Italian children to access education. UAMs are required to participate in Italian language courses held in special institutions and to comply with compulsory schooling. The law also provides for the possibility of participation of cultural mediators in school activities. School delay is a significant problem because children have trouble gaining admission to schools due to the many bureaucratic hurdles.

In **Poland**, access to education for UAMs takes place as soon as they arrive in the territory, for the first year of primary school, or after the verification of previous knowledge for the other years of primary school and secondary schools. The Polish school system also organises free language courses to promote integration.

In **Sweden**, irregular migrant children and asylum seeker children can, but are not obliged to, take part in compulsory education. The education of CMB is a local responsibility, resting with the municipality. Undocumented children 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 and out-of-school provision. Once a child has been registered and assigned to a municipality, he/she has the same right to access education as residents and the same obligation to attend compulsory education. The most common practice for new migrant students is to place them in transitional classes (Nilsson & Bunar 2016). Asylum-seeking children have the right to attend school, including pre-school and upper secondary school. UAMs can take part in introductory lessons on Swedish language and society, rules and customs. They then attend school regularly and they may have some lessons in their mother tongue in case they find it difficult to follow the lessons in Swedish. The school has the task of assessing the skills and previous knowledge of the child to decide which class he or she should attend (Björklund 2015).

In the **UK**, education is compulsory up to the age of 18. Local authorities have the task of providing full-time education for all children living in their area, regardless of their origin and status. In English schools, there are special education coordinators who are responsible for ensuring that the specific needs of children are met. Other facilitations may also be provided for such as: free meals, coverage of the cost of travel to school for those who cannot afford it, support for the purchase of school uniforms etc.. Local authorities are obliged to make UAMs attend school. They follow the same lessons as English students but have the opportunity to have services to help them reach a certain level of education according to their needs, such as language lessons. For UAMs seeking asylum, local authorities draw up an education plan, which in some cases includes a plan for access to the employment market when they reach 18 years of age. School delay is a significant problem because children have trouble gaining admission to schools due to the many bureaucratic hurdles (McIntyre & Hall 2018).

## 5. Integration in schools

Schools in all partner countries are expected to support the integration of CMB, but often they must do this with limited resources and insufficient training for teachers (see Chapter 8). Moreover, schools may be overcrowded, have concentrations of migrant children and face difficulty in supporting children when they have limited information on their educational background. A high concentration of migrant children in schools can have both positive and negative impacts on migrant children's school experiences. Schools with higher concentrations of migrant children have more motivation to develop resources to support this population. CMB are also able to benefit from being with those who have had similar migratory experiences (Scholten et al. 2017). The trade-off is that CMB do not spend as much time with non-migrant children, thus potentially hindering their integration. Schools' responses to these situations as well as available resources can determine these children's success. The challenges faced by schools and CMB are mitigated or enhanced based on several factors, including the experience of the school systems in welcoming migrants, the overall resources available to the school, and the trainings (and their efficacy) that are available to school actors. Delays involving the *level* at which migrant children start school may impact CMB. There are different approaches to the placement of CMB including: placing them with other children of the same age, placing them in a lower grade level, 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.

Table 1 summarises the condition of children in regular classes in the seven countries participating in the CHILD-UP project. It shows that while in all countries there are concentrations of CMB, in Germany and the UK schools can be overcrowded, in Germany and Italy time spent out of school is a problem, in Belgium, Germany, Italy and the UK information on CMB's background is limited. In all countries, undocumented children are meant to have access to compulsory education.

**Table 1. Conditions of migrant children inclusion into mainstream classes.**

Country	Overcrowded Schools	Concentration of migrant children	Time spent out of school	lack of information on child's educational background	Access for undocumented children
Belgium		X		X	Explicitly allowed
Finland		X			Explicitly allowed <sup>12</sup>
Germany	X <sup>13</sup>	X	X	X	Explicitly allowed
Italy		X	X	X	Explicitly allowed
Poland		X <sup>14</sup>			Implicitly allowed
Sweden		X			Explicitly allowed
UK	X	X		X	Explicitly allowed

<sup>12</sup> During the asylum process, or in case of a refusal when the family hasn't yet left the country, the organising municipality uses its own discretion in terms of access to education.

<sup>13</sup> It does exist in some areas.

<sup>14</sup> Where migrant centres are located.

### 5.1 After-school programmes

After-school programmes can be a key resource in CMB’s hybrid integration. While schools in some countries provide robust after-school programmes (which takes place on school grounds and are run by school staff), after-school programmes in other countries are more often provided by NGOs and social cooperatives. The efficacy of these programmes are hard to measure, both in terms of reaching the target population and in terms of integration outcomes. Typically, the aim of these programmes is to support children academically, but there are also programmes directly targeting integration or other aspects of children’s lives and wellbeing. Whether these are provided in schools or not can provide insight into school resources, investment, and continuity of programming.

**Table 2. 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

## 6. Support of language learning

Local language acquisition is key to hybrid integration. Every country offers some form of targeted support in language acquisition to newcomers, but the length of this support varies by country, as well as whether or not children are separated from mainstream classes for broader instruction. Thus, there is a wide array of practices and approaches to second language learning. School systems in some countries offer special language courses and bridging classes to prepare children for mainstream classes. This allows them to focus on learning the host country language in a dedicated setting. While these programmes can be beneficial, if children spend too long in such environments, they may feel othered and distanced from the mainstream school population. Other practices include placing children in classes based on their age with little consideration of their language ability or educational background, or else placing them in a lower grade level, or some mix of these practices.

Several countries decide on a case-by case basis which level or grade to place CMB in. In **Finland**, this decision is based on children’s age, knowledge and skills. In general, CMB are placed a grade lower than what their actual age would dictate. Integration into mainstream classes occurs gradually, as decided by the agreement of the preparatory teacher and the recipient teacher. The availability of teachers who have education or experience in teaching multicultural groups varies regionally. In **Italy** and the **UK**, CMB are generally placed in the grade corresponding to their age, unless there are reasons to do otherwise. In Italy, this is decided 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). In **Poland**, 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. 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.

**Germany** and **Belgium** offer specific bridging programs. In **Germany**, these vary widely by federal state, but there are two main models that are used, the integrative and the parallel model. In the integrative model, CMB attend mainstream classes while also receiving additional German language support. In the parallel model, there are separate classes for learning the German language. There are also partially integrative classes which include time for children to participate in some subjects in the regular class, depending on their language skills. In **Belgium**, there 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).

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 is highly variable. While separate classes for migrant children may provide more time and space for the teaching and learning of the language of instruction, these may also hamper hybrid integration if children spend too long separated from other children. Thus, it is 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. Spending time with children in mainstream classes positively contributes to hybrid integration and socialisation. While local language acquisition is key to hybrid integration, valuing children's home languages is also important for migrant children's wellbeing in school. However, this value is not frequently recognised, although multilingualism is frequently seen as a resource (Table 3).

**Table 3. Ways of dealing with second languages.**

Country	Separated Language Instruction	Incorporated Language Instruction	Multilingualism seen as a Resource
Belgium	X	To some degree	X
Finland	X	X	X
Germany	X	X	X
Italy	X	X	Technically yes, but questionable in

			practice
Poland	X	X	
Sweden	X	X	X
United Kingdom	X	X	x <sup>15</sup>

## 7. Problems of integration: A summary

According to the 2017 European Commission’s Communication on the protection of children in migration, Member States should establish procedures and processes to help identify durable solutions on an individual basis, and clearly set out the roles and duties of those involved in the assessment, in order to avoid that CMB are left for prolonged periods of time in limbo as regards their legal status. Access to education, healthcare and psychosocial support while awaiting the identification of a durable solution should also be ensured. This is crucial to support CMB’s hybrid integration. CMB should be provided with guidance, support and opportunities for education.

However, CMB are still facing challenges implementing the recommendations of the Commission. In particular, they face numerous challenges in school. These challenges often begin before CMB even enter schools. In addition to significant delays in starting school, a significant issue is that CMB 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 CMB into mainstream classes, some schools offering separate programmes for language learning and teaching subjects in CMB’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 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 (Dumčius et al. 2013; Nusche 2009). The lack of teachers trained in ‘intercultural competence’, qualified in language teaching and trained in teaching other languages is another important obstacle. The challenges for CMB continue once they are incorporated into the mainstream school system. Some of the common factors across countries that contribute to CMB’s educational problems include:

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

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<sup>15</sup> 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.

It is also important to be aware that ‘migrant’ is not a homogenous category. Successful hybrid integration of CMB may also vary depending on factors such as socioeconomic standing and the educational background of parents.

## **8. The importance of family**

The 2017 Commission’s *Communication on the protection of children in migration* established a non-binding measure aimed at addressing root causes and future management policies in the field of children in migration, whether they arrive with families, become separated on the way, or take the journey alone.<sup>16</sup> As UAMs are particularly vulnerable and require specific safeguards from the authorities, often less attention is paid to the needs and well-being of children with families, as it is assumed that families will ensure that the needs of their children are fulfilled. However, families are often overwhelmed by new and difficult situations, parents are preoccupied with urgent tasks including paperwork and procedures, and children are often taking on major responsibilities: carers for siblings and other family members, translators, food providers, etc.

The importance of families in children’s education is laid down in legislation and policies. For example, in Finland, parental collaboration with schools is written into the Basic Education and Early Childhood Education Acts and the curriculums. The Italian Constitution states that parents and schools share the responsibility for the education of children. 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. Parents’ attentiveness seems to affect children’s ability to learn language, 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). However, parents become less involved as their children progress in the education system. Children benefit most from an education that enhances the cooperation between parents and school actors. Children of involved parents 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.

### ***7.1 Housing and parents’ educational attainment***

An important issue with CMB’s family life concerns housing, which may be a risk factor for social exclusion. Children arriving to the EU with their families are usually placed in accommodation centres, or in private houses, flats, hotels and other premises adapted for housing applicants<sup>17</sup> where they may spend considerable time living next to other migrant families and single persons of different ages and backgrounds. Accommodation for those who are undocumented and seeking asylum sometimes breaks with international conventions and even national legislation. In some cases this means being separated from co-nationals by distribution policies, or else concentrated in places where there are no host country nationals and limited ways of hybrid integration in the host society.

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<sup>16</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, «The protection of children in migration» (2017).

<sup>17</sup> See Article 18(1) of the Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU).

Against this background, Table 4 shows that in the schools involved in the CHILD-UP project families living in asylum seekers' reception centres are few: 87.5% of CMB live in houses or apartments with their families, only 5.3% live in a reception centre with their family and only 1.9% live alone in a reception centre. Living conditions of CMB are slightly different in different countries. For instance, although homelessness is an increasing problem in **England** and London in particular, the data produced speak of the ability of local authorities to secure access to housing for children and their families. In **Germany**, all the CMB live in a house or apartment. This is because of political and welfare reasons: refugee families and asylum-seeking families with children should not be accommodated in reception centres. On the contrary, the **Polish** sample was collected in towns in the south-eastern part of the country where the reception centres are situated, and 36% reported living in reception centres where housing conditions are difficult due to limited space in the rooms.

**Table 4. Living conditions of CMB**

	n.	%
My family lives in a house/apartment	1,091	87.5
My family shares a house/apartment with another family/person	66	5.3
My family lives in a residential home/institution	66	5.3
I live in a residential home/institution without my family.	24	1.9
<b>Total</b>	1,247	100

Another important aspect is parents' educational attainment. Table 5 concerns parents' higher educational attainment. The table, which is based on the division of the different levels of education according to ISCED (0-8)<sup>18</sup>, shows that parents with a migrant background are quite highly educated, but also that many of those parents who have no or a very low-level education (primary or lower secondary) have a migration background. In general, migrant parents make up the biggest group among those with an upper secondary education and short tertiary education (ISCED 5).

**Table 5. Parents' higher educational attainment**

	All Parents		Migrants	
	n.	%	n.	%
ISCED 0-2	100	4.8	81	10.2
ISCED 3-4	1,147	54.7	464	58.7

<sup>18</sup> ISCED 0 = no formal schooling; ISCED 1 = primary education; ISCED 2 = lower secondary education; ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary education / post-secondary non-tertiary education; ISCED 5 = short cycle tertiary education; ISCED 6 = university degree, bachelor's level; ISCED 7 = university degree, master's level; ISCED 8 = university degree, doctoral level

ISCED 5-8	849	40.5	245	31.0
Total	2,096	100	790	100

The gap between parents of native children and parents of CMB exists, but it is not very relevant. Thus we can conclude that in our sample, while there are some contextual differences for what concerns family life between native children and CMB, these differences are relatively low. However, CMB's parents often seem less involved in their children's education. 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. Chapter 4 will show the problem of involving CMB's parents in teacher-parents communication.

### **9. Threads and opportunities for hybrid integration**

Many programmes of CMB integration have not been thoroughly evaluated and practices often exist at the local level, making it difficult to generalize. Nevertheless, common themes from these programmes, which also help to combat discrimination, may be identified. The common thread is teaching. Teachers spend a great deal of time with children and parents and, in addition to their regular teaching responsibilities, they are expected to counter bullying and discrimination, prevent early school leaving, promote integration, be culturally aware, and support language learning and home language retention. 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. Thus, for the benefit of CMB, teachers must be better supported. In particular, training programmes for teachers to work with CMB are very important.

It is also important that time spent outside of mainstream classes should be limited because it can have negative impacts on CMB's hybrid integration. It is important that CMB have the chance to socialise with both migrant and non-migrant background peers. Additionally, schools and teachers should value CMB's culture and home language and treat these a resource rather than obstacles to learning. This positive treatment can impact CMB's wellbeing and also contribute to reducing discrimination and bullying. In particular, CMB could 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 CMB. 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, as well as support of initiatives that encourage cross-cultural understanding and sharing.

Another important factor is the contribution of the public sector as well as civil society to ensure that the best interests of CMB and identify a long-term solution for them. Being in touch with neighbours and local actors of civil society is essential for an early integration process (Eurodiaconia 2019).

Relevant NGOs can have access to reception centres where their services are needed and to after-school activities, and at the same time, children and their families can be encouraged to interact with the local community. Parents and families are also key components of CMB's hybrid integration.

Monitoring children's wellbeing in school; understanding how outside factors impact school outcomes; and robust communication with parents are all key components of CMB's hybrid integration in education. What is key is to ensure that local actors have some level of flexibility since they are the experts on what is needed in their specific context.

### **9.1 Mentoring**

A specific aspect that seems to be particularly useful is **mentoring**. First, pairing migrants with non-migrant counterparts in order to promote cultural exchange is considered as an important support of CMB's hybrid integration. This type of targeted one-on-one attention seems to offer CMB a chance to gain first-hand knowledge of the local context. The projects like Intercultural Mentoring Tools to Support Integration at School (INTO, 2013-2015) reviewed pilot programmes in several countries that used a peer mentoring approach where CMB (aged 13-19) were trained and then paired with younger CMB in order to support them both socially and in their school work. In Sweden, Germany and Italy, mentorship programmes provide mediators who promote communication between school personnel, students and families (see Chapter 7). In Germany, as one example, the pilot project "jmd2start – Begleitung für junge Flüchtlinge im Jugendmigrationsdienst" (Accompaniment of young refugees in the youth migration service) is based on collaboration between local actors, such as the Youth and Social Welfare Office and schools, to find educational and professional offers for young refugees. This programme involves communication between schools, other support services, and the young migrants themselves. Similar mentoring programmes exist in Poland where projects run by Foundation Ocalenie are designed to support refugee children. One example is "Knowledge to power"<sup>19</sup> which provides mentors to motivate refugee children and build their self-esteem. A second mentoring programme endeavours to create a replicable programme based on individual contact<sup>20</sup>: local youth volunteers are paired with newly arrived child migrants and refugees in order to help them orient to their new surroundings. This programming is based on triangulation by involving several actors and considering children's overall well-being in addition to their education.

What is called "mentoring" involves several programmes, based on both peers and adults' support of migrant children. The CHILD-UP project aimed to understand if in the involved schools, teachers and other social actors (e.g. social workers and mediators) can facilitate CMB's agency. This facilitation can be considered a way of mentoring.

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<sup>19</sup> <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).

<sup>20</sup> <https://ocalenie.org.pl/nasze-dzialania/pomagamy/dzieci-i-mlodziez/mint-mentoring-na-rzecz-integracji-dzieci-cudzoziemskich-2> (access 10.07.2019).

## Chapter 4. The school experience

### 1. Introduction

This chapter deals with children's experience of school, in particular highlighting if this experience is different for native children and for children with migrant background (CMB). Children's school experience is not only based on experience of teaching, but also on experience of peer relations and the influence of the family context. Since almost all children (94%), and CMB (87.5%), live in apartments/houses with their families, and only 1.9% of CMB live separated from their families, the family context is very frequently regular. Therefore, it is difficult to propose a distinction between socially marginalised CMB and integrated native children. This chapter deals with communication in schools and communication between schools and families as well as between schools and external professionals (social workers and mediators).

### 2. Children's interest in school

The survey has shown children's perceptions of school in terms of pleasure, skills in understanding, schoolwork, school tasks, ways of finding solutions to problems, and knowing how to deal with new experiences. Table 1 shows that all responses are rather positive with the school experience, but there are some interesting differences. Enjoying learning new things is the most agreed feature of the school experience (79.3%), followed by managing school tasks as well as other children (74.1%) and dealing with something new (73.4%). On the opposite side, the less agreed aspect is the very general "like going to school" (62.7%), followed by finding solutions for all problems (63.3%). More than 40% of children do not appreciate school and problem solving, while only about on fourth do not enjoy leaning. Thus, children are specially interested in learning something new, it seems more important than the experience of school in itself. Differences between native children and CMB are rather small, as the limited deviation of percentages of CMB from the total percentage of responses shows. CMB are in some cases slightly more positive in their feeling towards school experience and learning, while they less frequently appreciate facing new things.

**Table 1. Differences between all children and CMB's perception of schoolwork (ISCED 1-3; totally agree and rather agree)**

	All children	CMB
	%	%
1. Appreciation of school	62.4	<b>69.1</b>
2. Enjoyment in learning	78.9	<b>84.5</b>
3. Understanding teachers	69.4	71.4
4. Skills for schoolwork	71.7	70.5
5. Management of school tasks	73.7	71.3
6. Management of homework	69.0	69.2

7. Problem solving	62.9	64.6
8. Facing new things	<b>73.0</b>	69.6

**These data are confirmed by the focus group and individual interviews** showing that school is valued as a meeting place, in particular a space for contact with friends. Some children even explicitly indicated that they enjoy breaks the most, because they can freely spend time with friends.

I genuinely like my school a lot and I get on very well with my classmates and teachers. For me the best thing, as my companion has already said, is break time, when I was in the first class and I didn't know anyone yet, it was talking with the others to get to know each other better. (IT\_F31\_CH\_G)

Children value greatly those activities that enable **personal expression** or **group work** and **collaboration**: “yes I like more the personal things, when one can express oneself”. (IT\_F29\_CH\_B). On the other hand, **inadequate teaching methods** and **lack of clear rules** were highlighted as key problems. Children expect far more opportunities for co-determination in matters concerning them, as well as the possibility of disagreeing on certain tasks. They feel that they should be able to exercise certain rights at school. They would expect teachers to be able to cooperate with each other, and to be consistent with one another, especially in terms of organising tasks and student work.

Teachers would ask us more for our opinion, even for the tests. That they would ask us when it suits us best, because it is democracy, it should be the choice of the student. It's not them [the teachers] who take the tests, it's us who have to study. They should think more of us. And that there is cohesion between teachers, that they organize themselves. (BE\_I6\_G)

Another issue raised by children was **helping to resolve social situations**, such as bullying and intolerance from other peers. Children reported that learning or rest during breaks may be disrupted by other children who do not respect the rules. In such situations, it seems important that teachers and other professionals provide support to help to define the needs and rules arising from them.

## 2.1 Dreaming a better school

Children frequently referred to the physical dimensions of friendly school, i.e. the architecture of the building, the functions assigned to the rooms and their decoration.

Like decorating the classrooms more because they are all white and grey” (IT\_F23\_CH\_B).

My first wish would be that our school was in the middle of a jungle, in a forest, where there is also a lake where we can go swimming. (G\_F24\_ISCED1\_FF)

A big, huge play area where all kids can play together and catch up and do nice things so they do not go there like they are going to get bored (UK\_F1\_SF1).

Some children would also like to have their voice included in planning the appearance of the school, as non-hierarchical, open to all and promoting good relations for all. In Sweden, children pointed out the importance of avoiding group boundaries. This also concerns the relationships between boys and girls: “everyone is kind of friends with everyone and none of the guys thinks it's embarrassing to be

with someone of the opposite sex". (SWE\_F8\_ISCED1). It also means peer support, respect for others and no bullying or making fun of others.

Girl: Then you want everyone to be friends, and friends are important for studies, I think.

Boy: For concentration, you do not have to think "where would I be now on the break? Would people laugh at me?" (SWE\_F7\_ISCED2)

Suggestions were also made to increase the number of extra-curricular activities. In Italy, children referred to art, music, dance, or sports, but similar ideas have emerged in all countries.

M1: Like some more activities, like in American schools there is the option of doing activities after the lessons like music, dance, etc. [...] Things like theatre music and dance, for me, I would do them in a shot [...] because they are things that attract me. (IT\_F5\_CH\_B)

Other suggested changes concerned the organization of the day. Older children wanted to start school later, but children also called for longer breaks, to have the opportunity to "switch", or some time to get rid of stress from the previous lesson. Children were mostly in agreement that the school day is too long and too full, calling for fewer hours of study and less homework. Children emphasized the limitation of life only to school: "Sometimes I cannot enjoy my time with friends because I think about school. I need real free time without stress". (UK\_F7\_WC1).

A friendly school should also reduce the distance between children and teachers, promoting a more relaxed atmosphere. Teachers should pay attention to children's interests. This is a call for the use of a person-centred approach and teaching through play.

Like you don't just go to school, like you're welcome to come and learn. Not just like you're forced to do something, but that different people learn in different ways. So when the teacher says to me, 'Write', and I learn by listening, it becomes difficult to me. I get nothing but writing benefits someone else. But that we all have to do it. (FI\_F4\_CH\_2\_G)

I believe that in school you have to learn while having fun because if it's too serious, ultimately it's hard to learn. (IT\_F21\_CH\_G)

In Sweden, children defined engaged and supportive teachers as those for whom it is most important that every student succeeds. At the same time, however, such teachers offer support in a sensitive and individualized way, when and how ever much is necessary.

A good teacher should also want the students to succeed in school by supporting them a lot in their learning. A boy gives an example of how a positive support is implemented by one of their teachers: 'she helps us all the time. If we ask one thing, she answers a hundred times'. (SWE\_F4\_ISCED2)

Children pointed out that the school is a **place that should include personal narratives and feelings**. In England, children claimed that such openness to the whole person should apply to everyone and would expect teachers to share their own personal memories and stories.

It would be nice, if our teachers could better narrate. The lesson. Then it could be better. (G\_F27\_ISCED1\_F).

New school is a school which understands students' needs better, which not only focuses on teaching, but also on spending time together [...] teachers and students should help each other more and talk (IT\_F10\_CH\_G).

Children feel that they are able and willing to take responsibility for their educational process and would like to be included as partners in teaching and learning, rather than being treated as passive recipients of teachers' activities. The change advocated by children concerns their participation in their own education by bringing personal experiences and knowledge in the classroom. Giving the children a voice increases sense of satisfaction with being in the classroom and feeling that children's stock of knowledge has grown.

M1: the best thing ever I like better is when we talk about what we have done with our friends and with the family?

I: Why is that?

M1: It feels nice to hear stories about places and to know what we do.

I: So you learn about them?

M1: You hear new things. (UK\_F10\_FM2)

### 3. School relations

Table 2 shows (1) relations with classmates, (2) possible reasons of selecting classroom relations and (3) relations with teachers. Children apprehend relations with classmates mostly positively and have friends in school. In general, relations between children, but also between children and teachers, seem to work well, although the perception of teachers' care is less widespread and closeness with classmates is more selective. The lowest level of agreement concerns closeness with children who speak the same language, followed by closeness with children with the same interests. While general relations with classmates are a bit less widespread among CMB, these children seem to be less interested in relations with children who speak the same language. This might depend on the presence of fewer children speaking the same language. However, CMB are more frequently interested in relations with other children having the same interests, where "same interests" might be interpreted as based on similar conditions or habits. Moreover, CMB more frequently agree with the suggestion that their teachers are fair and take care of them.

**Table 2. School relations for all children and CMB**

	All children %	CMB %
1. Closeness to classmates	74.7	72.6
2. Appreciation of relations with classmates	82.5	80.2
3. Friendships in class	83.8	83.6
4. Closeness to same language speakers	57.0	53.9
5. Closeness to children with same interests	65.5	70.8

6. Teachers' fairness	70.8	<b>73.0</b>
7. Teachers' care	66.5	<b>70.2</b>
8. Good relations with teachers	78.9	79.0

### **3.1 Relations with Teachers**

The interviews show that teachers play a very important role for children, especially for CMB. On the other hand, the relations of **support, trust and encouragement** with teachers were presented as being of crucial importance for children. On the other hand, level of confidence in educational system can be undermined by teachers' behaviours. Children mentioned barriers which hinder establishing trustful relations with teachers like hierarchical relations (Belgium), favouritism and pedantry (Italy), lack of engagement and solidarity in case of discrimination (Belgium, Italy, Germany), prioritizing obligations and rules above children's needs (Finland, Sweden). Children perceive such attitudes as obstacles for engagement at school. Moreover, perceiving teachers as a distinct and distant category results in not seeing teachers as allies in difficult situations: "In school I do not see who I would go to because in general, the teachers or the principal will protect their colleagues" (BE\_T5\_F). Performance-centred teachers are more focused on the content and evaluation than on dialogue, trust and the valorisation of competences (Italy). In Germany, children said that sometimes the older teachers are less willing to adjust their teaching methods or children perceive them as bitter: "Some teachers are old, and sometimes I think, they are old and a bit angry. I don't know why. I: How should they be? Boy, 10 years old: Not that angry" (G\_I26\_ISCED1\_M). There are teachers who leave children by themselves and do not put emotions in what they do: "For some courses, [the teachers] are not really attentive. 'Well, we give you lessons and while you do that for 50 minutes, I am going on amazon to order my new shoes.' There are teachers who did that, for example" (BE\_I8\_B).

In Belgium and Sweden, children recalled situations of unfair treatment and discrimination. Children also contested **oppressive behaviour by teachers**, enforcing discipline by shouting instead of explaining: "I don't like it when the teacher(s) shouts and the subject is difficult or incomprehensible" (PL\_F1\_CH). Some children stressed teacher's inappropriate reactions concerning problems that are experienced by CMB, e.g. one of the children indicated that the teacher disregarded the fact that CMB may not yet understand handwritten Polish words. CMB's limitations in the language of instruction are not taken into consideration. Lack of trust also impacts children's readiness to report problems to teachers and sharing confidential information with teachers. In Belgium, Italy and Finland children perceive teachers as not always adhering to confidentiality rules so student would refrain from turning to teachers in the case of any conflict.

Girl 1: I don't trust them [teachers] cause I've noticed that in other schools, when students have told them, they've had to go to this (...) Child protection. (...) They've reported it to them. So that's why I don't trust. But if the teacher is someone who doesn't really proceed with things, that's when I can talk about things. But I don't really trust teachers that much to be honest.

Girl 2: Yeah. I could easily talk about positive events and I'd be happy to do so but with negative I try to be a bit cautious especially in Finland, you know. They take everything so seriously. (FI\_F3\_CH)

In Finland and Sweden, children reported being hesitant to talk of problematic situations to teachers, because they are afraid of making a big issue out of it, which might have consequences in notifying social services and bringing more trouble than benefits. Here, however, there may be a discrepant understanding between children and teachers of the limits of confidentiality vis-à-vis professionals' duties to see to the best interests of the children.

In particular, CMB refrain from sharing their troubles to avoid any potential negative consequences. Some CMB expressed **being unfairly treated** by teachers. They mentioned handling their behaviour in class differently (Belgium, Finland), giving them lower grades (Poland), undermining their ability to learn (Poland), and declining remedial teaching (Finland). In Italy Poland and Belgium, children talked about teachers assigning labels, which has consequences for a child's educational career.

Every hour of class I had remarks 'we will have a future murderer or prisoner, won't we Mr. \*\*\*\*' . Comments like that I got every hour of class. So poor relations. It didn't bother me too deeply. A teacher who says that kind of thing to you is a bit of a kid, and you say to yourself "well, it's not someone that I hold in high esteem so that doesn't bother me.' (BE\_I8\_B)

If we confront her, we're screwed. Our year is ruined. So there you have it [...] But I think the management has heard some things, but they don't care. (BE\_I6\_G).

I would like to participate more, but I am afraid of making mistakes, and I'm also afraid [unclear] in front of other people, also because I am another colour and so I am afraid that someone might start targeting me. (IT\_F29\_CH\_G).

On the contrary, children **appreciate teachers' commitment to their work**. As one of the children from Belgium described, the teachers should "*live* their jobs". Especially appreciated by children is teachers' extra engagement in pursuing activities beyond the school curriculum. In Italy and Germany, children especially appreciate the time devoted to them after school hours.

Girl, 16 years old: My class teacher. I can actually talk to her openly about everything, because she was also the teacher, my first teacher, from this class. She accepted me into the international preparation class and, for example, she always asked me whether I had a device at home, whether everything was going well. So she already always asks me how I'm doing and tries it to find a way to improve that. She always thinks about me and that's why I would reach out to her. She always takes her time, also sometimes talks to me on the phone about my problem if I have one and that's why I have trust in her. (G\_I43\_ISCED3\_F)

Children in Sweden mentioned teachers engaged in playing sports after school with children. Some children in England talked of engaged and supportive teachers, appreciating teachers' openness and readiness to share their experiences and emphasising attitudes of interest in children and active appreciations of their work as particularly effective.

M1: I remember that we were talking about what we do on Sunday and Mrs. [teacher's name] told me that what I do is very interesting I was feeling like happy. (UK\_F14\_FM5)

M1: We had so much fun when Mr. [teacher's name] was telling stories of him going to school and he did not like it then I like it and the funny stories with his friends

I: How did it make you feel?

M1: Fun and it looked like me actually (UK\_F16\_WC3).

Children expressed their support for methods of teaching open to children's needs and interests. In England, children asked for allowing socialisation across age groups and classes, sharing personal stories and memories, learning by doing together. In Belgium, children favoured a mixture of methods, including both individual and group work, openness towards individual needs, and the possibility to refuse to participate in some activities. In Finland and Italy children claimed for creative methods, supporting active roles of students, work in small groups; in Germany, they claimed methods that strengthen the self-confidence through support, trust and encouragement; openness and flexibility in teaching; interactive methods.

Like you don't just go to school, like you're welcome to come and learn. Not just like you're forced to do something, but that different people learn in different ways. So when the teacher says to me, 'Write', and I learn by listening, it becomes difficult to me. I get nothing but writing benefits someone else (FI\_F4\_CH\_2\_G). My favourite activities involved working in groups because it helps you approach your classmates, to make friends, maybe we fought with a classmate and the teachers would then try and put us with this classmate to strengthen the relationship. Also, because with group work when you find something difficult you can ask your classmates for help or even the teacher supervising us. (IT\_F21\_CH\_B).

Some of them [teachers] teach creatively and they just are nice people and the way they behave towards students, not as friends, but they are pretty kind and when they have a reason to praise someone, they do this really well (G\_I36\_ISCED1\_F).

Girl: Well, our maths teacher is quite nice. She also tries very hard and she [wants] [...] to motivate us. And she also does a lot of good exercises and she also explains. Our tests are not so very hard, so they are doable. So I like my math teacher. And in some subjects, it's like that, so you don't write so much on blackboard, just always talking. And you have to do almost everything independently. And yeah, so there are also teachers like that. (G\_I40\_ISCED3\_F)

In Poland, refugee children asked for a quiet, calm atmosphere at school and more interactive methods of work. In Sweden children claimed for after school workshops and help with homework.

Girl1: At this school, we have something called Stahl. It is that every teacher gives help with homework. For example, the math teacher has on Tuesdays from four to five, then there are not as many students of course, and you get more help. (SWE\_F3\_ISCED3)

The importance of **establishing personal relationships** with children was underlined by most of the teachers. As a crucial process, teachers see **recognizing children's capabilities** rather than concentrating on their deficiencies.

Then, of course, you also think about the gender of the teacher, is it better off there now or is it better off there now, what does it need now? So as a role model. Therefore, we do that in any case, and we have at least one man in each class. [...] That one simply looks at where is the child going now? Therefore, this boy is conspicuous because he needs a father figure because or he needs a mother figure because or he has more difficulties with a woman because. Therefore, that plays a role in any case, but I think most are so that they say, it does not play such a role and we do not WANT to keep these roles. (G\_T2\_F)

The importance of bonding with children was encapsulated by a Swedish teacher's remark, that "Without it, it will not work" (SWE\_T1\_F). In this context, trust emerged as a key factor in building relationships, especially in English and Swedish contexts: "These students are very dependent on

relationships, so to speak. The more you know them, the easier the job will get. Because they always want to test you, can you really trust this person and so on". (SWE\_T5\_F). Teachers frequently declared of putting the integration of CMB over their academic performance: "What I think is to start from involvement fully in the life of the classroom, making sure everyone is heard by everyone and seen as equal; from there and not vice-versa, catching up academically will come". (UK\_T6\_F). Teachers see CMB as in need of more attention and greater sensitivity, highlighting the importance of supportive teacher – student relationships.

All children, I'll say most children, I won't say all, but I'll say most foreign or socially disadvantaged children come to me because I listen. I'm [...] always listening. And I'm trying to figure out what they want, why, how, if it's not right, what we can do, and that's it. [...] In fact, they call me the social one at school. When they say, 'Yeah you're very social', I say, 'No, I'm human'. Yes, I am very social, that's normal, we are in a group where there is a range of children, from many different cultures, we must also be able to share and listen to them. (BE\_T5\_F).

Teacher also recognised the need for **flexible** teaching style and **treatment of children as special but not different**. In all countries, the teachers recognized the need to be welcoming and open-minded towards CMB, responsive to their needs and ready to modify their teaching methods to fulfil CMB's needs. Teachers in Germany, Finland and Poland claimed that they treat CMB just like the rest of the class. This does not mean disregard for their individual needs, but rather treating them as equal and not emphasising their distinctiveness.

### *3.2 Perceptions of grades*

Children manifested **mixed feeling about grades**, ranging from appreciation to very critical views. On the one hand, children see grades as useful, allowing them to understand the level of knowledge they have acquired.

F1: grades are very important to me, because if I see that they are a bit low for a subject is, I know that I need to work harder in that subject.

M1: In my opinion they are important because they help determine when a person is doing well in some things and in what they need to improve. (IT\_F33\_CH\_GB)

In particular in Germany and Poland, children claimed to be engaged in and proud of obtaining good grades. Other children, however, were very critical about grades, perceiving them as too standardized, inadequate, and not taking children's capabilities into account. Especially older children said that gaining knowledge is more important than obtaining good grades.

You can't evaluate a person with a number, I am not a number. How do you evaluate a person with a number? It's almost like Auschwitz in that you have to remember your number, you have to evaluate a person according to his skills and if a person is not good in that field it is because you have decided that he has to learn that field, if you gave him the opportunity to measure himself in what he considers his field, something in which he considers himself good, everything would change [...] I would give them the opportunity to show their skills, but not with the lessons I decide, but with what they decide. (IT\_F4\_CH\_B)

In Finland, children were also very critical of grades and the grading system, describing it as a top-down process. The common practice of self-evaluation was also seen as pointless by children. In Belgium, CMB expressed the need for **more flexible grading methods**. In Italy and Finland, children also saw teachers as putting too much attention on grades and less on the actual process of learning things and making progress.

In my opinion, in general, some teachers should believe in us a bit more, not expect much or little, I mean, to believe in us anyway. Perhaps if you answer a question incorrectly, instead of giving us a four or five immediately, they could give us another chance. (IT\_F7\_CH\_G)

The perception of grades and their fairness or unfairness depends also on the relationship with the teacher, if he/she is perceived as a trustworthy person.

F1: As I was saying when I was at [school's name removed] I did not trust the teacher and the marks was so unfair I could not bear to look at them and to listen to him.

I: You could not trust him.

F1: No I could not and I did not believe him so it was pointless, really. (UK\_F13\_FM3)

In particular, children talked about the difficulties faced by CMB who lack the requisite language proficiency in obtaining good grades. CMB would like to be fairly graded like other children, but also would like that the grading system to be adjusted to their skills and capabilities. The interviews with Polish teachers show recognition of CMB's frustration when they cannot fulfil their educational goals and aspirations and the lack of adjustment in the examining system for CMB who do not have the requisite language proficiency or their cultural context.

The regulations do not foresee it being that difficult. [...] She will only have a dictionary, but it is a different vocabulary for example in math. And the examination sheet for foreigners is based on the readings that are supposed to be read in all European nations, but the African context is not taken into account. We would like the assistant to be present during the examination, but there is no chance of that. P. would have to have a certificate of special education, but she is a very intelligent girl, so there is not a chance for that. (PL\_T7\_F)

However, in general, teachers declared to assign importance to grades and would like to see children as striving for good grades. On the other hand, social workers, especially in Germany, observed that too much importance is put on grades: "I think, on the one hand, its overwhelming. For many, what happens in class is just too difficult. And the awareness [...] that their chances in society in general are not so good". (G\_SW4\_F).

### ***3.3 Relations with peers***

The dynamics of peer relations varies most of all according to diversity at school. Establishing peer relations among small children in nursery schools was considered as a straightforward process where migrant background does not play an important role. At school, peer relations can be both facilitated or hindered by teachers. In Germany, peer cooperation was often reported as stemming from teachers' encouragement, who introduced mutual learning practices (like group work) that include all children in small groups and projects that involve everyone.

That's why we're now tackling the tandem project. Where the third grade, for example, always takes over a first grade as a monitoring, so to speak, where everyone gets a tandem partner. And then you also do things together, in the hope that they will have someone, an ally in the schoolyard, so to speak, but not to ally against others, but simply to have support in questions of general orientation, language, learning mentorship, etc. (G\_T2\_F)

Children in England claimed that social relations among peers more than the quality of teaching or curricula seem to shape their experiences of schooling. In Germany and Italy children enjoyed **mutual learning and peer support** during classes as well as playing games together like football or learning other skills from their peers.

My favourite activities involved working in groups because it helps you to approach your classmates, to make friends, maybe we fought with a classmate and the teachers would then try and put us with this classmate to strengthen the relationship. Also, because when you find something difficult with group work you can ask your classmates for help or even the teacher supervising us. (IT\_F21\_CH\_B)

I: You just said something exciting about playing soccer, that you learned that. How or from whom did you learn that?

Girl: Well, the boys more or less taught us. We taught ourselves by playing a lot. And then we just learned it and kept on doing it. And then we got better and better at it. And I also practiced a lot with my friends. (G\_I33\_ISCED1\_F)

CMB reported receiving support from other children, both speaking their mother tongue as well as those who spoke the language of the host country (Poland, Italy, Germany, Finland). In Belgium, mutual support was seen by children as the main source of assistance for CMB, with structural support seen as non-existent.

Like last year, for example, we had a newcomer. We integrated him well enough into our group so that he does not feel different. He had more support from us than from the management. [...] I think the management doesn't realize, but they try to be there but without being there; it's not enough for a new person who has just arrived. (BE\_I3\_G)

These activities allow children to socialize with each other and are usually located outside of the classroom. Children can foster peer relations above all in the context of free time. For younger children, afterschool classes in the school or community centre (in Finland, Poland and Sweden) and parish (in Italy) represent places where children can **socialize through play**. Children also greatly appreciated any additional opportunities created for them at school that aimed at establishing close relationships. In Sweden and Italy, children mentioned trips outside the school, where they had the opportunity to get to know each other better.

In England, **gender** was also noticed as a factor influencing peer relations or class behaviour, but having only a minor significance. Also in Sweden, gender was not frequently experienced as determining group boundaries in the school context, although gender may play a role in conflicts, with all female classes seeming to have more conflict than all male or mixed ones. Some of the primary school children, who were interviewed in Germany experienced **gender divisions**, which had an impact on their social relations. In Belgium, the importance of gender was reported as developing in tandem with the age of the children. **Gender can be perceived as a bonding factor**,

when children are attracted to each other by gender specific interests like soccer, cycling or creative activities.

Professionals also recognized children's need to fit in the group of local children and their willingness to create social bonds. In particular, teachers recognized how peer networks improve the educational opportunities of CMB. Through the contacts with their peers, CMB gain more opportunities to develop their knowledge of the local language through, among others, peer mediation of the native language or create more space for individual expression in the school. In Italy, social workers stated that "kids [CMB] want to feel similar to Italian kids" (IT\_F6\_M\_3\_FM). Professionals also claimed that they undertake actions to help CMB to overcome marginalization. In Finland, teachers observed difficulties in finding friends among Finnish-origin children for CMB even when they had acquired basic Finnish language proficiency. In Italy and Poland, professionals highlighted the marginalization of CMB and the fact that they tended to stick to their own language community.

Polish children in such situations have them too when left on their own, and here when children from Ukraine are left alone, it's even double, or triple a problem, since they are left alone, because there's a language barrier, and on top of that they're separated from the world, because they don't know the language, they don't have friends, and they're separated, too and also often receive some negative things, because they're different and are not accepted in the classroom and, simply, such child might just have very many psychological problems and depression, and so on. (PL\_F1\_M1\_M)

Professionals especially underlined **the importance of unstructured time for hybrid integration** in various contexts (parishes in Italy, after school in Germany, Finland and Poland, community centres in Poland, Finland and Sweden, free play in the England, breaks during classes in Italy). CMB also spend time in playgrounds (England), in sports fields or in associations (Poland), in recreation and community centres (Sweden), in the Christian community or communities based on their native language (Germany). Often these activities do not require language skills, thus they can be particularly helpful in supporting CMB's self-esteem at the beginning of their stay, when they experience many challenges in the educational space due to the language barrier. These activities are also important for peer relationships as, according to some children and teachers, the ties made with the host group at school do not extend into the after-school environment (Germany, Poland). In particular in **informal spaces**, CMB establish relationships with other migrants who share **similar experiences**, but also with members of the host community. They can engage in activities they like, express themselves, develop their own interests (Poland, UK, Sweden). However, parents and guardians are seen as playing an important role in supporting or blocking participation in non-school activities. Teachers report that in conservative families, parents sometimes refuse to allow girls to participate in extra-curricular activities.

This cultural aspect has an enormous weight because males can go out, if sometimes they don't come it's because they go to pray or because they don't want to, but females are precluded from this opportunity, they don't let them go out and they find it difficult to come because they are just not used to it, it's improper, it can't be done. (IT\_T18\_F)

This it seems easier for CMB to **build relationships in open, less formal spaces where they can engage in activities related to their interests**. However, **unaccompanied minors** often stay in

residential centres (Belgium), under local authority care for undocumented children and foster placement for those with documents (UK), or reception centres (Italy). The assistance given by social workers to these children is sometimes hindered further by their difficult experiences and feelings of abandonment, even though it typically results in a higher degree of autonomy. Social workers coordinate the cooperation of the school with other institutions and provide a sense of security and relationships. Children living in residential have the right to choose how they spend their free time and, although different activities are on offer, they often choose to keep in touch with family members by making a phone call or sending messages. In particular, Italian social workers emphasized the importance of giving children space, mentioning the need to be honest and non-judgmental with them in order to build good relationships.

#### 4. Challenges for children

Table 3 shows children’s challenges in the school context. There are no great differences between CMB and native children’s experiences of these challenges. Challenges are almost absent in the UK and infrequent for CMB in Poland. Challenges are particularly frequent in Germany and Sweden for all children, although in Sweden CMB experience problems at school less frequently.

**Table 3. Children’s experiences of challenges at school (ISCED 1-3; many times)**

Country	All children		CMB	
	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	72	18.9	44	20.4
Finland	102	18.0	26	21.1
Germany	95	<b>28.2</b>	23	<b>33.3</b>
Italy	86	12.3	52	15.8
Poland	78	12.6	10	<b>7.3</b>
Sweden	42	<b>23.7</b>	26	19.4
United Kingdom	23	<b>3.8</b>	10	<b>5.0</b>
Total	498	14.7	191	15.8

Table 4 shows that CMB receive help more frequently from teachers (29.4%), while collaboration with teachers, which implies more reciprocity than help is less frequent. However, help is very rare in **Poland** and rare in **Italy**. By contrast, in **Sweden** and **Belgium** help is frequent. CMB also receive help much less frequently in Italy and more frequently in **Finland**, **Germany**, and **the UK**. CMB collaborate less frequently than the average of all children in **Belgium**, while in **Poland** collaboration is very high. Collaboration with teachers is also higher than on average in **Finland** and **Sweden**.

**Table 4. Teachers’ help and collaboration (according to children)**

	Help		Collaboration	
	All children	CMB	All children	CMB

	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	120	31.2	78	35.3	63	16.4	18	8.1
Finland	151	25.2	47	38.5	94	15.7	27	22.0
Germany	92	24.7	27	34.6	62	16.7	11	14.1
Italy	114	21.1	62	12.5	87	17.8	47	18.4
Poland	103	16.3	24	17.1	263	41.7	88	62.9
Sweden	70	40.2	58	43.9	40	25.0	36	29.5
United Kingdom	160	29.7	59	34.7	185	34.2	61	34.4
Total	810	25.0	355	29.4	794	25.0	288	25.8

The interviews show that most **teachers are a source of support for children**. Children usually would find one or two adults at school whom they can trust and see that person as a source of support. However, many teachers are seen as not being committed to their work or perceived as unreliable. There are also cases of indifference towards the situation of CMB or even discrimination. Some teachers appear to be particularly unsupportive and the whole school environment is seen as hostile. Alternative sources of support are the student counsellor or student coordinator in Sweden and social workers in Germany.

Girl: Well, there used to be Mr. [social worker], who was there for people who had a problem, who were sad. [...] With [name of social worker] it was just like that, you really trusted that he wouldn't tell anyone. (...). It was somehow nicer to tell him and not your own teacher. [...] He also sometimes sat down in front of the school with his guitar and sang and for the new school year, or for report cards, there were little notes that said no matter what your report card said, somehow like that and then, for me you're unique and yes, somehow something like that. (G\_F30\_CH\_F).

In the Polish case, a huge source of support for children are **intercultural assistants**. Children who had experienced stress and trauma in school especially appreciated their presence as they speak their language and act as an intermediary between children, their parents and the sometimes hostile school environment.

## 5. Parental involvement in education

Parental involvement in school is built on the assumption that parents are fully informed and have the interest and willingness to actively participate. However, educational institutions must provide the conditions for parents to be able to participate. Interviews show that in most cases, schools communicate with parents by organizing at least one parents' meeting a year. Web-based communication tools are becoming ever more popular. In cases where web portals are frequently used (e.g., in Finland) there is the expectation that parents are being involved with on a nearly daily basis. However, many 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 tools. It is also important to understand that without clear expectations and structures that guide parental involvement, there can be a discrepancy between schools' expectations of parents and the extent, to which parents participate. Additionally, there is a general tendency to regard the immigrant

family as a problem rather than a resource, and schools often fail to cooperate with and include parents (Bouakaz 2007; Lundahl & Lindblad 2018).

In **Belgium**, there are robust parent associations and school self-evaluations are made directly available to parents. Parental meetings are organised, but attendance varies greatly. Parents are encouraged to be in touch with schools and voice their opinions (Dom and Verhoeven 2006). 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**, in 2013 some migrant organisations published a statement, which emphasised joint responsibility for educational success, identifying the needs of parents and schools and calling for more robust parental participation. The statement has resulted in various programmes, which however still do not reach enough parents. In **Italy**, indications about parental involvement were provided by the Ministry of Education in 2014, highlighting the importance of the relationship between families and schools. Nevertheless, some schools do not translate documents for migrant parents and do not support cultural or linguistic mediation. In **Poland**, the parent councils are an example of a collaborative strategy, parents contributing to the yearly school budget and educational programmes. However, most parents state that they do not have time to contribute to school activities. **Finland** encourages parental involvement in education, using a web portal or some type of software to communicate with parents, expecting that parents and teachers communicate on a nearly daily basis. However, the risk is that schools and teachers do not notice that these systems can be challenging for migrant parents who are not familiar with the systems and the local language. In lower secondary schools, there are also parent evenings to address the parents of the same class as a group.

The survey investigated parents and teachers opinions about their communication with one another. Table 5 shows that parents' positive assessment of communication with teachers is much more frequent than teachers' positive assessment of communication with parents. This gap between the opinions of the two respondent groups is only filled in **Germany**, while it is very wide in **Belgium** and **Italy**. In Belgium, there is also a rather frequent teachers' negative assessment, while parents' negative assessment is relatively frequent in **Sweden**. In **Italy** and **Poland**, migrant parents more frequently show complete satisfaction than non-migrant parents do.

**Table 5. Satisfaction with teacher-parent communication (according to teachers and parents)**

Country	Perfectly or usually well		Usually or always poorly	
	Teachers	Parents	Teachers	Parents
	%	%	%	%
Belgium	41.4	86.8	17.2	1.6
Finland	63.7	84.0	1.7	1.0
Germany	68.8	70.4	1.4	5.5
Italy	25.3	76.4	3.6	1.4
Poland	80.0	92.0	-	1.2
Sweden	51.3	78.9	7.7	10.5

United Kingdom	66.7	95.7	11.1	1.0
Total	<b>56.6</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1.9</b>

Table 6 shows the possible reasons for problems in communication between teachers and migrant parents, i.e. communication channels, language skills, interest, and resources of time. The table shows that teachers indicate a lack of parents' interest and a lack of parents' language skills as the most frequent reasons. By contrast, parents claim that workload and limited resources of time and, above all, the lack of language skills are the most important reasons. These data show different narratives between teachers and migrant parents.

**Table 6. Barriers/challenges in teacher-parent communication (all countries)**

	Teachers		Migrant parents	
	n.	%	n.	%
Lack of proper communication channels	89	<b>18.8</b>	50	<b>14.7</b>
Lack of parents' language skills	104	<b>21.9</b>	116	<b>34.2</b>
Lack of parental/school interest	114	<b>24.0</b>	14	<b>4.1</b>
Parents' workload	42	<b>8.9</b>	81	<b>23.9</b>
Your own limited resources of time	26	5.5	28	8.3
Other	99	20.9	50	14.7

The perception of migrant parents and teachers about the functioning of teacher-parent communication is rather different. To guarantee smooth communication between migrant parents and teachers, exchanging views about their differing narratives seems to be an important way of enhancing collaboration.

**Interviews to teachers** confirmed that **one of the biggest barriers is language**, especially in the case of newly arrived families, being a crucial factor, which influences the capacity of parents to support their children in the school context. In particular, teachers from Finland, Sweden and Poland underlined the difficulties in communicating with parents. In Germany, Belgium, Poland, Sweden, and Italy, professionals also talked about the reversing of power dynamics inside families, when children have greater language proficiency than their parents. If so, the children become the translators and intermediaries in contact with the school. The lack of language skills has a limiting effect on parental understanding of the requirements of the school. In Poland, teachers also observed obstacles to parental involvement pertaining to work, i.e. **long working hours** or even leaving children with a nanny for a few months in order to work.

Engagement with migrant parents can also encounters several other obstacles, such as pushback from teachers who may feel their autonomy in the classroom is threatened, and power imbalances in councils, which may not represent the voice of parents (Muchacka 2013), often joined and led by

'elites' who have plenty of social, economic and/or cultural capital. In general, schools may be hesitant to support policy that dictates involvement of parents too strongly, rather than simply adopting the practice of creating some opportunities for parental communication. Another obstacle is the **temporariness of a migrant stay** in the host country, when parents want to either return or move on to another place. This hinders parental support for education and the educational process.

I always speak for my community, even now parents want their children to learn Chinese because in their minds they always think they will return to China to live forever. But that's not really the case for young people, so there is a wall in the communication between the kids and their parents now. (IT\_F4\_M3\_F)

The different ways of organizing the education system as well as ways of handling the educational process can be problematic. For example, professionals in Finland noticed that parents are willing to help children in ways that are not accepted in the country, for example buying grades or organizing extra lessons.

Gender differences, and especially the expectation towards the girls to marry early and start family life, was another frequently raised issue. In Poland, both teachers and social workers mentioned competing views on **gender roles** at school and at home.

There is small number of families in the centre for foreigners that attach importance to education of their children, especially girls [...] so maybe in their world the girl shouldn't be educated, maybe her role in life is different, maybe, I don't know. (PL\_T14\_F)

In Sweden, Poland and Italy, the control over girls was described as significantly stricter than over boys in some ethnic communities. Another consequence of cultural differences is the conflict arising between family and social welfare systems, especially concerning child welfare officers and violence at home, or different patterns of parenting.

Here a little one says that he has been beaten with a stick or something and I have to make a child protection notification behind the parents' back because the child has talked about something like this [...] Sometimes if there's been violence at home and then it's so hard for parents to understand that if a child talks about this then why aren't they even contacted. This is probably what has led to the worst conflicts with parents, that they don't want to have anything to do with me. Things like that must be sorted out then. These issues are worked through with child protection, but yes, it may leave parents with such distrust and then there's the fact that they cannot, for example, forbid their child to see a school social worker, according to the law. (FI\_SW1\_F)

Children's interviews confirmed that parents and family are a great source of support in the school context. For instance, children turn to them with challenging situations at school and with peer conflicts.

If I have a problem with a colleague or he insults me or says something, I won't do anything, I'll tell the father, then the father will tell the director that this boy insulted my son and that's why. And if he insulted me, that I would do something to him, then it would be a problem for us. That would be a problem, that's why I'm not touching anyone, I'll just tell the father, so that the father will tell the director. (PL\_I27\_CH\_B)

However, these interviews also confirmed that migrant parents are not always able to be a source of significant support in school matters. In Italy, ISCED 2 and 3 children also refrained from asking parents for help in difficult situations because they did not want them to get involved, wishing to deal with challenges on their own. Similarly, in Sweden and Germany, children admitted that parents were unable to play a role in the communication with school or as a source of support in this context because of a lack of language skills.

If I'm honest, they [the teachers] talk to me more than they talk to my parents. So for example in the LEGs [teacher-parent talks], my teacher talked more to me than to my mum. So my mum only said hello to her and then she only talked to me. I don't know if it's because she thinks my parents don't understand German or what, but mostly my teacher only talks to me. About things that she might normally discuss with my parents. [...] I find that a bit hm, critical? [...] So that somehow gives me the feeling that I am the parent of myself ((laughs)), because I am always addressed instead of my parents. That's so otherwise it doesn't really bother me that much. It's the only thing (G\_I43\_CH\_F).

In this context, **older siblings were frequently mentioned by children as family members who can be entrusted with difficult situations** or who can help in school matters as they speak the language, have already gone through the school system or they were sometimes the first one to come to the host country, especially in Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden.

The discrepancies between the children's own view of their educational path and their parental expectations influence the kind of support they receive. The difference that arises from values children adopted from school can be in conflict with parents' way of seeing the social order and children's educational path. In Poland, Italy and Finland, this pertains especially to **migrant girls changing perceptions of gender roles** and their desire for greater gender equality, which in turn causes conflicts at home.

## 6. Conclusions

The CHILD-UP research has stressed a need to provide opportunities to involve children in decision-making processes and negotiating various arrangements in a school conceived as a relational space. Children would like to see greater reflection on the broader aims of education and changes to teaching methods. The school should be a place where children feel safe, supported, and defended against attempts at exclusion or discrimination. Children are very sensitive to unfair treatment, and CMB are perceived as them being given lower grades, undermining their ability to learn or declining remedial teaching. Equal treatment, regardless of gender, is also an important issue. Children emphasized the importance of appropriate ways of stimulating inclusion and cooperation. Peer cooperation was often reported as stemming from the encouragement of a teacher, who introduced a mutual learning practice that includes all children in small groups and projects that involve everyone.

Children indicated the need for support in school as an educational space where they can realize their own aspirations and build friendships, a space for self-actualization where children can develop their own interests and sense of agency (see Chapter 5). Professionals emphasized to a much greater extent the need for educational support for children. Professionals claim that they should work on their own

competences to enable children and their families' participation. However, it seems that teachers are not always sensitive to CMB's problems, although the survey shows that CMB appreciate teachers' support more than native children. Finally, parental involvement in schools continues to be rather difficult.

## Chapter 5. Children's agency

### 1. Introduction

The importance of children's agency in the CHILD-UP project has been explained in Chapter 1 and recalled in Chapter 4. This chapter investigates the variety of aspects of children's agency and its facilitation that emerged from the field research. Through the integration of different types of evidences, it is possible to understand meanings and ways of supporting agency of children with migrant background (CMB) in the education system. These results are particularly important to suggest ways of introducing hybrid integration in European education.

### 2. Expressions of children's agency

The survey was used to understand in which ways CMB's agency is expressed in the classroom and which support it can receive from teachers and classmates. Table 1 shows what happens in regular classroom interactions from the perspective of children. The table shows that CMB seem to be more respectful of hierarchical relations with teachers than native children, in particular for what concerns listening carefully to teachers and letting teachers know their needs and wills. No relevant differences can be seen for relations with classmates.

**Table 1. Differences between all children and CMB's perceived classroom interactions**

	All children %	CMB %
1. Listening carefully to teachers	78.9	<b>82.6</b>
2. Following teacher's instructions	86.1	<b>87.1</b>
3. Asking about instructions	82.3	<b>83.3</b>
4. Letting teachers know needs and will	67.7	<b>72.1</b>
5. Collaborating with classmates	83.5	82.9
6. Listening to classmates' views and experiences	84.5	83.9

Table 2 is focused on children's exercise of agency, in particular the possibility of personal expression and active participation in decisions and planning. These aspects are very important to understand children's exercise of agency (see Chapter 1). The table shows that in classroom interaction most children feel they can speak freely about what they think (73.7%), feel and prefer (72.8%). A smaller percentage of children report that they feel they can participate in decisions about school activities (67.2%) and that they can express their ideas about the classroom design (61.5%). These percentages are important since they express how the children perceive relevant exercise of agency. It is also very important that there are not relevant differences between CMB and native children. CMB perceive more difficulties in speaking about their feelings and preferences, but, maybe surprisingly, they feel more frequently involved in decision-making and designing the classroom.

**Table 2. Differences between all children and CMB's perceived agency**

	All children %	CMB %
1. Speaking freely about thinking differently	73.7	73.3
2. Speaking freely about feelings and preferences	72.8	68.7
3. Participation in school decisions	67.2	69.0
4. Participation in classroom design	61.5	64.1

Against this positive background, Tables 1 and 2 show some important differences concerning situations in which agency is exercised, specifically as regards children's opportunities for participation in decision-making and school design, which are perceived by a much lower percentage of children than participation in regular classroom interactions.

Focus groups and individual interviews show that **traditional lessons and internal hierarchies** in school are negatively valued by children, as factors limiting their agency and expression of opinions and needs. For example, children in Belgium feel discouraged from full participation in the classroom if their role is reduced to listening to a teacher and stress the negative impact of deadlines and exam schedule. Children in Belgium and Italy also claimed that some teachers tend to label particular children negatively, which in turn leads to mistrust in the classroom and children's withdrawal from active participation in activities.

More towards the person who doesn't judge because I don't want to 'spit in the soup' but some teachers put a label on people directly and don't try to understand them, while some teachers have this thing that it doesn't matter who you are, what your difficulties are; they try to help you and understand you. So I would go more to these teachers. (BE\_I3\_G).

In Poland, CMB prefer to solve their problems and conflicts on their own and do not want to exaggerate the issue. In Finland, CMB also declared that they tend to stay silent on insults they hear, sometimes to avoid harsh consequences in terms of institutional interventions.

Girl 1: It depends on the teacher. Like I said I don't trust them cause I've noticed that in other schools, when students have told them, they've had to go to this social... like, what are they? Child---

Interviewer: Child protection.

Girl 1: Exactly, them. [laughter]. They've reported it to them. So that's why I don't trust. But if the teacher is someone who doesn't really proceed with things, that's when I can talk about things. But I don't really trust teachers that much to be honest.

Girl 2: Yeah. I could easily talk about positive events and I'd be happy to do so but with negative I try to be a bit cautious especially in Finland, you know. They take everything so seriously. (FI\_F3\_CH\_G)

In Germany, older children declared to be aware that they might to some extent determine their school life, but they did not feel very involved in decision-making and they were critical about the scope of their influence. **Institutionalised forms of participation** (e.g., class representatives, student's councils, and regular meetings with school heads) were perceived ambivalently. On one hand, they were seen as a basic yet necessary form of making their voice heard; on the other, they called it 'fake

**participation**' and point to it having no substantial effect.

This is already frustrating. It is sad, I think, because we all live in the 21st century and in a democratic country like Germany. And I think also in small institutions as schools more participation should be provided to us. Yes. I would appreciate it if the class representatives could change anything. And weren't only there to organize playground services. (G\_I43\_CH\_G).

CH1: Well, the decisions that we make are easy decisions, but the other decisions that the big ones have to make and determine, those are mostly, well, very difficult ones. (...) really very, very difficult decisions. Well, I don't think I want anything else.

I: Who are the big ones? Are they adults, or are they older students?

CH2: Yeah, so our teachers. (G\_F24\_CH\_G).

However, student council was positively evaluated by children in Sweden, who believe that thanks to such a body they can change small things at the classroom level, while in Poland children linked their agency with collective actions of evaluating their behaviour and performance; they liked to be engaged in open discussions and express their opinions.

Boy: I was in the class council last year together with another student from my class, and it's like this that she, the "headmaster" asks like "what does your class think and what do you want to change?" and stuff, then we say it and she listens to it, but not always.

[...]

I: But have you experienced something happening sometimes?

CH: Yes, but mostly not.

I: But is it really this channel that you have to express your opinion?

CH: Yes, such things that you want to change. Although if there is something small you want to change in a class, then you can just talk to the teacher and then it feels like it changes immediately (SWE\_F3\_CH\_G).

I: How do you decide on the mark for your behaviour? Does the teacher decide alone or do you decide too?

CH: As I remember we always decided what the grade would be.

I: What did it look like?

CH: We wrote the name on the blackboard and a teacher said, for example, how many was negative comments someone had, or if he/she got any, and then we had to decide whether if it was 4 or 5, or an A for behaviour.

I: How did you feel about it?

CH: I felt good about it. (PL\_I9\_CH\_G)

In England, children advocated a **more person-centred style of teaching**. Activities in which children can express their personalities are considered to provide a boost to trust and self-confidence. They also believed that teachers should learn to trust students' capacity to pursue their learning more autonomously. In Belgium children mentioned that one possible form of participation in school life is to supply their own input about how the school and classroom should function, for instance by means of a suggestion box where children can submit their ideas regarding school organisation. The **possibility of contesting rules** that children find unfair or simply unnecessary was also viewed as an expression of agency.

We tried to give our opinion on the infamous decision that girls can't dress how they want. Some decided to put posters on the walls etc., and the management sent the educators to tear them up. We did not understand. We asked for explanations and the only answer we got was 'yes, it is the management which imposes that on us. You can't say anything. These are the regulations which have been in place.' [...] There were a lot of

posters all over the school and when we saw the educators, especially female educators, remove these posters and tear them up in front of us, we felt a bit like, I'm not going to say dirty, but a little humiliated. We were saying to ourselves that we are not supported. (BE\_I3\_G)

Contesting rules was also an important way of expressing agency by preschool children, who were interviewed in Germany. For instance, they reported that rejecting of taking a nap is a way of showing their autonomy and ability to make their own decisions. Moreover, in the day care centre, children efficiently negotiated both play and rest spaces. Furthermore, upon being asked what they do if they want to complain about something or change something in kindergarten, a significant number of children responded that they usually go directly to the head of the day care centre. This not only clearly shows their trust in the system, but also their agency.

Children also raised the importance of **peer networks** to support their exercise of agency. For instance, in Italy, children argued that support emerges from a personal bond which can develop into long-lasting friendship. Peer networks go beyond the school premises and the school context and spread to personal sphere as well. In England, outside school spaces - such as playground – allow children to exercise their agency, since they can take autonomous decisions and increase their capabilities to undertake social interactions and joint play.

To sum up, children's agency is expressed in terms of taking decisions about themselves, having a sense of influence on school activities and rules, being listened to, and being able to form social relationships according to their own needs. Agency is also ability to influence how difficulties are resolved. Finally, beyond school, children express their agency participating in leisure time activities and co-constructing social spaces around them.

### 3. Support of children's agency

Table 3 deals with professionals' perception of their support of children's agency. Variable number 5 in the table concerns the possibility for personal expression in the company of adults and teachers. Other variables (2, 3 and 6) more generally concern possible participation in interaction in the classroom. The third, and most important type of variables, concern support of children's initiatives, such as initiatives that are not connected with teaching (variable 1), creative initiatives (variable 4), and initiatives which are not connected with adults' professional expertise (variable 7).

The table shows that agreement among teachers is high enough in terms of support of creative new ideas about teaching and encouragement of expressing children's interests and allowing for autonomous discussions (58.5%), followed by encouragement of children's questioning of teachers' thoughts and decisions (54.5%). Only a few teachers, however, declare to enhance children's activities that are not connected to teaching (34.5%). Moreover, only a minority of teachers declare to support children's initiatives that are not linked to teaching and encourage them to realize them, support and coordinate autonomous proposals about initiatives/activities, and support the implementation of creative, new ideas about teaching or other issues regarding to school.

Interpreters/mediators (55.5%) and social workers (57.3%) above all encourage children to articulate

and enforce their interests. The less frequent support for agency among interpreters/mediators concerns enhancement of children’s activities that are not connected to interpreters/mediators’ work (only 25.9%) and allowing children to question their thoughts and decisions (33%). Social workers also support autonomous discussions (50.6%) and are more supportive than teachers for what concerns expression of creative ideas and above all encouragement of initiatives not connected with social work (47.1%).

**Table 3. Support of agency (a lot)**

	Teachers		Interpreters/ Mediators		Social workers	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
1. Support and encourage initiatives	190	<b>46.0</b>	46	41.8	133	42.4
2. Accept autonomous discussions	241	<b>58.5</b>	49	<b>44.5</b>	159	50.6
3. Support and coordinate autonomous proposals	189	45.7	47	43.1	142	44.9
4. Support and encourage creative ideas	190	46.3	50	45.5	156	<b>49.8</b>
5. Support dissent	223	<b>54.5</b>	36	<b>33.0</b>	132	42.0
6. Encourage articulation of interests	241	58.5	61	55.5	180	57.3
7. Encourage initiatives not connected to profession	139	34.5	28	<b>25.9</b>	148	<b>47.1</b>

**Interviews** showed that the need to express agency in school life is recognized by teachers and other professionals. However, agency was considered from a variety of points of view, which are not always coherent with the value assigned to children’s autonomous choices. For instance, teachers frequently associated agency with educational needs.

I see the educational needs of children of this age group being a lot about, I mean, the need for play, as well as the need for relationships with peers, the negotiation of rules, the negotiation of play, the negotiation of shared spaces and materials. (IT\_T14\_F)

Teachers also stressed **open and safe atmosphere** in the classroom and teaching methods based on **dialogue as** key factors positively affecting CMB’s agency. Some underlined the need to introduce **novel and creative methods in teaching** that increase children’s agency. This concerns participating in making decisions about the appearance of the classroom, organisation of work, grading and scheduling deadlines, coherently with the data from the survey. In Belgium, teachers mentioned following children’s interests and hobbies, and interestingly role exchange, so that students become teachers. In other countries, suggestions were more limited. In Finland, teachers mentioned using humour and supporting student unions activities. In Germany, teachers stressed fostering the individual needs and creating a safe space for ‘coming out of one’s shells’. Some German teachers also highlighted the importance of **discussing and negotiating rules of the classroom** as a creative tool for encouraging children to express their points of view and feelings.

What I have noticed, especially with children with a migration background, is that I always find that they still need a little longer than other children to simply warm up to everyday life and to come out of their shells and to really participate actively in processes. (G\_T11\_M).

I would never stand in front of a class and say, 'now you have the rules here, and this/ this is how it works for me.' That is always negotiated together. And those are the things, right? Where I say, this negotiation, this communication with each other, rules of conversation. But also really paying attention to what is expressed, what could hurt or offend others during the breaks. (G\_T6\_F).

In Sweden, teachers stressed the importance of starting lessons with warm-up tasks or games, using body language and visuals in communication and exploiting digital tools. They also emphasized that children express their agency in spontaneous conversations, and educators working with them should interpret and redefine their own methods and approaches at work.

I think it is important to create an environment where everyone feels safe. When everyone comes to school or is in the classroom that you are safe with yourself and you get to be who you are. And that's why we usually start a lot with this kind of warm up games or tasks and so on. [...] So that everyone can have room, quite simply. (SWE\_T5\_F).

I work a lot with digital tools, in all different ways. And I notice that it works very well for the students [...] The whole point is that they work in randomly selected teams and answer, as it looks now in the system, you can always just enter twelve questions. And the whole point is that students should talk to each other to find the right answer. So, every student has an answer, or their answer on their computer. So, you must work with each other to find the right answer to the question. And it's also a way to get them to discuss and interact and talk to each other at all. (SWE\_T4\_F).

By listening to students' needs, and listening not only by asking, but actually interpreting what emerges in their texts, in the work we do, and the spontaneous conversations we have [...] Their influence has so many different channels [...] I use very many different channels to get their influence. And it is clear that it affects, that is the relationships I have with the students and what comes up, it affects my planning and my approach, at the same time as I have to relate to the curriculum. (SWE\_T9\_M).

This highlights **the need of listening students** and creating social spaces in which they could express their needs, opinions and fears and attention that should be paid to **students' interests**, which will motivate them to learn the language and participate in school activities.

I try to always be open to what they say, I find it very important to listen to them [...] if I see that there are small tensions, I am not going to pretend anything. I would rather go and see what is going on, if it is at the level of the students. (BE\_T4\_F).

If we provide content, tools, and methods that are appropriate, it will be fun and attractive for these children, it will motivate them to spend their lessons actively. Then this knowledge will stay. We intuitively sense certain passions and hobbies and try to match them with tools and methods. (PL\_T11\_F).

However, the potential to express one's needs can be limited by lack of language skills. For instance, according to teachers, language competences have a great impact on the educational and social development of CMB and might significantly shape their participation in peer relations, their academic performance and social relations.

They lack technical language and that is a big problem. A very big problem, because if they are eleven or twelve years old and can't understand a scientific text, even if it's very simple and they can't read it. (G\_T4\_F). Strengthening their language skills is an absolute need, language as a vehicle of coexistence, not so much to learn about literature and poetry, but precisely language as a means of establishing social relations (IT\_T7\_F).

Teachers in Germany observed that organizing work in class in small groups encourages children to be more open with their opinions and reflections. In Italy, professionals recommended **extensive mediation, cooperation and dialogue with local communities**, educational extra-curricular activities that do not involve the extensive use of the language of the host country. Other teachers referred to the **personal expression of feelings and views**. In the UK, for example, teachers emphasized children's agency as support of newly arrived classmates, independent of teachers' elicitation.

In normal times, relationships are good and children help each other autonomously, this is so true when a new child arrives, there is so much support, it is amazing to watch how they sort themselves out naturally, they are so mature. (UK\_T11\_F)

Active and open dialogue was however rejected by some teachers as too unconventional. Moreover, teachers suggested that **structural barriers** might negatively influence CMB's agency. For instance, in Belgium and Italy, CMB often attend (vocational) schools with lower expectations regarding their academic performance. In Germany, educators pointed to lack of resources, together with fluctuations and deficiencies in the number of competent staff, which hinders work on topics such as autonomy and participation.

Perhaps because the teachers themselves are overwhelmed. Perhaps they are overburdened with the class size, with the heterogeneity of the class, with yes, the pressure of the parents. Perhaps there are too few teachers with basic training. The lateral entrants are technically good, but they lack the pedagogical qualifications. (G\_T4\_F).

In Sweden, mediators underscored the fact that children express their agency by showing that they do not need support and can participate in activities autonomously.

There may be resistance to having study guidance at all. There are those students who, especially after a couple of years in a Swedish school, may think, 'I do not need this'. (SWE\_M3\_M).

Mediators also stressed the need to be open to children's needs and difficulties, not only with CMB but also with migrant families and their expectations towards children's academic development.

Well, madam, you have no right to punish that child. I, for example, for getting a 3 grade (..) I would have given her a chocolate. Because, the kid must get some kind of reward, a reward for that (..) But she received punishment from her parents. And therefore, we sometimes must educate parents first– so they would be able to appreciate their own child, because when she is willing to learn, well, it's easier for her and for every teacher in the Polish school, right? And when the child is blocked by her parents, because mom is unsatisfied with such mark, so (..) We, too, are such intermediaries on one side and on the other, too. (PL\_F1\_M\_F).

### ***3.1 Gendered agency***

CMB's gendered agency was underlined by some professionals. Social workers in Finland emphasized that, due to **diverse cultural background family expectations** regarding careers and education towards migrant boys and girls, their participation in school activities may differ

significantly and negatively. Interpreters pointed out that the **school should actively promote gender equality** and thus encourage girls and women to fully participate in social life.

The school should promote these things and educate girls and women even more about Finnish society. And men too, of course (..) they have some bad habits to unlearn. The school should take an open stance on this for both men and women. The school is in an excellent position to teach young women and young girls that they have those rights. (FI\_I3\_F).

In Italy, teachers similarly underlined that **socialization into gender roles** and social expectations can encourage boys to participate intensively in social activities, while deterring girls from active engagement in events they do not feel suitable.

For example, if you organize an extracurricular activity, it is generally the boys who are allowed to come and take part in all the activities [...] girls are hardly ever allowed to come, whereas the boys take part in everything and this clearly facilitates them, but also in terms of relationships the boys have fewer difficulties in relating to friends with other nationalities, girls tend to isolate themselves more, to stay among themselves. (IT\_T16\_F).

In Poland, teachers working at schools near the centres where refugee families reside, accentuated the influence of the family in the academic development of girls. According to them, **female students are expected to finish their education quite early** in order to get married. In Italy, teachers claimed that girls were encouraged less to continue their studies, negatively influencing their self-esteem and increasing their chances of taking on unqualified jobs.

One girl said that she was going to get married. And I replied: What do you mean? She was in the first year of secondary school, at the hairdressing school. She said she would still like to study, but she was already engaged. She already has a boyfriend, a family. [...] Her older sister was also forced to marry. They were together for three months and she ran away from that boy because he beat her. (PL\_T13\_F).

The fathers of the girls of the Maghreb area already have an idea of their daughters as mothers, at home, who may gain a school diploma but not for the reason of increased job opportunities. The same thing, not for religious ideological reasons, but the same thing applies to the fathers of Ghanaian and Nigerian girls, a little education, yes, whatever is compulsory, it has to be done or social services might come to your home, but they tend not to have high expectations for their daughters. A little bit better, a lot better in fact, are the parents of boys from Eastern Europe [...] or the boys' fathers expect their sons to do something better than their own job. (IT\_T6\_F).

Gendered agency was also present in the narratives of some children. For example, girls in Germany declared that some school spaces are too loud and disturbing due to the behaviour of boys. Their strategy for dealing with such situations was to simply avoid those places. However, if avoidance is no longer possible, girls ask teachers for an intervention and initiate a discussion on the impact of being rough and loud on students' wellbeing. This clearly demonstrates **girls' agency** in shaping their school experiences.

### ***3.2 Peer networks enhancing children's agency***

Teachers and children highlighted the **importance of peer networks in enhancing children's agency**. They observed that other children are **a source of support for CMB** and assistance from

older local (in Poland, Italy, Belgium) and migrant students have a positive impact on CMB's self-confidence, feelings of security and well-being.

They have this extraordinary gift of knowing how to welcome and support each other, of immediately identifying the difficulties that a classmate is experiencing and acting in this sense. [...] all the children of any origin activate behaviours of care and activate behaviours of welcoming the other, that is to say, noticing that a child is on the side lines and going to call him. (IT\_T14\_F).

Peer networks can help CMB to **better understand cultural norms** as well as comply with school rules and regulations. For instance, CMB in Poland described their native peers as enabling them to settle in the class and providing opportunities for socializing and forming friendships.

CH: A girl sat down with me, her name was L. and she sits with me now and she's a very nice girl, because she sat with me from the first day. [...]

I: And when you went back to school [after the pandemic], how was it in May?

CH: She sits with me too and helps too.

I: But it's better now [with the language], well what are you already

CH: Because everyone started writing to me or talking to me. (PL\_I14\_CH\_G).

German teachers appoint students who are already perfectly familiar with school to guide new children through school life and make them feel welcome. This approach can lead to enhancing children's agency through practice-based examples, i.e. by observing the participation and engagement of other students in school activities.

That's why we're now tackling the tandem project. Where the third grade, for example, always takes over a first grade as a monitoring, so to speak, where everyone gets a tandem partner. And then you also do things together, in the hope that they will have someone, an ally in the schoolyard, so to speak, but not to ally against others, but simply to have support in questions of general orientation, language, learning mentorship, etc. (G\_T2\_F).

Peer networks play important role in **in particular in a context of problematic situations, conflicts and the way of resolving them**: "I had a fight with my friends. Then for two entire days I didn't go to them. And on the third day I didn't go, then we settled everything, reconciled and one thing like that" (PL\_I8\_CH\_B). Being able to take action to resolve the conflict by themselves, without engaging teachers or parents, is a sign of children's agency in peer relations.

#### 4. Facilitation of children's agency

The analysis of classroom activities has shown some ways in which children's agency can be facilitated in nursery, primary and secondary schools. This section presents the ways of facilitating agency in these schools. Previous research has highlighted the most frequent facilitative actions that can enhance and support children's agency and their limitations (e.g. Baraldi 2012a, 2014a, 2014b, 2018; Baraldi & Iervese 2017; Baraldi, Joslin & Farini 2021). Facilitative actions, as observed in previous research, are listed below.

1. Invitations to talk, i.e. to present, ask, add/expand, comment narratives or actions.
2. Focused and open questions which do not wait for known answers. Focused questions can be used to clarify children's narratives; open questions can promote children's expanded narratives.
3. Minimal responses, i.e. minimal signals of active listening, such as continuers ("mh mh", "yes", "okay"), acknowledgments that show interest or surprise, and repetitions of words or short sentences.
4. Formulations which summarise, make explicit or develop the gist of children's contributions. Formulations both show facilitators' understanding (or doubts about understanding), and promote further communication by supporting clarifications.
5. Comments that add meanings to children's narratives, stressing their relevance, including appreciations that provide affective support to children's actions.
6. Personal stories that show involvement in the interaction and closeness to children.
7. Displacements/jokes reframing children's contributions through a humoristic or ironic, creative and dissonant design, surprising and entertaining children. They create a positive and funny relation between facilitators and children and stress the unpredictability of personal contributions, showing that the conversation is open to any possible contribution.
8. Management of children's initiatives, including (a) clarification of meanings, (b) response, (c) short feedback.

The following extracts show the most relevant ways of facilitating CMB's agency and their hybrid integration through negotiation and interlacement of narratives in the classroom, during the video-recorded activities. These extracts show successful forms of facilitation. In the concluding section, we shall also stress some limitations of facilitation. Other extracts about these activities will be shown for what concerns second language teaching (Chapter 6), personal cultural trajectories (Chapter 8) and conversations on the pandemic (Chapter 9).

In Extract 1, recorded in a nursery school in Italy, the facilitator explains that the activity is about what you may need to live happily on an island (turn 1). Children, including CMB (F1, F3 and F4), participate very actively and consider and choose different needs; here, the children demonstrate increasing epistemic authority. In particular, the facilitators' formulations make children's contributions explicit through formulations (turns 7, 11, 13, 15, 21, 43, and 49), summarize children's contributions (turns 19 and 59), and develop children's narratives that stress their autonomous views (turns 25, 30, and 34). These formulations are combined with several minimal repetitions of children's contributions (turns 3, 17, 23, 47, 55 and 57), a few open questions (turns 27, 30, 41, and 45) and one focused question (turn 51), an occasional confirmation (turn 36), and the completion of the children's turns (turn 11). This extract also shows that CMB (F1, F3 and F4) actively participate in the conversation and this shows how they can contribute to their own hybrid integration by exercising agency.

Extract 1

- 01 FACm pay attention! Well look at me everyone because now it begins the most difficult part where you need imagination. I ask you to speak one at a time, when you have ideas raise your hand, and we share them together, is that okay? The first question is this: we are pretending to be on a ship and going to this island (.) to make it a beautiful place, if you can, it must be the most beautiful place possible to live. What do you think are the first things you need to live well on this island? The first needs the things to think of first, does anyone have any ideas? (.) of the needs we might have [of the
- 02 M1 [building houses
- 03 FACm for example M1 says as first needs to build houses
- 04 M1 or otherwise when it rains (..) you have to go to a place like the forest where it rains less
- 05 FACm but building houses is certainly a need, F1  
(..)
- 06 F1 (m) you must have food
- 07 FACm **F1 says let's go find some food or you must have it somehow you must have it, F2**
- 08 F2 we can find a treasure
- 09 FACm she says while we are there we could also try to find out if there is a treasure. Let's hear in a row F3, M2 and F4 F3
- 10 F3 (m) we can drink
- 11 FACm **water?**  
(..)
- 12 F3 (m) Yes
- 13 FACm **you have to make sure you can drink, M2**
- 14 M2 a shop so we can go and buy food
- 15 FACm **you would also put a shop among the first needs: that we have (..) F4**
- 16 F4 (m) Sleep
- 17 FACm F4 says sleeping
- 18 F4 (m) ((nods))
- 19 FACm **so some places to sleep, we have the house M6 mentioned earlier, and in the house there will certainly be a place to sleep too, M3**
- 20 M3 and: we can (2) also eat spaghetti
- 21 FACm so he starts to say we have food it has already been said that we needed food, and he starts to say however food can mean so many things let's be more precise and see what foods we want what foods we need and here it could [be
- 22 M4 [vegetables
- 23 FACm he says vegetables, you see! he [says] spaghetti, let's go on with M5
- 24 M5 I would eat: (??)
- 25 FACm I understand, **so let's do like this: the need for food is there, then you will prepare a nice menu of the island, the basic things to eat on the island, let's go on with the first needs, M2**

26 M2 in the woods it rains less but you can get lost

27 FACm mh:: what can you do not to get lost on the island M1?

28 M1 we can bring the compass!

29 Tf sh:

30 FACm **one at a time then because M2 remembered before the question of the houses and he says going into the woods you can get lost, let's see M1 says but with the compass - it's a remedy F1 (2.0) please** (.) do you agree with: M1? (..) can you think of other ways not to get lost F1? What could be done? M5

31 M5 we can take a flashlight

32 FACm a to- then here are some st-

33 ? a compass

34 FACm **a compass so F1, M1, M5 start thinking that on the island some tools could be useful too a torch to light up when it's dark, a compass,** let's see F1 (..)

35 F1 (m) When it's so dark, we have to turn on the flashlight (.) with the light

36 FACm exactly (.) F4

37 ? (?)

38 F4 (m) we go to sleep

39 FACm pardon?

40 F4 (m) we can go to sleep (..)

41 FACm where?

42 F4 (m) in bed

43 FACm sure (.) **when it's time (.) we will go there.** M4

44 M4 we can also turn on the flashlight when it's dark

45 FACm yes M8 (.) you wanted to say something to build you were saying? No? F1

46 F1 (m) we can also buy clothes and shoes

47 FACm ah F1 thinks that among the needs we have there could also be clothes and shoes

48 F1 (m) ((nods))

49 FACm but **F1 you said something, that we could buy them (.) to buy them we need**

50 M1 money!

51 FACm money, will money be needed on this island or could you live on an island even without money in your opinion?

52 ? without money

53 F1 (m) maybe we need to look for it

54 M1 if it's just us: no money

55 FACm if it's just us, M6 thinks that it would be possible without money

56 M1 ((nods)) because we have - if one goes: ah: where there is where there is the forest and in front of you there are some pine trees you can take (.) some pieces of pine tree

57 FACm ok you see that according to M6 you could also live without money on the island where you go if you are alone M3

58 M3 ah: (4) we go to bed when the light ah: there is no more light then we turn on the flashlight

- 59 FACm **yes pay attention to the question because the question was what are the things we need to live well on the island so far you have told me food and you have also said what kind of food, houses, places to sleep, compasses and flashlights so we don't get lost in the woods, clothes and shoes, about money F1 says if we want to buy things we will need money, but M6 says if we go alone on the island as long as we are alone we can also do without (.) F2**

In extract 2, recorded in a preschool in Germany, teachers facilitate the production of children's contributions above all through appreciations (turns 1, 17, 26, 37 and 39). An unexpected outcome is appreciated in a dyadic sequence between the two teachers (turns 28-34). Turn 35 is also an indirect and joking form of appreciation that recognizes children's work. One teacher also facilitates the work of two girls, who seem to be marginalized during the activity: in turns 5, 7 and 9, the teacher asks F3 and F4 if they need building blocks, receiving their confirmation. In turn 13, she encourages the two children to work. Despite some distractions, the teacher pursues a collaborative positioning (turn 26). In this case, facilitation is based on appreciations and discrete support.

Extract 2

01	Tf1	you're doing a great job. Great ((towards all children sitting on a table using Kapla building blocks to build their ideas/ scenes))
02	Tf1	what are you building now, you two? (.) What are you building, F1? ((asking F1 and F2; both girls work together and their construction is actually in a very basic stadium))
03	F1	a garage ((without interrupting her play and without looking up for Tf1))
04	Tf1	a garage, ok ((Tf1 slowly walks around the table, is now in the back of F3 and F4, who currently not participate in the activity, observing the scene))
05	Tf1	F3 do you need some building blocks? Shall I give you some building blocks? ((touching F3's shoulder with her hand))
06	F3	((nods))
07	Tf1	F4 yes?
08	F4	((nods))
09	Tf1	would you like to have some building blocks? ((just leaving the scene to grab some building blocks; Tf1 goes around the table towards the box containing the bricks; children's gameplay continues, while F3 and F4 still passively share the scene))
10	M1	Tf1
11	Tf1	[jo
12	M1	[take a look
13	Tf1	it's best to get started you have a really good plan already PAUSA?
14	Tf1	°look.° (???) Here, F4
15	M1	Look, Tf1
16	M3	>Tf1< ((calling Tf1 for attention pointing on his building while teacher 1 crosses him in his back))
17	Tf1	super (.) With a roof, even (.) Cool
18	F1	(?) we could use that ((F1 grabs some of the building blocks that Tf1 putted on the table for F3 and F4 to use it for her own building, talking to Tf1))
19	Tf1	yeah, I'll put some more for you
20	M3	you can give us some too
21	Tf1	<u>of course</u>

22	M1	<u>and for me::</u>
23	Tf1	look at this girls
24	F1	EY:YH, I had that ((talking to M1, who is taking a brick from the place, where F1 and F2 are building))
25	Tf1	well, you can build something together
26	Tf1	F1, it's supposed to be a work by all of you, you know (.) It looks really good already
27	Tf2	(?) the grandstand ((Tf2 stands behind F3 and F4, looking at the opposite side of the table, where F5, M6 and M7 built an audience gallery around the Carrera-circuit, seemingly impressed by the work of the children))
28	Tf1	great, isn't it? ((replies towards Tf2, underlining the impressive character of children's work))
29	Tf2	Yes
30	M1	look here ((request for teachers attention, no further reaction of the teachers))
31	Tf1	quite different (turned out) than expected, nor, hh ((looking at the table and talking to Tf2))
32	Tf2	but, that's the way it is ((replies also looking at children's play))
33	Tf1	that's right
34	Tf2	I like it ((regarding the growing scenery built by the children on the table))
35	Tf1	so, we need a truck to bring all the building blocks to you, hey ((towards the children while bringing more bricks and putting them on the table between M5 and F5. Both continue working on their buildings without any reaction))
36	M3	Tf1, look (?) ((asking for Tf1's attention, who is standing on the other side of the table))
37	Tf1	cool It's like a tower with a view (0.3) Awesome great ((replies to M3, who left his place to grab more bricks out of the box))
38	M1	Look, tf1
39	Tf1	nice great ((answering M1, standing beside of the table))
40	M3	I built a tower with a view M2 ((talking to M2, who works on his own building, when coming back to the table with a handful of more building blocks))

Extract 3 was recorded in a primary school in Sweden. The lesson builds on a youth book about Agnes, a 13-year-old girl with Sami background living in Stockholm. One day she receives a SMS in Sami. She has learned some Sami and she manages to answer to the SMS. The teacher introduces the lesson and the book that it builds on, both orally and with a handout. The children asked to listen to the beginning of the book and then answer to three questions. They are invited to reflect upon these questions individually, then to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups, and finally to report their discussion to the whole class. The exercise is concluded with a comment on how they liked the exercise and if they would like to listen/read more in the book. Extract 4 regards the phase of reporting to the whole class. The teacher asks a short question to invite the children to explain how they worked (turns 3), then he asks about the children's use of social media (turns 5 and 7). In the following phase, the teacher repeats the children's list of media (turns 9, 11 and 13). In turn 13, she adds a formulation which makes explicit what the children have listed. In turn 16, she acknowledges the children's explanation of their point of view and in turn 18 she adds another question to clarify F3's conclusion. After a new repetition (turn 21), she acknowledges the children's new conclusion and asks a question for clarification (turn 24). In turn 28, the teacher gives a new minimal feedback of acknowledgement and in turn 31 she appreciates the children's report.

Extract 3

1	Tf	are you ready
2	F1	yeah
3	Tf	yeah, and how did you talk about the last one, can recap a bit
4	F3	we said that we think that it is bad and that there are many negative aspects, do we think there are positive aspects?
5	Tf	which channels do you foremost use
6	F3	social media
7	Tf	yes, and which are these
8	F2	Insta
9	Tf	Insta
10	F2	Snapchat
11	Tf	Snapchat
12	F3	TikTok
13	Tf	TikTok. That is, you communicate with each other via these
14	F3	yes, and we think that it is mostly bad, since someone can like hack into your phone or can=
15	F2	=someone can take the keywork and then enter and see what you have written
16	Tf	ok, yes
17	F3	and positive aspects (..) do we think there are any positive aspects
18	Tf	yes, what are the positive aspects
19	F3	like mostly that is is faster
20	F1	easy
21	Tf	it is faster, easier
22	F1	yes
23	F3	but we think there are more negative aspects
24	Tf	ok. Would you think that it is better with sms or to phone instead
25	F1	yes
26	F3	yes, i think it is better to phone or to meet or so
27	F2	Yes
28	Tf	or meet, yes
29	F3	that is, one could for instance
30	F1	well yes (..) if one is in the situation that Agnes and Henrik are in, I think it is better to talk on the phone
31	Tf	yes, very well

Extract 4 was recorded in a secondary school in Italy. The narrative concerns school performances and parents' control. Three CMB participate actively. The extract is opened by M1's long contribution about the contradiction between studying hard to get sufficient grades and staying with classmates and making friends. In turn 2, the facilitator gives the floor to M4, who suggests that it is not necessary to do well at school. M1 comments that going well pays, but the facilitator stops him to allow M4's conclusion. After the facilitator's acknowledgment of M4's explanation, F4, a CMB,

takes the floor to talk about her mother's desire for better education for her. In turn 11, M3 relates to M4's contribution to agree with him. However, the facilitator focuses on F4's turn, formulating its content and asking a question about possible improvement as consequence of parents' encouragement. M3 rather stresses that his father is not rigid since he left school early, but he encourages him since he would like to have better education for him. The facilitator comments that M3's narrative is similar to F4's narrative, thus promoting interlacement between narratives. In turns 15-24, F3, another CMB, talks about the importance of parents' desires with the facilitator's supporting actions, i.e. an acknowledgment followed by a question for clarification (turn 18), an interrogative formulation (turn 20) and an invitation to comment classmates' point of view (turn 22). In turn 25, M3 adds to his previous intervention about her mother's pressures, claiming the importance of autonomous judgment. In turns 26-32, another CMB tries to intervene with some difficulties, so that the facilitator helps her with a formulation (turn 31) which she confirms (turn 32) and is completed in turn 33. In turn 34, M1 also claims about the negative effects of parents' pressures and the facilitator acknowledges the usefulness of the conversation and asks if someone else wants to intervene (turn 35).

Extract 5

01	M1	yes in my opinion eh::m as M2 said (that's right) because in any case (to get as sufficient grades) as possible is something that (?) they tell you and maybe:: eh:: they also give you a punishment if you do not get them, then it is more an order, a command compared to being comfortable with the other mates which is more a desire because eh (?) more and then ehm eh you can eh to be with the classmates (?) and you are not only at home you make friends and then go out in the afternoon
02	FACf	ok what do you want to say?
03	M4	one can do badly in school not necessarily must do well (.) I mean-
04	M1	it pays to go well
05	FACf	wait let him explain
06	M4	well (?) for grade four it is not that you t- you take a punishment (?) if you- if you ta::ke ten thousand yes (?) many a punishment of (?) yes, otherwise no
07	FACf	fine, please
08	F4m	I meant that
09	FACf	Louder
10	F4m	I meant that my mother's desire was a little different, well, my mother wanted tha::t I: I had had a better education than hers let's say
11	M3	in my opinion what M4 says is right because in any case you can't always have excellent results every now and then it happens to get a bad grade well parents

		have to do- well you take a four I put you in punishment in my opinion parents should help children to improve
12	FACf	it is a bit what she said (.) I mean that her mother wishes for her (the best of what she experienced for herself) (.) Right? This (.) is this improving in your opinion?
13	M3	eh in my op- my father stopped doing school at fifteen he is- he is not rigid on the:: on- well, on the school for me (but he tells me) to go well when I take a bad grade he doesn't get angry he tells me oh well then you recover it eh:: I mean I try to recover it and he doesn- he doesn't scold me so much (.) because in the end he just wants us to have a:: a better job a better education than theirs
14	FACf	fine then it is very similar to her thought right? And you who had your hand raised?
15	F3m	no, it's a bit like M3 tha::t-
16	FACf	no- no- I don't hear you sorry
17	F3m	I agree with M2 that it is more a desire (.) to do well
18	FACf	ok (.) here - but compared to what they said?
19	F3m	I mean
20	FACf	also for them also for the parents they were talking about is it a desire to improve eh?
21	F3m	((nods))
22	FACf	and your mate says the command is not good
23	F3m	well in my opinion it is a command (and it is not good) (?) it is in Aurora's speech (?) because I don't know her mother wa::s well how to say (?)
24	FACf	Mh
25	M3	I have the last thing to say that is because I took a four now I go home and my mother scolds me you have to say I took a four and I have to find a new study method that helps me a::nd recover it I mean because if you think of your mother who scolds you then eh you are a little conditioned let's say by- by the rules they put you (.) instead you have to think for yourself at school
26	F5m	(?)
27	FACf	and then?
28	F5m	((signs to give up))
29	FACf	no no no it's okay I just haven't heard

30	F5m	(?)
31	FACf	let's see if I understand that you are telling me that fear does not help you eh? W- which is a little bit what he said
32	F5m	((nods))
33	FACf	you have to accept the bad grade to improve yourself and not be afraid
34	M1	for example in an oral test eh::: if you know that if you get a ba- a bad grade your father scolds you and punishes you, you get more anxious and you can't say things (and you only have that in mind) and you don't think about the topics of the questions and therefore you are more likely to get a ba- a bad grade
35	FACf	fine (.) someone else who has something to say?

Extract 5 was recorded in a secondary school Sweden, where a method is used to give the children the possibility to express opinions. The goal of the activity was to develop the children's ability to know their senses and their own taste. The activity was realized in a domestic science lesson which begins with an introduction of the purpose of the activity, i.e. to taste ingredients and discuss flavours and textures. The children are divided into four groups in which they are instructed to make a smoothie according to four nutritional themes (Iron, Protein, C-vitamin and Spinach), one nutrition for each group. Children are instructed to search for information about the nutrients included in their smoothies, then to choose two or three of the nutrients that they think are important and to motivate why so. Extract 6 concerns the last phase of the activity. In turns 1, 2, 3 and 5, F1 and F2 explain collaboratively the vitamin C smoothie the group has produced. In turns 4 and 10, the teacher appreciates the work. In turns 6 and 8, he confirms and briefly develops what F2 is saying through a formulation, receiving the girl's confirmation. In turn 10, the teacher makes a comment. F1 upgrades her epistemic authority by adding to the teacher's comment. The teacher validates her knowledge, thus collaborating in assigning her the authority, adding a question, confirming the answer and inviting the children to taste the smoothie, then moving to the next group.

#### Extract 5

01	F1	ok, we have made a vitamin C smoothie and it contains raspberries, blueberries, vanilla sugar, honey, and ginger and milk. ((Reading)) raspberries protect eyesight and have (?). Raspberries contain minerals and vitamins that are good for the body. Honey is good for
02	F2	yes, for health products
03	F1	ginger is good for the digestive process, and milk contains proteins, minerals and vitamins
04	Tm	nice work
05	F2	((Reading)) Vitamin C contributes to a better immune system, it normalizes the function
06	Tm	yes, so you get less sick

07	F2	exactly, it also contributes to not being so tired and exhausted
08	Tm	hm, makes one more alert
09	F2	exactly
10	Tm	great, thank you very much. Eh, this thing with ginger. You may have heard of it, that you usually use it when you have a cold, and sometimes you have it in your tea, it softens up the throat
11	F1	so, one can have ginger and lemon
12	Tm	yes, exactly, and in lemon, what vitamin do we have there?
13	C (?)	c-vitamin
14	Tm	yes, vitamin C. Turns to the whole group: Please taste (their smoothie)
15	C (?)	it tastes strange, I didn't think it would taste like that
16	Tm	haha, and now, let's go to the next group (the spinach group)

Extract 6 was recorded in a higher vocational school in Italy, attended by male adolescents. The extract shows a conversation between two facilitators and M7, a CMB, in which a narrative based on the profile picture of M7 is constructed. The activity was held remotely and all participants were on the screen. One facilitator asks a question about who are the people on the picture in M7's profile and M7, who has not switched on the camera, answers that they are his girlfriend and himself (turn 2), receiving the facilitators' appreciation (turns 3-5). In turn 5, the facilitator asks a question which includes a joke about the picture and M7 aligns with it (I wish!) adding that he and her girlfriend were in the bathroom. The facilitator laughs (turns 7 and 8) and continues the joke (turn 9, the home spa right?; turn 10, do it yourself; turn 11, you do what you can), which is confirmed by M7 (exactly). In turn 14, FACf invites and encourages M7 to show himself on the screen. After he is appearing, FACm provides an appreciation on the adolescent's room, which is then jokingly commented by the facilitators (turns 18 and 20) and by a classmate (turn 21), whose comment is confirmed by FACm (turn 22). The proper theme of facilitation starts in turn 25 with a question about desire of travelling and M7's narrative about travelling continues until turn 36, supported by the facilitators' minimal responses and one more question of clarification (turn 29).

#### Extract 6

01	FACf	M7 who are those in your profile picture? I mean of your account?
02	M7m	eh it's me and my girlfriend
03	FACf	that's nice!
04	FACm	cute
05	FACf	how cute, had you gone to the spa?
06	M7m	no I wish! we were in the bathroom hh
07	FACf/FACm	((laughing))
08	M7m	it's the same
09	FACm	the home spa right?

10	FACf	the home spa oh!
11	FACm	do it yourself
12	FACf	exactly, I mean, you do what you can
13	M7m	correct
14	FACf	listen M7 after the mask you will have a beautiful face, can you show us?
15	M7m	yes, I'm going to put the phone down now
16	FACf	now just a moment you put on your concealer too, just a second, here it is:!(.) tana ((something you say in Italy in hide and seek game when you find someone)) M7
17	FACm	with this beautiful light in the room by the way
18	FACf	exactly, this light, a bit like a club, a bit like a: (.) like this
19	M7m	eh yes
20	FACf	lounge bar
21	M6	like a tik toker
22	FACm	exact [like a tik toker is true
23	FACf	[exacthh
24	M7m	<u>Hh</u>
25	FACf	thank you M7 listen if you too could leave now you had the means to do so where would you want to go?
26	M7m	em: I [would go] to two places that are very [similar
27	FACf	[go
28	M7m	either Milan if I had to stay in these places here, or America
29	FACf	you too west coast California Los Angeles or are you interested in New York are you interested in anything - [San Francisco
30	M7m	[no
31	FACf	no
32	M7m	always those places there
33	FACf	ok
34	M7m	also because I'm a little bit interested in the charm of fashion a little bit this stuff here so
35	FACf	mh mh,
36	M7m	Milan, America in my opinion would be a lot of fun

## 5. Conclusions

Individual and focus group interviews show that the school can be a crucially important space for the promotion of children's agency. They shows CMB through the lens of their capability to express their opinions and emotions, their ability to contest adult decisions, and shape their relationships with other actors. The data shows that the school can play a role in the recognition of children's agency by stimulating trust, the autonomous expression of feelings and thoughts, the negotiation of rules and shaping of social relations according to children's needs. This may include interactive methods of teaching, mediation, working in small groups and using personal experience.

By contrast, institutional constraints of agency include those directly related to the working conditions of teachers and mediators, funding and language barriers, which may limit CMB's participation in school life. Internal hierarchies at school and a culture of subordination (in which the student only listens to the teacher) were also identified as important elements which negatively impact children's agency. Among the non-institutional factors, individual and cultural backgrounds were identified as hindering effective hybrid integration. In this context, according to professionals, the gender dimension is important and manifests itself, for example, in social expectations of girls and boys with regard to their educational careers and emotional expressions. However, this dimension was not so intensively recognised by children.

The analysis of activities has shown several successful forms of facilitation which can enhance and support children's agency, as autonomous initiatives and display of epistemic authority. CMB's exercise of agency was very frequent during these activities independently from gender. Facilitation was based on different combinations of facilitative actions, so that there was not one specific way of facilitating. Facilitation was based on facilitators' different ways of acting and on the different ways in which children actively participated. In particular, **forms of facilitation were** based on a mix of: (a) questions enhancing participation and showing a genuine interest in children's points of view; (b) formulations which interpreted (summarised, made explicit or developed) the meaning of the gist of children's narratives or contributions; (c) minimal feedback which showed listening and attention and favoured the fluidity of conversations; (d) appreciations.

However, there were also other, less successful forms of facilitation, which have not been shown in this chapter for reasons of space. First, there were **mixed forms of facilitation**, in which phases that were more guided by facilitators alternated to proper facilitation. Mixed forms of facilitation were based on adults' expanded turns of talk which provided comments or explanations about relevant and positive meanings produced by children. There were also **directive forms of facilitation**, including facilitators' more frequent, or systematic, comments and explanations, combined to normative recommendations. These forms decrease the potential for children's exercise of agency. In these interactions, teachers/facilitators provided relevant knowledge for children, establishing adult authority in the classroom. Finally, there were some forms of **participated teaching**, based on teacher's superior epistemic authority, shown by their questions aiming to guide and scaffold children's answers; in these cases, children aligned with teachers' orientations, but when children did not align, teachers tended to avoid negative sanctions.

Facilitators' and teachers' enhancement and support of children's agency, in particular CMB's agency, decreased from successful forms of facilitation to mixed forms of facilitation until participated teaching. This shows the importance of competence in facilitating classroom interactions in a way to produce generalised agency, massively involving CMB, and thus producing the conditions of hybrid integration.

## Chapter 6. The importance of language

### 1. Language use in multilingual contexts

The problems of language concerns children with migrant background (CMB) who are not proficient in local or national language of the country of immigration. This problem has generally to do with the lived experiences of CMB before reaching the country of immigration. The survey (table 1) shows that more than one third of CMB (37.1%) lived in another country before reaching the country of residence. In particular, 25.7% lived in more than one country, which means that personal cultural trajectories of these CMB were more complex. Table 1 also shows that these trajectories vary quite a lot in different countries. For example, 38% of CMB in **Belgium**, 43% in **Finland**, nearly one fifth in **Germany** and 17% in **Italy** lived in another country before arriving to the destination country. This also shows, however, that most children did not experience life in other countries: they are “second generation” children.

**Table 1. Children who lived in another country before arriving to the present country**

Country	More than one year		Less than one year		Total	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	19	24.1	11	13.9	30	38.0
Finland	20	30.8	8	12.3	28	43.0
Germany	15	19.2	9	11.5	24	30.7
Italy	10	8.5	10	8.5	20	17.0
Poland	21	16.4	10	7.8	31	24.2
Sweden	16	24.2	12	18.2	28	42.4
United Kingdom	61	62.9	12	12.4	73	85.3
<b>Total</b>	162	<b>25.7</b>	72	<b>11.4</b>	234	<b>37.1</b>

The experience of living in different countries can have an effect on children’s education. Depending on the residence country conditions and family situation, the children have or have not attended school. In addition, school language and quality of teaching may vary depending on the local conditions and the family’s resources. However, the survey has also shown that problems of language proficiency are not generalised, although differentiated in different countries. Table 2 includes the negative value (*not so well yet*, as a response to the question “How well do you speak the local language?”), which was proposed to children in primary schools. Only 19.1% of children declared not to speak the local language so well yet. Especially CMB mainly declared that they master the local language well or very well in all research contexts. The most relevant exceptions concern **Poland**, where one third indicated that they still have some problems with the language, and **Italy**.

**Table 2. Children’s proficiency in local language (ISCED 1 and data from Sweden)**

Country	Not so well yet	
	n.	%
Belgium	10	12.3
Finland	12	12.5
Germany	0	-
Italy	48	<b>26.7</b>
Poland	50	<b>33.1</b>
Sweden	4	8.3
United Kingdom	3	4.1
<b>Total</b>	127	<b>19.1</b>

Table 3 concerns children in secondary schools (ISCED 2 and ISCED 3). Data from the UK are missing since the UK sample only included children in primary schools. Table 2 shows that 42.2% of children can understand and express the local language, while only a few have serious problems in doing that. However, once again, there are relevant differences between **Belgium, Finland** and **Germany**, one the one hand, and **Italy** and **Poland**, on the other. In Italy and Poland, the percentages of children who are able to understand and express the local language are much lower. Moreover, in Italy, the percentages of children who have difficulties in understanding and expressing are much higher than in the other countries, although they are not so high as such.

**Table 3. Children’s proficiency in local language (ISCED 2 and 3)**

Country	Understand and express		Difficulties in understanding		Difficulties in expressing	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	46	79.3	.	-	3	5.2
Finland	42	72.4	2	3.4	2	3.4
Germany	22	73.3	1	3.3	1	3.3
Italy	33	24.1	17	12.4	22	16.1
Poland	45	29.8	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	188	<b>42.2</b>	20	<b>4.5</b>	28	<b>6.3</b>

**Focus group and individual interviews** with professionals and CMB have provided a qualitative insight into language proficiency. In particular, these interviews have provided insights into the challenges arising from the insufficient language skills, as the following CMB in Sweden underlines.

The largest challenge is that our students have very weak language skills. As a large majority, the vast majority have really weak language skills. And then we talk about all ethnic backgrounds. It does not really matter. I have students with an ethnic background other than Swedish who have better languages than those with a

Swedish background, or ethnic Swedish background. So, it really does not matter. But I think it's a big, big problem that students come here and have such weak language skills. (SWE\_I4\_F)

Language learning has been identified by the majority of teachers, mediators and social workers as one of the main obstacles that CMB may face. Professionals have pointed to the fact that **low language skills characterize most of all the newly arrived children**. Language seems to be particularly challenging in the short term, in the period after the arrival of the child in the classroom.

The language is the main factor as education is all about communication, so difficulties in speaking and listening can be a problem, but we have always managed to overcome that quickly, I cannot remember a child who finished my year not yet being comfortable with English. (UK\_T16\_F)

According to the teachers, language acquisition is a swift and smooth process. However, children in Poland, UK, Italy, and Sweden have highlighted serious language difficulties after their arrival and have recalled **sense of loneliness and isolation**. Many children have remembered the effort in understanding peers and teachers as a reason for discomfort.

M1: I was literally scared because I did not understand anything and I had to take two buses and sometimes a train and I was 8 with no English to be honest. The school was a scary place.

I: How did you manage then?

M1: Everyone was kind I was scared of breaks and lunchtime I was always looking for Ms. D. [teacher assistant] because I was scared and I think I thought she was like my mum. But everyone was cool and chilled after like one week I was fine and I met him we travel together. (UK\_F24\_CH\_B)

F: Since I didn't understand the language, and I was also small and I was the only black child in the class, so since we were all small we all had the mentality of children, so every child was kind of afraid basically since they had never seen a girl in the class like me and I didn't even know how to talk to them and say, like, 'can we play together?', those things, so I was always just saying 'yes' and 'no' so when someone said something to me I just said 'yes' or 'no' (IT\_F2\_CH\_G).

Moreover, many teachers have mentioned the problem of children dropping out of the education system, especially those from a refugee background, emphasizing the strong influence of family's contexts and lack of educational aspirations. In such situations, children do not make efforts to learn, rather being focused on other goals, such as getting a job quickly and helping their family.

The teachers have stressed two levels of language competences. On the one hand, they refer to language skills that are necessary for daily communication for establishing social relationship, while on the other hand they give relevance to subject-related and technical language. The language barrier is caused not only by the lack of skills in spoken and written language, but also shortcomings regarding specialized vocabulary related to education, as mentioned for instance in Poland and Sweden.

Even though they've often been here for a longer period of time, for example for a year, it isn't only those children who have just arrived, but they've been here for a longer period of time, there are very few hours of Polish as a foreign language and apart from the fact that they don't have the basic communication skills, there are also problems in the educational sphere, because they don't understand many subjects in Polish, like for example the analysis of a poem or a metaphor, they also have problems in biology and history. Because in

those universal subjects, like mathematics, it's the least of their problems, because they can understand them without the knowledge of the language, in the case of the other subjects, well, it's troublesome for them. (PL\_F1\_T\_F)

I actually tried to start translanguaging a lot more, that many times when we create wordlists, I put a column with... where we have words in English or Swedish in one and then I add mother tongue and Swedish. (SWE\_T2\_F)

According to German social workers, CMB often live in a linguistic gap, whereby German is required at school, their mother tongue is spoken at home and English is spoken alongside German among friends. Thus, there is a risk of speaking a mishmash language so that neither the mother tongue nor German are mastered well. Against this background, teachers see the closer cooperation between L2 and subject teachers as a chance to promote language learning and individual success in school.

Lack of language proficiency are also related to **limited opportunities to use the local language outside the school**. With parents and siblings, CMB speak prevalently national and local languages (42.5%) or a mix of local/national languages and native language or other languages (42.8). Only 14.7% only speak foreign languages.

**Table 4. Languages spoken in family**

	Only national/local languages		Only foreign languages		Mixed languages	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	46	20.9	34	15.4	133	60.5
Finland	439	77.2	32	5.6	94	16.5
Germany	20	23.1	26	33.3	32	41.0
Italy	51	15.5	27	8.2	250	76.2
Poland	-	-	63	41.7	88	58.3
Sweden	12	8.1	43	29.2	88	59.8
United Kingdom	145	72.9	21	10.6	33	16.6
Total	713	<b>42.5</b>	246	<b>14.7</b>	718	<b>42.8</b>

In cases, where the language at home of the country of origin is spoken, children claim having worse results in learning and lower language competences.

We speak Russian in the family. At school and wherever we meet people we speak Polish. And Ukrainian I'm starting to remember [forget], because Ukrainian is similar to Polish, so I put words from Polish in Ukrainian and if I came to Ukraine and had to speak only Ukrainian, there would be a lot of Polish words. Well, I haven't practiced this language, I haven't spoken it for a year. In my family only mom knows Ukrainian, papa doesn't, that's why Russian comes first, that's what we speak. (PL\_I4\_CH\_G)

In the Polish context, since language learning concerned children arriving mainly from Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, cultural affinity and geographical proximity facilitates communication at school and good school results: “I happened to have a student, also a Chechen, who wanted to learn, was ambitious, making progress. It is generally observed that it is easier for Ukrainian children, because the language is similar” (PL\_T12\_F). This situation should be reviewed after the massive arrival of Ukrainian children in Poland, following the war in Ukraine.

In Germany and Sweden, this problem often concerns second-generation children (those born in an admitting country) and their slowness in learning.

A challenge for instance are beginners, as I said. Many children with a migrant background come to us. However, a migrant background does not automatically mean that children need L2-classes. There are many children who have a migrant background but who have been born in Germany. You cannot see that they have a migrant background. I think about Russians or Europeans. It is a challenge to figure out which child needs the support of a L2-class. (G\_T3\_F)

Those who are newly arrived in Sweden, they are very good. They read in Arabic. But those who were born here in Sweden, they need more planning or like some who does not know the letters. I have grade six, some do not know letters. (SWE\_M4\_F)

In any case, after a period of time spent in the host country, the language competences of the newly arrived children seem to grow as they swiftly make up for language deficiencies, and, quite often, become diligent and outstanding students, as the data from the survey have shown. Many teachers in Italy, UK and Poland showed both surprise and satisfaction with the approach of CMB to learning and achievement.

## 2. Use of language in multilingual contexts

The school policies concerning the language of instruction vary and range from strict rules commanding the mandatory use of the language of the host country to liberal attitudes aligned with students’ needs. The survey showed a rather widespread monolingualism in all countries. Table 5 shows children’s experience of multiple languages in class and in the playground. The table shows that the research locations in the seven participating countries are characterised largely as monolingual since only 28.8% of children with migrant background declare they have experienced multilingualism in the classroom. The percentage increases in the playground, which probably means that CMB tend to gather in the playground, while they cannot do the same in the classroom.

**Table 5. Experience of multilingualism in school (CMB ISCED 1–3)**

Country	Class		Playground	
	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	42	19.18	62	28.4
Finland	45	35.2	78	61.9
Germany	24	31.6	36	47.4

Italy	120	37.4	95	29.1
Poland	92	63.4	111	76.0
Sweden	34	23.1	42	28.8
United Kingdom	-	-	9	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>35.1</b>

However, table 6 shows that more than half of children declared to receive support in native language and that translation is used. However, data are different in different countries. In **Belgium**, a large majority of CMB reported that they are not helped in their native language and that translations in their native language are not provided. On the contrary, in **Finland and Poland**, the large majority reported receiving support in their native language and translation to their native language. In **Sweden** too, the large majority of CMB perceive that they can use translations in their native language in class. In **Germany**, half of the CMB indicated that they have access to sufficient language support in classroom. In **Italy**, schools support the native language and translation of some 40% of CMB who need it. In the **UK**, migrant background does not imply having languages other than English as the first language, due to the global reach of the British imperial heritage, so that many migrants from Commonwealth countries are native speakers of English.

**Table 6. Support of native languages in the classroom (according to children having challenges with native language)**

Country	Help in native language		Use of translation	
	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	33	<b>29.0</b>	25	<b>21.9</b>
Finland	80	<b>66.7</b>	93	<b>78.2</b>
Germany	28	50.9	33	61.1
Italy	44	40.0	49	43.8
Poland	101	<b>69.2</b>	102	68.9
Sweden	70	59.3	79	68.7
United Kingdom	-	-	1	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>57.4</b>

Against this general and controversial background, some interesting practices have emerged through the interviews. In Belgium and Sweden, for instance, flexible practices include permission to use the language of origin during breaks, while playing, or in sport activities.

For example, during break time, teachers reported allowing students to speak with each other in different languages because they were likely to be tired from spending so much time speaking in a language they were not completely comfortable with. (BE\_T4\_F)

I have many newcomers who are super-motivated, and they have good marks, since we have made some adoptions. For instance, in social science or in natural science, the teachers have worked a lot together with

the mother tongue teacher, so the students have made tests in their native languages. So, no, I would not say that it [a migration background] is a factor really. (SWE\_SW3\_F)

Majority of professionals in Sweden, Germany, Italy and UK raised **the importance of child's language of origin in communicating and strengthening L2 learning**, recognising it as a resource for CMB and their parents.

Yes, of course, the main thing is language I guess, but I am not fully comfortable with that because I wonder if we are the one who are not ready, children never come without a language, they have often more than one, it is us, we are structured around one language only. (UK\_T23\_M)

Using the language of origin is considered as particularly useful in the case of newly arriving children, who are able to talk about lessons, learning, teachers' requirements, and school tasks with their peers, who come from the same country of origin. Such relations, developed often among children speaking the same language, are an element of their emotional safety and peer support. Knowledge of the language of origin also provides children with a tool to exploit when they do not want someone to understand what they are saying: "I think I start speaking in my mother tongue when I do not want people to understand. Although I think most people use it, because they meet someone who is from the same country, or because they might get angry" (SWE\_F2\_CH\_not specified). Second-generation CMB are sometimes found to voluntarily choose to communicate in the language of the country of emigration with both family members and friends. This indicates that children actively take advantage of the opportunities offered by multilingual development.

The possibility of communication in the language of origin may be a factor that builds a sense of security and reduces anxiety in the first months of staying in a new country. It is worth creating space and opportunities for children who have already gone through the acculturation process to share their experiences. Children who have just arrived can not only receive logistical but also emotional support from people who are able to take on their perspective. It helps them in developing their language skills, pursuing educational aspirations and establishing relationships. Children themselves displayed satisfaction with a possibility of relying on their language of origin in learning a language of instruction.

CH1: Everyone is helpful. Like, the teachers... even for me, I have my mother tongue teachers in the end of the hallway. So I could... if I need something urgent, I just go to her and tell her I want some lesson.

CH2: You just don't need to be shy. It's like you can get help with everything.

I: Yeah, it feels okay to ask?

CH2: Yeah, yeah, you can ask. If they want... say like no, if they... If they cannot help, they will just say 'sorry, I can't', or something. But they will always help you. (SWE\_F5\_CH\_B)

These children are willing to present cultural practices of their country of origin in a classroom or at events at school. Such positive functions of the language of origin are emphasized by social workers, cultural assistants, mediators and interpreters.

There were nonetheless critical opinions voiced, for instance, by some professionals in Germany, who see several downsides in using the language of origin by students.

I felt with the students [...] who had also been in an elementary school for a while, they speak such a strange language. Such a mixture of German and your mother tongue. So in everyday life too, they can already speak German [...]. In an elementary school, they actually learn German pretty quickly. They can then, but they have a completely different language. So they speak German to each other ... and have already spoken to each other in their native language, mostly Arabic. Now it's either German or some strange mixture, something like an artificial language. And the Germans take it on board and speak the language, too. Such a mixed language. (G\_SW3\_not specified)

In this opinion, native language disturbs the course of lessons, slows down learning the language of instruction and hinders inclusion. Moreover, some professionals in Sweden, Poland, Belgium and Germany indicate that using the language of origin leads to the establishment of sub-groups in the classroom on the basis of origin, and also transfers negative language practices to native students.

Sometimes I have to stop when it's only in the native language or in the language of origin. That's not possible. We've already had that, too, when there are a lot of Arabic speakers, that it then gets out of hand and that the communication goes over the heads of the others. [...] but then children are excluded, who have just no other child of the language of origin there. I simply don't want to, therefore: I prefer German as the language of instruction. But I allow the language of origin if it makes sense in any case or if I notice that the child is now overwhelmed, that it is too fresh, that it can no longer concentrate, that it now simply needs the language of origin or it now simply needs a possibility to switch off, too. Because the whole day is, that is already for some children simply large load, especially at the beginning. (G\_T2\_F)

I talk a lot of Swedish with them, but sometimes when you look at them, and you know... when they make a face like this and 'Do you understand what I mean?' No, then I talk in [the native language]. (SWE\_SW4\_M)

Sometimes some students who were born here, still it needs to be explained to them, for example, about atoms. Teachers explain about atoms, but they need someone to explain in Arabic. Then I can help them. For example, I explain to students in Arabic – 'ah, now, I understand'. (SWE\_M5\_F)

Of the 50 teachers who are teaching mainly children of colour, only one is from a migrant background. Sometimes I ask friends of a migrant background to come to speak to my students and the kids open up more and are more honest about their experiences. (BE\_T6\_F)

The professionals in Italy, Sweden, UK, Belgium and Finland clearly indicated that **children speak different languages within the school space, given the increasing importance of multilingualism and the use of 'mixlanguages'**.

I: What language do you speak at home with your parents?

M: A mixture.

I: And between which languages?

M: Tunisian and Italian. (IT\_F33\_CH\_B)

Recognizing various cultural and linguistic contexts can provide the conditions for **establishing equal and trust relations within a student-teacher-parent triad**. It can help to avoid discriminating CMB because of their country of origin. The practice of mixing languages is a characteristic, dynamic feature of schools with CMB. An example is a Swedish school where translanguaging was employed: "Mostly Swedish is used. You can say something in Swedish, then you can use words from your mother tongue and then continue in Swedish" (SWE\_F3\_CH\_not specified). While Swedish is used

both within the school's space and during lessons, English is mainly utilised when the interlocutors do not speak Swedish or share a native language, and it becomes the only means of communication.

### 3. Ways of promoting language proficiency

The ways of promoting language proficiency, through second language teaching, was investigated through the questionnaire, the interviews and the recordings of classroom activities in the seven countries.

The survey investigated the most important types of initiatives to promote a plurality of languages in schools, that is, language and cultural mediation, providing learning in L2 and providing resources to support learning in CMB's native languages, according to teachers. Table 7 shows that the most frequent initiative is providing resources for L2 learning. Language and cultural mediation on the one hand, and support of learning native languages on the other, are much less frequent. Mediation, which will be investigated in Chapter 7, is largely ignored, with the partial exceptions of Poland and Sweden, while Finland and Sweden offer many resources for native languages.

**Table 7. Initiatives to promote languages in class and school (according to teachers)**

Country	Language and cultural mediation		Resources for L2 learning		Resources for learning native languages	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	12	41.4	15	53.6	6	24.0
Finland*	1	2.1	58	74.3	33	<b>70.2</b>
Germany	11	25.0	24	60.0	1	2.5
Italy	25	30.1	57	68.7	13	15.7
Poland	23	<b>69.7</b>	28	84.5	10	31.3
Sweden	23	<b>59.0</b>	26	68.4	28	<b>73.7</b>
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	95	<b>34.9</b>	208	<b>69.1</b>	91	<b>34.1</b>

\* In Finland, multiple answers for resources for L2 learning.

Some countries, such as Germany and Finland, offer one-year preparatory classes and a number of remedial classes, while in other countries, e.g. Poland, children attend regular classes relevant to their age while schools offer remedial or additional classes. Interviews to the teachers highlighted both the advantages and disadvantages of the solutions mentioned above. For example, it was claimed that teaching German language in preparatory classes in Germany may contribute to the cultural segregation of children, hindering their integration and limiting their social relations to ethnically/nationally homogenous circles. However, direct inclusion in an education system may initially raise a lot of stress in children, helplessness, and generates gaps in knowledge and its acquisition.

I don't know if throwing these kids into school is a good idea without language preparation. I am in favour of a one-year Polish language course, but maybe it is a professional preference, because I teach Polish for foreigners, so it seems to me that it would be helpful for them... assuming that everyone will handle without it is wrong. Maybe children from the first grade but I would not throw a child into the second grade. (PL\_T15\_F).

In order to resolve the language problems of children and support them along their educational path, schools employ social workers in Sweden and Italy, mediators in Italy and Belgium, cultural assistants in Poland, who provide assistance to children and their families. Their role is to facilitate hybrid integration in the school. Children living in centres for refugees in Poland are provided with additional assistance in learning the language. In addition to the opportunity to have an interpreter, they can also work with a guide showing them the school and non-school environment. Collaboration with parents is seen as key in this process, especially as a way to raise awareness of the importance of their children's learning.

The interviewees also emphasised the benefits of learning in small groups where it is easier to ask questions and show uncertainty than in larger ones. The meaning of L2 learning from the point of view of CMB is discernible in the German case.

CH: I do not go there anymore. So, there we learn to say, how old we are, what our name is and the numbers, colours. And we also learn to write, how to write [...] This is, what we learn. However, that all the way the same, because we are in L2-class [...] and this is quite boring. Other children think that too.

I: Is it boring, because you already know these things, or why it is boring?

CH: I know this and we do those things all the time, have to paint all the time, to write the same things all the time. This is really boring. I: What would you do instead? Girl, 9 years old: I want to learn things that are more difficult. (G\_I25\_CH\_G)

The views expressed by professionals and children indicate that the goal of learning the language of instruction is clearly defined and is intended to improve the integration of migrant children. The conclusion is that **each country, based on its own experiences and digital innovation, should find attractive teaching methods**. Teaching basic language skills is seen as the first but most important step towards hybrid integration.

#### 4. Classroom interactions

In particular, the CHILD-UP project investigated L2 teaching in classroom or small group interactions attended by CMB with problems of language proficiency. Children were gathered on the basis of their level of language proficiency. The research includes data about ISCED 1 children (in Finland and Sweden), ISCED 3 children (in Italy) and above all from ISCED 2 children (in Germany, Finland, Sweden and Poland). The analysis did not concern the effectiveness of CMB learning. It concerned the effectiveness of facilitation of dialogue and children's agency. For this purpose, the analysis was focused on prevalent modes of teaching second language. These modes are defined by Walsh (2011) as managerial mode, materials mode, skills and systems mode and classroom context mode. The **managerial mode** has the function of transmitting information, organising activities,

explaining materials, managing changes among the other modes. It is based on the teacher's extended turns to explain or give instructions, while learners do not provide relevant contributions.

The **materials mode** has the function of showing linguistic practices through use of materials, promoting answers checking and providing answers, clarifying and evaluating. This mode is based on the IRE (Initiation, Response and Evaluation) scheme, focused questions, feedback on linguistic forms and scaffolding. However, materials (written texts, photographs, videos, objects, drawings, etc.) can also be the starting point of dialogue in the classroom. They may be understood as physical media to stimulate personalised and interactive production of narrative. Materials can enhance narratives concerning either the content of a written text, a photo, a video, etc. or the situation or circumstances in which these materials were produced and the narratives they promote.

The **systems and skills mode** has the function of putting children in the conditions of producing correct forms and checking their use of language, giving correcting feedback, promoting specific abilities, highlighting correct answers. This mode is based on repairs, scaffolding, focused questions, repetitions and feedback on linguistic forms. Finally, the **classroom context mode** has the function of promoting clear linguistic expressions, giving context to them, and promoting oral communicative fluidity. It is based on short turns, minimal repairs, feedback on contents, questions about themes and clarification questions, and scaffolding. Children are encouraged to produce extended turns.

The adoption of specific modes is influenced by the language proficiency shown by the children. However, there is not a precise correspondence between the adopted modes and children's fluency. The following three extracts show cases of material, skills and systems and classroom context modes. The absence of cases of managerial mode depends on the low interest of this mode from an interactional point of view.

#### ***4.1 Materials mode***

Extract 1 was recorded in a lower secondary class (ISCED 2) in a semi-rural school in Finland. The school assistant reviews with children written assignments on sustainability. The sequence extracted here was recorded remotely through video observation necessitated by pandemic, and the fact that some utterances are marked unclear is because of poor sound quality resulting from a standard built-in microphone of the laptop in the classroom. At the beginning of the transcribed sequence, the teacher has moved from behind his desk to the front of it and closer to the children and checks how children are proceeding with the assignments in a handout. A case on saving electricity is made, and to study it in detail, the teacher returns to his desk at the front to use the computer with the screen projected on the wall for the children to see. In the extract, the teacher uses plain language and clear pronunciation to support the learning of children of Finnish as a second language.

In turn 1, the teacher checks if the children are in the right assignment and in turn 3 asks what a child wrote, initiating a typical IRE sequence, including a question, a response and an evaluation which is proffered in turn 6 with a simple "yes", then checking other children's attention. In turn 8, the teacher repeats the correct answer initiating a clarification, which is concluded with a new question on the meaning of another word. In turn 10, the teacher asks to find the word in Arabic rather than Finnish, thus providing scaffolding, but in turn 12 he shifts to a new explanation. This extract shows well the

way of using materials in the materials mode and the enhancement of children's contributions about the materials by checking and providing answers, clarifying and evaluating.

#### Extract 1 (Finland)

01	Tm	((sits at the front edge of the teacher's desk, addressing a pupil from outside the screen)) are you in assignment four
02	Children	yeah
03	Tm	((addressing M2)) what did you write
04	M1/M2	((exchange some words quietly in Arabic))
05	M2	energy
06	Tm	yeah ((addressing a child)) did you hear what M2 said
07	C?	((from outside the screen)) me not hear
08	Tm	yeah (.) so (.) you save electricity (0.2) so when you do not use electricity you are not in the room (0.5) switch the light off ((pulling movement downwards by right hand)) (0.1) because (.) you do not need it (.) so you save ((heading towards the teacher's desk to use the computer)) let us check out the word save
09	Children	((some overlapping speech))
10	Tm	((typing the word in Finnish)) (0.6) to save (0.4) you know it in Arabic
11	Children	(?)
12	M1	((grabs his smartphone and browses it, his gaze shifting between the mobile screen and the handout))
		(0.4)
13	Tm	so you save (.) electricity (.) money (.) <u>and</u> nature

#### 4.2 Skills and Systems Mode

Extract 2 was recorded in Germany with ISCED 2 children. One teacher and five children participated in the interaction. All children were CMB and came together in the class to learn German as a second language. Everyone wore masks in the classroom, the teacher sometimes put the mask down when she had enough distance to the children, so that the children could see their facial expressions and pronunciation better. The following extract concerns a situation in which a book was read in class and the content of the last lesson was repeated interactively. The book was in German and was about an Arab girl who lives in Saudi Arabia, Wadjda. Four of the five children also speak Arabic. Two children did not participate in the last meeting, thus the other children were invited by the teacher to summarise its contents for them. The teacher also asked the children about aspects of their private lives in relation to the book in order to establish a connection to their lives. Two children stated that they were neither female nor male; for this reason, the children were abbreviated as C1, C2, etc.

In turn 1, Tf reminds the previous activity and asks the children to tell of the dreams of Wadjda. The children raise their hands, but Tf stops them to show the picture, thus switching to a materials mode. However, the following sequence is based on a mitigated skills and systems mode, since although C2 starts to tell the story (turns 4 and 6), the teacher asks several questions to C4 and C5, the two children who did not participate in the previous meeting, with the clear intention to test their use of language. The teacher's turns but one are questions. The only exception is a correction in turn 42. Some questions are preceded by positive evaluations or partial corrections of previous turns (turns 20, 23,

25, 32, 40), which show the recurrent IRE sequence. In turn 29, the question takes the form of scaffolding. Short confirmations and a repetition are also provided by the teacher, in turns 20 and 40. Also this extract, as extract 4, shows the function of checking children's use of language, giving correcting feedback or highlighting correct answers, although the focus is not explicitly on linguistic forms and corrections/validations are not systematic.

Extract 2 (Germany)

1.	Tf	A:right, exactly (.) last week we dealt with this book and the book is obviously about Wadjda. So it's about this girl Wadjda and then I'd like to ask the girls, you've read it with - you were present. What is Wadjda's greatest dream?
2.	C1, 2, 3	((raise their hands))
3.	Tf	I have to take a moment (.) so that we can see the picture (6) So the picture here is what's on the front of the book. (2) Listen carefully now, this is just for you, yes. C2, what is her greatest dream? ((meanwhile, she turns on a Power Point presentation and throws it on the wall so that everyone can see it clearly))
4.	C2	Her greatest wish is (.) Dream, uh, that she owns a green bicycle. So, exactly
5.	Tf	Exactly, so I don't want to know. I already know it, tell the boys. hh
6.	C2	hh. >Well< her biggest dream is to own a green bike Turns to the boys sitting behind her and repeats what she has just said, a little louder than before
7.	C4	hm ok ((nods))
8.	Tf	Do you have a bike?
9.	C4	Yes
10.	C5	<u>Yes</u> ((nods))
11.	Tf	Both of you?
12.	C5	Yes
13.	Tf	Is it green?
14.	C4	No
15.	C5	No ((shakes his head))
16.	Tf	What colour is your bike?
17.	C4	Blue, black
18.	Tf	Blue and black, ok and yours?
19.	C5	I can't remember
20.	Tf	You can't remember, alright. Um, what parts can you find on your bike?
21.	C4	Every part
22.	C1, 2, 3	hh:
23.	Tf	Exactly, what items do you need on your bike
24.	C4	A helmet (2) a bell?
25.	Tf	A bicycle bell? ((nods in agreement)) So maybe it's not the most important thing for the bike but it's part of it. What else?

26.	C5	(?)
27.	Tf	Say again ((encouragingly)) ((Meanwhile, Tf shows C2 with her hand that she has seen that she is reporting, but that C2 should wait a little longer))
28.	C5	Uh, oNE wheel
29.	Tf	One wheel, one wheel? ((agreeing and asking for it. She holds up one finger the second time she repeats "one wheel"))
30.	C4	No two
31.	C5	Yes, two
32.	Tf	Two. Two wheels, okay. What else is on it?
33.	C4	That which (?)
34.	Tf	That what?
35.	C4	That which makes you go faster
36.	Tf	The one that makes you go faster?
37.	C4	((nods))
38.	Tf	What do you have to do-
39.	C5	He means the thing into which (?)
40.	Tf	mhm ((agreeing)) what is the name of the thing you have to operate so that you can do it faster or slower, or uphill, downhill?
41.	C2	Kicks, things
42.	Tf	You mean the pedals, I don't think he means the pedals
43.	C2	Oh yes, pedals
44.	Tf	You mean that you can set different [levels, steps, gears
45.	C4	[YES, yes, that's right ((nods vehemently))
46.	Tf	That's right, the gearstick. I see, you have them too. And do you have to stand on your bike?
47.	C5	(?) ((speaks to C4))
48.	C4	mhm no, so whether you have to stand?
49.	Tf	Yes. So what else do you have on your bike? (5) C1? Meanwhile, C2 raises her hand
50.	C2	A saddle?
51.	Tf	A saddle, of course. Exactly, because that was also an exercise we did last week, that we looked at. Um (3) sometimes he does that ((difficulties with the technique of the PowerPoint presentation interrupts the sequence))

### 4.3 Classroom context mode

Extract 3 shows the shift from the materials mode to the classroom context mode in Germany, with the participation of ISCED 2 children. The extract shows three girls participating in this lesson,

because one usually participating boy left the school after regular lessons. All girls are CMB, but they are speaking German without any idiom. The three girls sit side by side, the teacher directly in front of them, starting into the lesson talking about a book, which is one topic of the lesson. The point of departure is thus a material mode. The teacher talks of a book concerning a wish of an Arabic girl called Wadjda. This extract shows that the focus may be more on the material mode or on the classroom context mode, depending on the specific phase of the interaction.

In extract 3, the teacher invites the children to connect their experiences with what they are learning from the book, thus, adopting a classroom context mode. In turn 1, the teacher opens the discussion, giving the girls a suggestion of a kind of real situation according to the topic of the particular lesson, and inviting F3 to respond. In turn 3, the teacher suggests a scenario in which the bike is stolen. In turn 4, F3's answer includes a joke, which is accepted by the teacher who laughs with the children (turn 6), however pursuing the previous trajectory about the stolen bike. In turn 8, F1 responds and the teacher asks for confirmation, implicitly inviting to go on. F1 jokes about her possible detective activity but this time the teacher simply confirms reception and asks a new question. F3 proposes a suggestion, which is validated by the teacher who invites the third girl to take the floor (turn 13). In turn 14, rather than following the teacher's trajectory, F2 tells a personal story, which continues in turn 16, while the teacher confirms interest through nonverbal expressions. In turn 17, the teacher formulates the content of the previous turns then starts with a new objective: describing the bike to help to find it, which according to the teacher is difficult. However, F3 suggests an alternative strategy, which is based on having a picture of the bike, which is acknowledged by the teacher with interest (turn 22). The teacher acknowledges F3's clarifying answer.

#### Extract 3 (Germany)

1	Tf	Ok, now you're riding your bike to school F3 and now imagine it's gone. It's happened many times. That's why we always lock the bikes
2	F1	Yes
3	Tf	Stolen bike. What do you do then?
4	F3	Then my mother drives me to school
5	F1	<u>hh</u>
6	Tf	(?) <u>But what about your bike? hhh</u>
7	F3	<u>Hhh</u>
8	F1	I would look for it
9	Tf	You would look for it?
10	F1	No. Playing detective and then ((makes some gestures with her hands))
11	Tf	Ok. What else can you do?
12	F3	Call the police or something?
13	Tf	((emphazised nod)) °Ok, (F2)°
14	F2	My father, my brother, has had three bicycles stolen before. Last year, they found a bicycle in the city. One of his three. ((Teacher nods empathically)) And they have -
15	Tf	And who are "they found it"?
16	F2	Police. (.) Yes. (.) In town. ((Teacher nods empathically))

17	Tf	Ok. So, search or play detective, if you know the detective agency or - If it's gone, you have to describe it then, no. Otherwise, ehm -
18	F3	Yes. [Or you have a picture ready
19	F2	[Yes
20	Tf	[It's quite difficult to describe- So to know which one it is
21	F3	I have a picture of my bike
22	Tf	Aha, you got a picture?
23	F3	Yes
24	Tf	mhm

The analysis of these three extracts shows different ways of teaching second language. Children's active participation shows their understanding, their ability to produce knowledge and their involvement in the interaction. However, participation does not necessarily mean agency. Although there is not a strict connection between modes of teaching and children's expression of agency, the data show that a mere materials mode or a skills and systems mode can enhance participation, since children are invited to show their knowledge, but cannot produce the conditions for children's agency, if not in the form of rejection of teachers' requests. The only mode which improves children's manifestations of agency is the classroom context mode.

Frequently the classroom context mode starts from the materials mode, i.e. from the use of texts or images that promote conversations. Teachers' questions concern the use of materials and children are invited to show some competence in understanding and remembering them. When the conversation switches to classroom context mode, based on children's views and experiences, children's agency becomes visible. Visibility of agency is prevalently linked to themes in which children have something relevant to say. In this case, L2 teaching becomes similar to facilitation. However, it seems rather infrequent that teachers renounce to explain, i.e. to upgrade their own epistemic authority. Thus, some sequences are based on facilitative actions and others are based on teachers' explanations. These results can suggest some directions for future reflections on the ways of teaching a second language and on the ways of organising training for teachers.

## 5. Conclusions

Language is a controversial issue in hybrid integration of CMB. Clearly, knowledge of local and national languages in the country of immigration is very important to attend schools, create relations with peers, and for any lived social experience, avoiding marginalisation and segregation. However, the relation between national language as second language and preservation of native language is an important issue which is dealt with in a rather unclear way in European countries.

First, the data show that, while few CMB only speak their native language, there is a rather similar percentage of CMB who only speak local/national language and speak a mix of local/national and native languages. Thus, two main conditions seem to characterise CMB's use of language. Against this background, schools are prevalently monolingual, despite the claim of the importance of multilingualism from some teachers (see also Chapter 3). On the other hand, several children feel to

be supported in their language use, although prevalently in their learning of second language, and less frequently through language mediation.

The analysis of classroom interactions shows the different modes of teaching second language, while no case of use of native language was identified. In Sweden, forms of “translanguaging” (Garcia & Li Wei 2014; Li Wei & Lin 2019), i.e. use of different languages in the classroom, are used but limited, and they are tailored on the teachers’ good knowledge of English. For what concerns second language teaching, there are different ways of enhancing or not enhancing children’s agency in participating in the classroom. In particular, the classroom context mode, which enhances children’s active participation in conversations, is the most facilitative way of learning without evaluations and reducing top-down conveyance of knowledge. This mode does not prevent the use of materials, since materials are used to enhance participation in conversations.

In chapter 7, we shall analyse language mediation, unfortunately available only in a limited context, to understand if this is a possible way of enhancing preservation of native language. In the concluding chapter, it will be possible to include the language issue among the different open and controversial results of the CHILD-UP research concerning hybrid integration.

## Chapter 7. Language mediation in teacher-parent interactions

### 1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on audio-recorded interpreter-mediated interactions between Italian teachers and foreign-speaking parents and children. These interactions relate to children's performance at school and during home activities. The chapter is based on the analysis of 18 transcriptions from audio-recordings in primary schools (16 transcriptions) the nursery schools (2 transcriptions) in the city of Modena and in the province of Reggio Emilia. Teachers speak Italian, parents (and children) speak Chinese (seven transcriptions), Twi (four transcriptions), Arabic (two transcriptions), English (two transcriptions, with a Nigerian and a Ghanaian mothers in nursery schools), Urdu (two transcriptions) and Albanian (one transcription). These are also the most important languages spoken by migrants in the area.

In these extracts, Italian female teachers (indicated as TF1, TF2, etc.) interact with fathers (PM1, PM2, etc.) or mothers (PF1, PF2, etc.), and sometimes their children, sons (CHIm) or daughters (CHIf). All mediators (M) are bilingual women. The analysis focuses on the ways in which (1) teachers approach mediators, parents and children; (2) mediators coordinate interactions by exercising agency; (3) parents and children participate through mediators' renditions and in dyadic sequences with mediators. It is important to underline that mediators' actions are constrained by teachers and parents' actions. The following analysis aims to show the importance of specific constraints of mediation in the school context. The analysis concerns 10 extracts from the recorded interactions, including original turns in Italian and other languages, and English translation of these turns. The translations in English of the extracts reproduce the oral language used in the interaction, including all mistakes and repetitions produced in talk.

### 2. Mediation of teachers' monologues about children

In primary schools, teachers' contributions mainly included negative assessments of CMB's attitudes and performance. Teachers primarily reported and evaluated children's negative performances and lack of parental support. Teachers did not ask parents to comment on or explain their children's attitudes or behaviours, nor proposed any collaboration with parents. Thus, teachers' contributions take the form of a *monologue*. Mediators may find it difficult to provide renditions of these monologues. Mediators reacted by trying to mitigate teachers' assessments both through their renditions and through dyadic sequences with parents. Extracts 1-2 show teachers' monologues and mediators' exercise of agency in mitigating, expanding or negotiating teachers' contributions. In particular, these extracts show the teachers' negative assessments, primarily addressed to children's language acquisition, children's behaviours in the classroom and children's homework. These extracts also show that parents give minimal feedback to mediators' renditions of teachers' assessments (although mitigated by the mediators).

Extract 1 (Arabic 2)

In turn 1, the teacher says that the child's performance is inconsistent, i.e. he does not do his homework or he does it too in a hurry. In turn 4, the mediator's rendition stating that the child works very hard mitigates the teacher's assessment.

01	TF	<p>va bene hh (.) eh: niente allora di (.) F. (.) mh: dobbiamo dire che è un bambino: che si impegna (0.6) eh: (.) delle volte (.) un po' meno: (.) mh (0.5) cioè .hh (.) a volte c'è il compito che non è fatto oppure (.) eh:: (.) l'ha fatto un po': (1.0) eh:: (0.9) insomma u- (.)</p> <p>un po' veloce (.) ecco non ci ha pensato tanto (.) ma in generale è un bambino che si: (.) impegna(.) ecco [eh::]</p> <p><i>okay hh (.) eh: nothing then about (.) F. (.) mh: we have to say that he is a child: who works hard (0.6) eh: (.) sometimes (.) a little less: (.) mh (0.5) that is .hh (.) sometimes he doesn't do his homework or (.) eh:: (.) he does it a little:: (1.0) eh:: (0.9) i mean a- (.) a little bit fast (.) well he didn't think about it so much (.) but in general he is a child who works hard: (.) that is [eh::]</i></p>
02	MF	<p>[posso tradurre] questa parte per favore?</p> <p><i>[can i translate] this part please?</i></p>
03	TF	<p>sì</p> <p><i>yes</i></p>
04	MF	<p>hia bitagul lak ya habibti ana fatu (.) hua walad biyiltazim kitir (.) biyemel eh elhagat elly biulu li aliha bas fi maraat ma biemilsh l l ittamari:n (.) eh aw biemelha bitar:iqa bisura (.) okay?</p> <p><i>she is telling you my dear that F. (.) is a boy who works <b>very</b> hard (.) he does eh the things they are telling me (0.6) but sometimes he doesn't do his homework (.) or he does it quickly (.) okay?</i></p>

In turn 14, the teacher insists on the negative assessment of the child's homework. In turn 15, the mediator's rendition for the child's mother is expanded, including the suggestion to invite the child to pay attention to the teacher's explanations.

14	TF	<p>&gt;no no&lt; ma questo va bene: (.) però magari (.) si vede che: (0.8) li fa: un po': con insomma magari a scuola ci sta più attento (.) ecco che a casa (.) eh eh [eh (.) così]</p> <p><i>&gt;no no&lt; but that's okay: (.) but maybe (.) you can see that: (0.8) he does: a little:: with well maybe he pays more attention at school (.) than at home (.) eh eh [eh (.) that's it]</i></p>
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15	MF	<p>[hia bitul lik] (.)</p> <p>bas huma shafu in hua biemelha bisura (.) yarit yaeni tetkalimu maah anah fi lqism (.) eh ikhali balu kuais min isharh bita il'asatida</p> <p>[she says] (.) but they have seen that he does them quickly (.) <b>maybe if you talk to him that in class (.) you have to pay a lot of attention to the teacher's explanation</b></p>
16	PF	<p>Mashy</p> <p>it's fine</p>

#### Extract 2 (Twi 4)

In turn 72, the teacher says that the child's behaviour is appropriate on the whole, but she adds that when the boy is tired or does not want to do something, he becomes introverted, refuses to work and makes a fuss about everything. The mediator's rendition provides a mitigation of this assessment: while some problems are rendered, the child is presented as good and respectful (turn 77), his behaviour is presented as normal (turn 80) and his learning as greatly improved (turn 93).

72	TF1	<p>allora (.) questo giudizio qua, (0.6) e la prima parte è il comportamento (.) e: (.) lui comunque (.) è mo- è corretto (0.7) eh con i bambini con i compagni con le insegnanti_ (0.7) eh mh anche se delle volte? (0.6) fa come faceva l'anno scorso quando si stanca o non vuole fare un lavoro, (0.7) eh si chiude un po' rifiuta di lavorare fa un po' di storie</p> <p>so (.) this assessment here, (0.6) and the first part is the behaviour (.) and (.) he however (.) is ve- is correct (0.7) eh with the children with the classmates with the teachers (0.7) eh mh even if sometimes? (0.6) he does as he did last year when he gets tired or doesn't want to do a task, (0.7) eh he shuts himself off he refuses to work he makes a little bit of a fuss</p>
		(0.8)
73	MF	[[o-]
74	TF1	[[o]kay,
75	MF	<p>me pa wo kye3</p> <p>please</p>
76	TF1	[mh]
77	MF	<p>[w] se] w) y3 good (0.9) w) bu teachers no (1.0) w) ne ne nanfufu sua adi3 (.) bibiaa w) y3 good (0.5) but 3bi w) h) aa men fa ne se (.) ak)ara di3 eh (0.5) y3 kase w)n y3 bibia w)n p3 se w) b3 y3</p> <p>[says] he is good (0.9) he respects the teachers (1.0) with his friends he studies (0.5) overall he is good (0.5) eh (0.5) but sometimes (.) for example e:h (0.5) a child when you tell him/her to do something he/she doesn't want to do it</p>

		(0.6)
78	PM	sa[:] <i>ind[eed]</i>
79	MF	[a se]n'ani a ha <i>[he loo]ks bored</i>
		(0.5)
80	PM	Mh
81	MF	a ha 3no die 3 y3 normal 3 w) h) <i>but I mean that is normal</i>
82	PM	Okay
83	TF1	heh (.) hoh
		(0.9)
84	TF	inve[ce la par]te di sotto è il: come lui lavora <i>wher[eas the pa]rt below is the: how he works</i>
85	PM	[o k a y]
		(0.7)
86	TF1	come lui sta in classe (0.9) quin[di] how he behaves in class (0.9) [so]
87	MF	[di3] 3 w) asie nso y3 n3 adwuma w) y3 w) class <i>[what] is below instead is the work he does in the classroom</i>
88	PM	ah (.) okay
89	TF1	hih-heh-heh-heh (0.7) allora (.) intanto vabbè lui ha iniziato (0.6) a mh (.) a a capire un pochino meglio (0.6) l'im[pegno de]lla scuola <i>hih-heh-heh-heh (0.7) then (.) so far he has started (0.6) to mh (.) to to understand a little bit better (0.6) the effo[rts that sch]ool requires</i>
90	PM	[sì] <i>[yes]</i>
		(0.6)
91	TF1	perché [°°insomma°°]

		<i>because [°°well°°]</i>
92	PM	[o k a y]
93	TF1	eh [u n p o c h i-] <i>eh [a littl-]</i>
94	MF	[w) se sei sei w) yere ne h)] w) tumi te bibbia ase <i>[she says <b>he now works hard</b>] he can understand everything</i>
95	PM	Okay

### 3. Mediation of teachers assessments of parents' support

In addition to negative assessments of children, teachers' contributions frequently include an implicit or explicit negative assessment of the family's support. They explicitly invite parents to support/help their children. Also in these cases, mediators may mitigate teachers' assessments, while parents may try to defend themselves from the negative assessments.

#### Extract 3 (Arabic 2)

In turn 37, the teacher asks the mother to help his son with his maths homework as it does not raise any linguistic problems. In doing so, the teacher underestimates the mother's Italian language skills. As teachers assert in other cases, it is impossible to learn any subject if learners do not know Italian. In turn 38, the mediator's rendition mitigates the negative assessment of the child (he is doing well, he is good) but she also adds that the mother's help is important. After a pause, the mother reacts to this rendition stressing her attempt to help the child (turn 39), but also that the child is autonomous (turn 41). After the mediator's rendition of the mother's response, the teacher insists on the need of help, although admitting that there may be some limitations to this help. Once again, the mediator's rendition mitigates the teacher's request by stressing that the mother is doing well (turn 46) and omitting that she could do more, thus projecting the mother's new attempt to say that she is doing her best (turn 47).

37	TF2	di memorizzazione (.) si deve concentrare un po' di più (0.6) magari la mamma comunque sulla matematica un pochino lo può aiuta:re perché alla fine (.) non è come l'italiano dove (.) c'è un problema di lingua (.) sì sono (.) delle operazioni in colonna sono le tabelline (.) potrebbe un pochino:: (.) insomma seguirlo perché so che lavorare da solo può essere un pochino più difficile (.) però lui in classe segue (.) eh (.) comunque (.) è bravo <i>of memorization (.) he has to concentrate a little bit more (0.6) maybe his mother anyway with maths she can help him a little bit because in the end (.) it is not like Italian where (.) there is a language problem (.) yes there are (.) column operations there are multiplication tables (.) she could a little bi::t (.) I mean help him because I know that</i>
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		<i>working alone can be a little more difficult (.) but he follows in class (.) eh (.) anyway (.) is good</i>
38	MF	<p>hena el ustada bitae irriyadiaat bitul lak hata hia min khilal ettamarin arfa anaho byaemal altamarin liwahdu bas da mush mushkil(.) bitul lak ashan hua kuis (1.0) bi mh mh (.) raki arf (.) alit' lik bravo (.)bas hia bitul lak enek mumkin tisadih fi lbiyt (.) alashan erriyadiaat hua eibara an 'arqam (.) yaeni mumkin tisadih (.)u mumkin hataa (1.0) y yigyb 'ahsan (.) in sha' allah</p> <p><i>here the maths teacher is telling you that she also knows through the exercises that he does the exercises by himself but this is not a problem (.) she is telling you why <b>he is doing well</b> (1.0) mh mh (.) you know- (.) <b>she told you that he is good</b> (.) but she is telling you that you can help him at home (.) because maths is in the fo- form of numbers (.) <b>it means that you can help him</b> (.) and it is also possible that he will get better grades (.) god willing</i></p>
		(1.2)
39	PF	<p>'iin sha' allah (.)'ana bahawil alaa gad magdar(.) bisaraha fi rriyada maeah fi lbe:at webizaat jadual edd:arbf (.) 'ana ma:eah (.) hua daeif fih shuaya (.) bass 'ana bahawil maeah fi lbeyt wahdah wahdah</p> <p><i>god willing (.) I try according to my skills (.) honestly in maths with him at home and especially multiplication tables (.) in the I'm with hi:m (.) he is a bit bad but I try with him at home a a</i></p>
40	MF	okay=
41	PF	<p>=hu biahuluha bayahlu liwahdu bardak</p> <p><i>= he solves it by himself (.) he solves it by himself anyway</i></p>
42	MF	<p>okay (.) no diceva io (.) c'è (.) mmh (.) faccio quello che posso (.) e soprattutto per le tabelline però diceva che (.) la maggior parte lo fa da solo</p> <p><i>okay (.) no she was saying (.) there is (.) mmh (.) I do what I can (.) and especially as for the multiplication tables however she was saying that (.) most of them he does them by himself</i></p>
43	TF2	<p>eh lo so (.) [cioè (.) lo so eh eh]</p> <p><i>eh I know it (.) [I mean (.) I know it eh]</i></p>
44	MF	[mhm (.) eh eh eh]
45	TF2	<p>eh eh purtroppo lì a volte fa comodo avere qualcuno che ti ascolta (.) io lo capisco che loro hanno tanti impegni (.) però lui comunque ci prova (.) oggi l'ho interrogato e anche se (.) alla verifica non aveva preso un buon voto si vede che si sta impegnando: (.) quando</p>

		<p>hanno tempo quando possono dedicarsi (.) eh (0.7) insomma si potrebbe (.) si potrebbe migliorare (.) [però (.) va bene]</p> <p><i>eh eh unfortunately in that case sometimes it is useful to have someone who listens to you (.) I understand that they are very busy (.) but he still tries (.) today I tested him and even if (.) he didn't get a good mark in the test I can see he's trying hard: (.) when they have time when they can help (.) eh (0.7) in short he could (.) he could improve (.) [but (.) it's fine]</i></p>
46	MF	<p>[hia] bitul lak 'ayua hauli hataa t (.) tesmaei lu (.)'anek t matalan tijlissi mae:ah lamma ykun yemel ettamarin(.) hia bitul lek ennahar dah 'ana shuftu eamil et (.) amalitlu l'imtih:an (.) w (.) shafit bass bitul lik kwaiss kidah kwaiss (.) mumkin tikammili kidah (.) bass hawli 'enek t meh lamma yikun yaemel ittamarin 'inti tikuni maeah tismaei lu eh: u bass</p> <p><i>[she] is telling you try also (.) to listen to him (.) that you for example sit with him while he is doing the exercises (.) she is telling you today I saw that he did the (.) he did the tes:t (.) and (.) she saw it but she is telling you it's okay this way it's okay (.) you can continue this way (.) but try to sit with him when he is doing the exercises you are with him you listen to him eh: and that's it</i></p>
		(1.4)
47	PF	<p>la 'ahu bisaraha fel fi' irriyada 'ana maeah bisaraha 'ana bahibbi 'irriyada binugead maeah bisara:ha ah ah ah wahda wahda</p> <p><i>no he honestly i- in maths I am with him honestly I love maths I sit with him honest:ly eh eh a a</i></p>

#### Extract 4 (Chinese 3)

In turns 70 and 74, the teacher warns the child's father that his son may face problems in the future if he continues with his behaviour/attitude, thus implying that he is completely unaware of his child's bad behaviour. The mediator's rendition is expanded by the explanation of what the transition from primary to lower secondary school might entail (turns 75-91). Only in turn 93, the mediator's rendition mentions the need of parents' support, but mitigating the hostile language of the teacher and concluding with the need of keeping an eye on the child (turn 100).

70	TF1	<p>e quando un bambino è così il papà non deve stare- non deve stare poi così tanto tranquillo perché quando un bambino è così è facile preda di comportamenti non bellissimi</p> <p><i>and when a child is like that the father must not be - must not be so relaxed because when a child is like that it's easy for him to fall prey to unpleasant behaviour</i></p>
71	MF	Okay
72	TF1	<p>ancora è piccolino</p> <p><i>he is still a child</i></p>

73	MF	sì certo <i>yes of course</i>
74	TF1	adesso che arriva alle medie si renderà conto il papà che cosa succederà se continua a fare questo <i>now when he goes to lower secondary school his father will realise what will happen if he continues to do this</i>
75	MF	老师说，就是说，他：呃：他们老师现在(.)因为现在是五年级了嘛，哦::只有剩下半年了 <i>the teacher says, I mean, he: eh: they are now (.) because now they are in the fifth grade, no, unfortunately there is only the second term</i>
76	PM1	嗯 <i>Yes</i>
77	MF	九月份要去上初一了 <i>in september he will start the first year in lower secondary school</i>
78	PM1	嗯 <i>Yes</i>
79	MF	初一就是说，因为他是在这边上了五年的孩子，学习能力没问题，OK? <i>the first year of lower secondary school I mean, because he is one of those who attended five years, he has no learning problems, okay?</i>
80	PM1	哎 <i>Yes</i>
81	MF	也没有学习障碍 <i>he has no learning problems</i>
82	PM1	哎 <i>Yes</i>
83	MF	okay? 他也(.)你们::就是说，老师也没有(.)从来也没有让你们签过什么个别化的教学方式(.)协议，okay? <i>okay? he didn't even (.) you:: I mean, the teachers didn't (.) they never made you sign a personalised learning plan (.) okay?</i>

84	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>
85	MF	<p>就是说，那种是适合那种语言不行或者干嘛，其他同学，就是说(.)呃::没办法完完全全理解老师的教学内容的话，老师就会给他都是一些简单一点的内容的嘛，哦？</p> <p><i>I mean, he is not one of those who does not understand or has language problems, other classmates, I mean (.) eh:: if one is not able to completely understand the teachers' explanations, they try to prepare him some simplified materials, right?</i></p>
86	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>
87	MF	<p>但是他也没有这个，因为以他的水平，老师说，他，只要自己努力的话，可以跟得上其他同学的嘛，哦？</p> <p><i>but he is not one of those, because according to his level, the teacher says that, if he worked hard, he could follow up with the other classmates, right?</i></p>
88	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>
89	MF	<p>所以主要这个问题是怎么样的呢？以后上初中的话，老师就是说，呃让他跟普通孩子一样做(.)跟其他同学做，完完全全做一样的题目啊，考试的试卷啊，什么都是一样的</p> <p><i>so what is the main problem? when he will go to lower secondary school, the teacher I mean, eh will have to make him do the same things as the other children (.) do the same things as his classmates, for example the same exercises, the same tests, all the same things</i></p>
90	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>
91	MF	<p>但是以他这个水平去上初中的话，以后会上的很累</p> <p><i>unfortunately, attending lower secondary school at his level, he will struggle</i></p>
92	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>

93	MF	<p>然后, 如果他, 老师希望你们家长能够重视一下这个孩子, 这个 (..) 他这个, 呃对待事情, 就是说, 呃的责任心, 因为就是这个孩子就是说, 呃你们还要 (..) 多去, 就是说, 呃让他知道学习的重要性, 如果这样子下去的话, 有可能, 就是说, 很容易 (..) 就是说, 呃怎么说呢? 做一些就是说, 会被其他的不好的-</p> <p><i>and then, if he, the teachers ask you to give more attention to this child, this (..) he, eh his way of doing, I mean, eh the responsibility, because this child I mean, eh you should (..) do more, I mean eh make him understand the importance of studying, if he continues in this way, maybe, I mean, easily (..) I mean, eh how can I say? He will do some things, there will be some things not nice-</i></p>
94	PM1	<p>对对对, 会影响</p> <p><i>right right right, distracted</i></p>
95	MF	<p>呃不好的事情影响到</p> <p><i>eh involved in things that are not good</i></p>
96	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>
97	MF	<p>就会很容易被影响到</p> <p><i>he will be easily involved</i></p>
98	PM1	<p>嗯</p> <p><i>Yes</i></p>
99	MF	<p>所以老师说希望你们::就是说重视一下这件事情</p> <p><i>that's why teachers ask you to pay more attention</i></p>
100	PM1	<p>就是看住一点的意思呐</p> <p><i>I mean to keep an eye on him</i></p>
101	MF	<p>对, 对对对 OKAY?</p> <p><i>right, right right right OKAY?</i></p>

#### 4. Mediation of teachers' support

When teachers provide positive assessments of children and positively support parents' commitment with their children, mediation seems to be much easier. In primary schools, however, this happens only once, with one teacher appreciating the child's behaviour, as shown in extract 5.

Extract 5 (Twi 1)

In turn 41, the teacher praises the child's behaviour and her involvement in the class, despite her insufficient knowledge of the Italian language. The mediator's rendition for the mother reproduces the teacher's narrative about the child, thus providing an effective rendition of the teacher's praise.

41	TF	<p><u>bene</u> (.) allora parliamo di <u>D.</u> (.) eh mh allora heh cosa dire, (.) intanto parliamo del suo comportamento allora D. (.) è una bambina molto matura (0.6) eh molto educata (.) molto rispettosa sia nei confronti degli degli <u>adulti</u>, che anche nei confronti dei compagni (.) eh mh diciamo che si è anche molto inserita bene nel <u>gruppo</u> (.) e nonostante qualche difficoltà a comunicare nella lingua italiana (.) però insomma (.) durante l'intervallo durante la ricreazione gioca insomma ha buoni rapporti con tutti</p> <p><i>well</i> (.) <i>so let's talk about D.</i> (.) <i>eh mh then heh what to say,</i> (.) <i>first let's talk about her behaviour then D.</i> (.) <i>is a very mature child (0.6) and very polite</i> (.) <i>very respectful both towards adults, and also towards her classmates</i> (.) <i>and mh let's say that she is also very well integrated in the group</i> (.) <i>and in spite of some difficulties in communicating in the Italian language</i> (.) <i>but well</i> (.) <i>during the break during the playtime she plays well she has good relationships with everybody</i></p>
42	MF	<p>mh 3nti w) se [y3n hy3 ase3] from n3 behaviour</p> <p><i>mh so she says [let's start] with her behaviour</i></p>
43	(?)	[[ ? ? ? ]]
44	MF	<p>heh D. y3 obia se b3 (.) n'ani da h) kakraa (.) wa gyini (.) n'ani afi (.) 3na w) (.) )di obuo ma teachers no w) d3 obuo ma classmates no (.) even though kasa no w)n sheda (.) 3cee n3 nyinaa by w) mo ma break a w)te se ne w) w) n3 w) mo 3ntem y3 fine w) ne ne class mates 3ne w) biala nt3m y3 kama (.) 3nti w) y3 [obia:] =</p> <p><i>heh D. is a person with a</i> (.) <i>good head on her shoulders</i> (.) <i>and mature</i> (.) <i>she is smart</i> (.) <i>and then</i> (.) <i>she has respect for the teachers and she has respect for her classmates</i> (.) <i>even if she hasn't learned the whole language yet</i> (.) <i>when they have a break she gets along well with everybody she gets along well with her classmates and everybody</i> (.) <i>so she is a [person:] =</i></p>
45	PF	[e:h]
46	MF	<p>=w) de bua (.) mma nk)raa ne mpanyinfuo (.) 3nti 3 y3 ade papa</p> <p><i>=who has respect for both the little ones</i> (.) <i>and the adults</i></p>
		(1.4)

47	PF	Okay
		(0.8)
48	TF	okay (.) ( <u>bene</u> ) <i>okay (.) (<u>well</u>)</i>
49	PF	Okay

Teachers' support of parents is systematic in the two mediated interactions in nursery schools. Here, teachers' assessments are always positive, although teachers also suggest the existence of some problems of language and behaviour. Mediators are much more at ease with renditions since they do not need to mitigate or expand teachers' contributions. There are not relevant problems in teacher-parent relations and parents can be more active.

#### Extract 6 (English with Ghanaian mother)

Before the following sequence there was a rendition about the child's way of eating which promoted the teachers' laughter. In this sequence, the teachers continue to describe the child's behaviours. In turns 219-226, one teacher is very positive about the child and the other teacher leaves her the floor. The task of the mediator is thus made easier: mediation is fluid and without problems as included in a relaxed conversation (turns 227-236).

219	TF2	°okay°
220	TF1	sa[i] <i>you kno[w]</i>
221	TF2	[e] <i>[and]</i>
222	TF1	qui e-eh (.) °scu[s a v a i]° <i>here e-eh (.) °sor[ry continue]°</i>
223	TF2	[(2syll) vai] vai <i>[(2syll) continue] continue</i>
		(0.6)
224	TF1	è molto bravo perché lui aiuta anche M. (.) eh (.) è un amico lei lo conosce è un amico che parla solo inglese <i>he is very good because he also helps M. (.) eh (.) he is a friend you know him he is a friend who only speaks English</i>
225	MF	mh mh

226	TF1	e lui lo aiuta spesso a tradurre o a capire le cose vediamo che gli va vicino e sottovoce gli dice in inglese quello che deve fa[re]  <i>and he often helps him: to translate or understand things we see him go close to him and whisper to him in English what he has to [do]</i>
227	MF	[m]h (.) he say that (.) he's helping also M. (.) because M. just speak English
228	PF	mh mh
229	MF	so your child goes to him
230	PF	mh [mh]
231	MF	[sp]eak to him
232	PF	yes
233	MF	in Ita- i- in English to understand to translate him (.) the language to tell him what to do
234	PF	°yeah° (.) there are (3syll) (.) told the mother that (0.7) his son is (.) trying to make my son speak (.) English
235	TF1	HH
236	MF	AHhh

## 5. Lack of children's involvement in mediated meetings with parents

In a third of our cases (6 out of 18), children participated in mediated interactions with their parents. In four cases the children who participated in the interaction were Chinese, in one case the child was Moroccan and in one case he was Ghanaian.

When the children participated in mediated interactions, the teachers mainly addressed the parents talking of the children indirectly as “unratified participants” (Goffman 1981). Children were mainly considered for learning problems rather than as active participants in the interaction. Thus, these meetings were largely similar to those in which children did not participate. Only sometimes children were addressed by teachers or through mediators' initiatives. However, when children were addressed by mediators, who translated teachers' questions or recommendations, they were frequently silent or only provided minimal feedback (such as “yes” or “no”, or “I understand”). Extracts 9-10 show this situation.

### Extract 7 (Chinese 4)

In the phase immediately before extract 7, the teacher invites the parents to become aware that the child needs a lot of help. The teacher claims that she has very rarely met the father during the school year, she invites the parents to understand what they really want, stressing the big effort they need to

make in order to help, then she suggests that the parents are not working hard to support the child, concluding that probably there is nothing to do. The mediator starts to report the child's grades in turn 72, adding some elaboration of the teacher's comments. The child provides some minimal responses to the mediator's report about the grades (turn 77, 89, 92 and 98) and to the mediator's renditions of the teacher's comments (turns 101 and 103).

72	MF	okay okay, 现在她的分数呢, 就是说, 意大利语六分, 历史六分  <i>her grades now, I mean, Italian six, history six</i>
73	MF	cioè questi sono i voti basato sul bes?  <i>these are the grades based on the SEN programme? ((special educational needs))</i>
74	TF1	basato sul bes esatto sul programma che lei sta facendo devono sapere che lei sta facendo un programma di seconda elementare eh  <i>based on the SEN programme exactly on the programme she is doing they must know that she is doing a second grade programme eh</i>
75	MF	她现在所学的所有的, 就是说, 教科书内容是关于小学二年级的哦  <i>all the subjects she is studying at the moment, that is, the textbooks of the subjects are those of the second grade</i>
76	PM1	[嗯  <i>[yes</i>
77	CHIF	[嗯  <i>[yes</i>
78	MF	okay? 她毕竟来意大利不久嘛, 对吧?  <i>you have come to Italy recently, haven't you?</i>
79	PM1	嗯  <i>Yes</i>
80	MF	所以就是, 老师是这样子说的, 今年开学到现在稍微进步一点了  <i>then, the teacher said this, for this year so far she has improved slightly</i>
81	PM1	嗯  <i>Yes</i>
82	MF	okay? 她在学校也很积极

		<i>she works hard at school too</i>
83	PM1	嗯 <i>Yes</i>
84	MF	现在这些分数是按照她那个 (.) 呃怎么说呢, 呃 (.) 简单的那种教学方式给她学的哦, okay? <i>these grades were based on her (.) eh how do you say, eh (.) with that mode of simplified learning, okay?</i>
85	PM1	嗯 <i>Yes</i>
86	MF	意大利语六分, 所以这个分数是按照那个简单的方式给她打分的, 不是跟同班同学同等的水平的哦 <i>Italian six, so this grade is based on that simplified way of assessing her, she is not at the same level as her classmates</i>
87	PM1	嗯嗯 <i>yes yes</i>
88	MF	okay? 意大利语六分, 历史六分, 地理六分, 数学八分, 数学就是算数方面都可以嘛到时候如果万一碰到应用题啊, 选择题啊, 这是你意大利语就是你看的进去, 没办法做的出来了嘛, 哦? <i>Italian six, history six, geography six, maths eight, well for maths it's ok, and when there are problems, or multiple choice questions, even if you can read them, but you can't do them, can you? ((Look at the child for confirmation))</i>
89	CHIF	嗯 <i>Yes</i>
90	MF	okay? 然后, 科学六分, 然后技术就是手工课就八分 <i>then, science six, then technical education that is a matter of manual skills she got eight</i>
91	PM1	[嗯 <i>[yes</i>

92	CHIF	[嗯  <i>[yes</i>
93	MF	然后英语六分， 绘画课八分， 体育课九分， 呃音乐课九分， 态度 (.) 呃满分  <i>then English six, art eight, physical education nine, eh music nine, behaviour (.) eh the highest grade</i>
94	PM1	嗯  <i>Yes</i>
95	MF	态度和表现， okay? 还有除了(.)她没有上宗教信仰课嘛?  <i>her behaviour, okay? and then she doesn't (.) she doesn't attend religion right?</i>
96	PM1	嗯  <i>Yes</i>
97	MF	去外面上其他， 关于意大利语课九分， okay ?  <i>she goes out for an alternative lesson, it's Italian nine, okay?</i>
98	CHIF	嗯  <i>Yes</i>
99	MF	她的 (.) 呃老师是怎么说的呢， 就是说(.)呃她 (.) 老师不是 (.) 她的书本没有跟同班同学同一种书本的嘛， 哦?  <i>her (.) eh teacher said, I mean, (.) eh her (.) teacher told her (.) her books are not as those of the other classmates, aren't they?</i>
100	PM1	[嗯  <i>[yes</i>
101	CHIF	[嗯  <i>[yes</i>
102	MF	老师特特地的， 就是说给她买了一本比较简单  <i>the teacher in particular, I mean you bought her a simpler book</i>
103	CHIF	嗯

		Yes
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The mediator's rendition in turn 197 follows a series of collaborative feedback to the teacher (not shown). However, after the father critical comment in turn 198, the child starts crying. She probably cries as consequence of the accumulation of critical comments during the whole meeting. The mediator's initial interest in this emotional outburst (turn 200) is blocked by the father's comment (turn 201), and by the teacher's invitation to stop crying (turn 203). Then, the teacher and the father continue to talk about the child, never asking her the reason for crying. In turn 206, the mediator tries to interpret the child's cry for the teacher, but she is unable to involve the child since she engages in a conversation with the teacher and in the following rendition for the father. The focus of the conversation moves to the role of the father, while the child disappears from the conversation, but continuing to manifest herself through crying.

197	MF	<p>eh eh sì, 主要就是J.的爸爸, 就是他自己孩子的学习情况也是这样子了哦,就是说, 所以就是说, 老师说她自己能力是有的, 但是老师不确定她在这个叔叔阿姨家到底是(.)有没有人真正的对她学习方面的有担心过, 因为你们也不再她身边-</p> <p><i>eh eh sì, mainly J.'s father, and his son's learning situation is like this, so, in other words, the teacher said that he has his skills, but the teacher is not sure if at home with this uncle and aunt is (.) someone is really worried about her studies, because you are not by her side-</i></p>
198	PM	<p>那在家里天天催着她, 叫她看书怎么样的, 这些小孩子嘛, 现在(.)怎么说呢, 有时候贪玩一下啊, 在家里是每人都 (0.4) 都督促她学习嘛</p> <p><i>that's why at home they encourage her every day, encourage her to read, they are children, now (.) how can I say it? sometimes they get lost playing games (0.4) at home everybody encourages her to study</i></p>
199	CHIF	<p><i>((scoppia a piangere))</i></p> <p><i>((she bursts into tears))</i></p>
200	MF	<p>怎么啦? 怎么啦?</p> <p><i>what's happening? what's happening?</i></p>
201	PM	<p>没没关系的</p> <p><i>no nothing</i></p>
202	CHIF	<p><i>((continua a piangere))</i></p> <p><i>((she continues crying))</i></p>
203	TF	<p>L? L.? guarda che non è niente di grave</p>

		<i>L.? L.? look it's nothing serious</i>
204	PM	non- non è niente eh <i>it's no- it's nothing eh</i>
205	TF	non è niente L. lo stiamo dicendo per farti migliorare capito? Sei brava però non- non possiamo mettere voti grandi alti ancora è il primo quadrimestre capito tata? Devi stare- devi stare tranquilla e cercare- fai una cosa a casa vediti un po' di più qualche film qualche cartone animato <i>it's nothing L. we're just saying that to get you to improve, you know? you're good, but we can't but we can't give you high grades yet. it's the first term, okay, dear? don't- don't worry and try- do something at home see some more movies some cartoons</i>
206	MF	no secondo me è scoppiata a piangere perché papà sta dicendo che comunque lei viene sempre- cioè eh: a casa glielo dicono di andare a studiare impegnarsi di più <i>no I think she burst into tears because dad is saying that anyway she always come- I mean eh: at home they tell her to go and study harder</i>
207	TF	ma lei si sta impegnando <i>but she is studying hard</i>
208	MF	però secondo me lei ha necessità di qualcuno <i>but I think she needs someone</i>
209	TF	di qualcuno che s'interessi a lei <i>someone who takes care of her</i>
210	MF	sì no- i genitori non posso dire a lei d'impegnarsi di più davanti a un libro cioè <i>yes no- parents cannot tell her to put more effort into a book I mean</i>
211	TF	No no dovete essere voi <i>no no it has to be you</i>
212	MF	eh è questo il problema <i>eh this is the problem</i>
213	TF	ad avere interesse di lei <i>to be interested in her</i>
214	PM	(io ho capito) <i>(I understood)</i>
215	MF	Okay

216	TF	eh perché voi eh- io eh io vi ho dovuto chiamare perché- ho dovuto insistere a volere la vostra presenza voi avete rag-  <i>eh because you eh- I eh- I had to call you because- I had to insist on wanting you here you have-</i>
217	MF	老师她今天特别要求你过来是因为你们家长能尽量多关心一下女儿  <i>the teacher specifically asked you to come today so that you parents can take care of your daughter as much as possible</i>
218	TF	eh vi dovete un pochino sforzare capisco la vita è difficile per tutti io lo capisco mi creda anch'io non sono di qua e vengo da fuori quindi so che è difficile cercate il possibile  <i>you have to make a little effort I understand that life is difficult for everyone believe me I'm not from here either, and I'm from another city so I know it's difficult try your best to</i>
219	MF	mh mh
220	TF	perché la bimba è brava però i bimbi purtroppo hanno questa cosa di sentire le mancanze e loro per quanto- per quanto si possono sforzare io la capisco a me dispiace del signore però non volevo toccare dei tasti solo che io- capisco che lei ha bisogno di altro che non è solo la scuola perché per la scuola lei sta facendo il massimo  <i>because the child is good but unfortunately children have this thing of suffering from being alone and they as much as they can- as much as they can make an effort I understand him but I didn't want to talk it's only that I- understand that she needs something else which is not only studying because she is doing her best at school</i>
221	MF	mh mh 她说她也能理解我们做为外国人在这个国家也不容易，就是说，但是作为她的学生呢，她尽量在(.)她能做的已经都很积极的去做了，但是,毕竟就是说，刚在意大利语言不懂-  <i>mh mh she says that she understands very well that it is not easy for us foreigners to live in this country, in other words, being one of her students, she has tried to (.) for what she can do she has always done her best, however, at the end of the day, it is that she still doesn't understand Italian-</i>

#### Extract 8 (Arabic 1)

In turns 151-164, three teachers alternate and sometimes overlap in assessing the child's behaviour despite the mediator's attempts to translate for the child's father (turn 159, 163). These attempts are interrupted by the teachers' insistence on talking. The mediator directly addresses the child (turn 165), but the child does not respond. A possible reason is that the teachers take immediately the floor (turn 166).

151	TF1	no no con gli a[ltri con i compagni è molto corretto
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		<i>no no with the o[thers with his classmates he is very correct</i>
152	MF	[no no
153	TF1	ho detto c'è proprio solo questa fase in cui secondo me sta <i>I said there is just this phase in which I think he is</i>
154	TF2	oppure ogni [tanto vuole far ridere gli altri <i>or sometimes he wants to make others laugh</i>
155	TF1	[cercando di cap- sì ogni tanto [si pone un po': <i>[trying to und- yes every now and then [he behaves a bit:</i>
156	MF	[mh
157	TF2	vuole fare lo spiritoso <i>he wants to be funny</i>
158	TF1	vuol fare lo [spiritoso però sempre corret[tissimo <i>he wants to be [funny but he is always very [correct</i>
159	MF	[yaeni keyebghi ydahek edreri walla (??) [vuol dire che voleva fare ridere i bambini o no (??) <i>[does this mean that he wanted to make the children laugh or not (??)</i>
160	TF3	[perché ha un carattere allegro <i>[because he has a cheerful character</i>
161	TF2	sì per for[tuna <i>yes luc[kily</i>
162	TF3	[lui ha un carattere allegro <i>[he has a cheerful character</i>
163	MF	wece fhemti yaani- [hata <i>did you understand she means</i>
164	TF1	e poi siamo in un momento in cui proprio deve capire (.) dove si deve fermare <i>and then we are in a moment when he really has to understand (.) when he has to stop</i>
165	MF	huma fehminek fhemtini? rak jey men wehed elmadrassa w men wehed elbiaa  eli hia masduda eli hia el madrassa makontice tahdar kassek todkol tgul essalemu alikom w tabka tetsanet w metedwi mewelu jiti lkiti hne dekeci adi mahlul meci mocekil yaani andek elhorreya edir li bghayti eh, tfehemna meli fhemti eli keyna edik elhorreya tawalliti katokroge aleha ci ciuwaya kassek tarjiaa (2) bghayti tokrog kassek teelem bghayti thez

		<p>ci haja hatta men and el compagno dyelek yaani eli hdek bghiti ci hwija tgul lih posso eh aadi tfehemna huma cefuk rak maciallahalik eh? wghadi ykamlu maak ay haja htejiteha ra ghadi yawdu- khassek ghir tgul mafhemtece ghadi yetseedu maak (2) eh</p> <p><i>they too have understood, they understand do you understand me? you come from a school and from a closed environment you weren't supposed to speak you had to come in say hello and stay to listen and say nothing, you arrived and you found here everything normal open you have the freedom to do what you want eh, do you understand? when you understood that there is that freedom you started to go out a little bit from the right way you have to come back (2) you want to go out you have to tell it you want to take something also from your classmate the one next to you you want something, you should ask eh it's normal do we understand each other? they have seen you (it doesn't translate) eh? and they have to continue with you and for anything you need I repeat- you only have to say I didn't understand and they have to help you (2) eh</i></p>
166	TF1	<p>poi detto questo diciamo anche che è educatissimo perché secondo me è l'uni[co che non saluti quando entra</p> <p><i>then having said that, let's also say that he's very polite because in my opinion he's the on[ly one who doesn't say hello when he comes in</i></p>

## 6. Lack of support of children's initiatives

Against this general background, it is particularly interesting to observe the few children's initiatives, which show their agency, i.e. their autonomous production of knowledge and attempt to change the orientation of the conversation. There are only three cases of children's initiatives in our data.

### Extract 9 (Arabic 1)

In extract 9, the silent Moroccan child suddenly takes the floor. Two teachers and the mediator are talking about the mediator's education and training (turns 239-243), when the child asks for information about a test (turn 244). The teachers' monologue makes it difficult to understand the meaning of the child's initiative, despite the mediator's efforts (turns 245, 247, 249). In turn 250, T7 interrupts the dyadic sequence of clarification, inviting the mediator to produce a rendition. In the following turns, the teachers produce a monologue, making the mediator's tentative mediation difficult, as the rendition in turn 258 and the confused dyadic sequence with the child (turns 263, 267-271) show, while T7 is already showing the test to the child (turn 272).

239	MF	<p>però sono partita da casa mia che parlavo già francese e inglese</p> <p><i>however I left my house that I already spoke French and English</i></p>
240	TF5	<p>eh vedi (che)</p> <p><i>eh you see (that)</i></p>

241	MF	perciò [ci ho messo così [poco <i>so [it took me so [little</i>
242	ChiM	[eee
243	TF7	[complimenti <i>[congratulations</i>
244	ChiM	[lemtihanet eli derna <i>[ the tests that we had done</i>
245	MF	cemen emtihanet? <i>which tests?</i>
246	ChiM	heduk lemtihanet konna derna hedek enhar heya arfehom losteda <i>those tests we had done that day the teacher knows them</i>
247	MF	mh
248	ChiM	mtee el matematica <i>maths</i>
249	MF	[em melhom? <i>em what about them?</i>
250	TF7	[cos'ha detto? <i>what did he say?</i>
251	ChiM	[ghadi taatehom lina? <i>should she give it back to us?</i>
252	MF	per: i: e le le verifiche che avete fatt[o <i>for t: e. them the tests you have don[e</i>
253	TF6	[oh beh prima era preoccupato per (le) verifiche <i>[oh well before he was worried about (the) tests</i>
254	TF7	[oggi? oggi non l'abbiamo corretta ancora <i>[today? today we haven't corrected it yet</i>
255	MF	no non di oggi le altre ha detto quelle che avevamo fatto di [matematica ma le dovete dare? <i>no not today the other he said those we had done for [maths bu do you have to return them?</i>
256	TF6	[((?)) era preoccupatissimo

		[ (??) <i>he was very worried</i>
257	TF7	no eh
258	MF	voleva [sapere <i>he wanted [to know</i>
259	TF7	[gliela faccio vedere <i>[I'll show him</i>
260	MF	voleva sapere un po' com'è andata <i>he wanted to know a bit how it went</i>
261	TF6	ma l'hai vista questa [Cm! <i>but you've seen [this</i>
262	TF7	[lui l'ha vista l'ha anche corretta lui da solo <i>[he saw it and he corrected it himself</i>
263	MF	maci cioftiha enta? <i>no have you seen them?</i>
264	TF7	non puoi fare questo <i>you can't do this</i>
265	MF	aah?
266	ChiM	eh <i>yes</i>
267	MF	w makhassekce tsahah bwahdek <i>and you didn't have to correct yourself</i>
268	ChiM	eh <i>yes</i>
269	MF	liana he[ya lighadi tsahah <i>because her who had to correct</i>
270	ChiM	eh <i>yes</i>
271	MF	wa alken raki sahahti ci haja bwahdek enta lkayti ci haja meci edika he <i>but you corrected something yourself you found something that is not that and</i>

272	TF6	la maestra l'aveva già corretta <i>the teacher had already corrected it</i>
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Extract 10 (Chinese 1)

During this meeting, a very active child contradicts the teacher's and her father's analysis of her performances. The mediator first provides a minimal feedback to the teacher's monologue about the child's performance (turns 173-188), then she provides a mitigated summarised rendition of it (turn 189). At the end of this turn of rendition, she addresses the child (turn 190) receiving the usual minimal feedback (turn 191). However, after another part of the rendition, the child contradicts the position of the adults claiming that she is not interested in better grades (turn 194). This claim is not taken seriously by her father who engages in a dyadic sequence with her (turns 195-202), concluded with a laugh (turn 203). The mediator renders this discussion for the teacher (turns 205-211), but the teacher ignores it focusing on her own method (turns 212-220). The mediator provides a mitigated summarised rendition of this second monologue (turns 222, 224), receiving minimal feedback from the child (turns 223, 225) who seems to give up to her claim, at least for the moment. In fact, the child will continue to claim her autonomy for the rest of the meeting.

173	TF	allora io eh è bene che sappia che io ho capito che la- la bimba è preparata <i>then I eh you should know that I understand that the- the child is prepared</i>
174	MF	mh mh
175	TF	però la modalità con cui sono state fatte qu- le verifiche non le hanno dato piena soddisfazione <i>but the way in which the tests were done did not give her full satisfaction</i>
176	MF	Certo <i>of course</i>
177	TF	quindi il voto rappresenta quello <i>so that's what the grade represents</i>
178	MF	mh mh
179	TF	è sulla verifica non sulla preparazione lo dico sempre eh quello <i>it's about the test not the preparation I always say that</i>
180	MF	certo okay <i>of course okay</i>
181	TF	quindi ho notato che forse con lei è troppo presto quindi è meglio eh: cam- utilizzare insieme alla verifica dei bimbi della sua classe l'altro tipo la- la- che non è semplice <i>so I've noticed that maybe it's too early with her so it's better eh: to chan- to use together with the test of the children in her class the other type the- the- which is not easy</i>
182	MF	Certo <i>of course</i>
183	TF	non è semplificata <i>it's not simplified</i>
184	MF	okay mh mh

185	TF	è solo cambiarla la modalità in modo che lei può scrivere poco <i>it's just to change the type of test so that she can write less</i>
186	MF	mh mh
187	TF	ma deve capire molto in base a quello che chiedo <i>but she has to understand a lot based on what I ask</i>
188	MF	ok va bene <i>ok it's fine</i>
189	MF	然后就是说这:以这种方式, 因为老师知道她在家很用功的去复习老师布置的作业啊, 功课啊, 考试的时候她提前做好准备, 但是主要这些分数老师是按照她的试卷打分的嘛, 哦, 试卷毕竟, 就是说(.)呃(.)这意大利语方面她还是有点(.)对她来说还是有很多错误的嘛, 没办法-  <i>so then: in this way, the teachers understood that she works hard at home for the assigned homework, when there is a test she prepares in advance, but all the marks they gave her are based on the marks of the tests, that is (.) eh (.) for the problem of Italian she is still a bit (.) she still makes a lot of mistakes, unfortunately-</i>
190	PM	是啊, 难度, 难度还是很大的-  <i>it is true, there are still many difficulties-</i>
191	MF	对, 就是没办法完全的解释出来她脑子里面=就是学习到的那些信息, 就是没办法写上去, 对吗?  <i>yes, precisely because she is still not able to express the information she has in her head, I mean, the theories she has learned she is not able to write them down, right? ((looks at the girl for confirmation)</i>
192	CHIF	嗯  <i>Yes</i>
193	MF	嗯, okay= 所以就是说这样子, 可能这个分数老师觉得 就是 不是 她实际 知道的那些信息, 不符合, okay 所以想到这种方式来, 就是让她尽量可以回答的时候写的时候不用那么长 那么长, 只要简单的 句话啊, 或者选择题啊, 这样子让老师更方便的知道她的理解水平, 就是程度到了哪个阶段  <i>yes, okay and so in this way, according to the teacher the grades do not really reflect really what she knows, they don't match, okay so she thought about this type of test, during the tests she is facilitated to write her answers not so long long, a simple sentence would be enough, or with multiple choice, in this way the teachers can get to know better her level of understanding, I mean the level she has reached</i>
194	CHIF	呃我想说的是 其实, 打什么分我不介意, 其实, 就是能及格就好了因为  我知道 我-

		<i>eh I would like to say that I don't care about grades, actually, as long as I get the pass mark because I know that I-</i>
195	PM	<u>Hhhh</u>
196	CHIF	自己呢能写完就不错了，而且，还有人比我更差，所以我呢并不是很在乎就是分数啊这些东西，我能及格就好-  <i>I eh if I manage to finish writing it's already a lot, and then, there are people worse than me, and so eh I don't give so much importance to things like grades, it's fine if I get the pass mark-</i>
197	PM	你这种想法不对，你这种想法不对-  <i>this way of thinking is not good, this way of thinking is not good-</i>
198	CHIF	但我知道，我我-  <i>I know, but I I-</i>
199	PM	你要更加努我跟你讲-  <i>I'm telling you that you should try harder-</i>
200	CHIF	我知道  <i>I know</i>
201	MF	嗯嗯，呃 okay  <i>yes yes eh okay</i>
202	CHIF	我不想给自己太大的压力，你知道吗?  <i>I don't want to put too much pressure on myself, you know?</i>
203	PM	<u>Hhh</u>
204	MF	<u>Hhh</u>
205	MF	no perché lei ha detto- detto guarda per i voti alti o bassi lei non è che ci tiene- cioè non dà molta importanza  <i>no because she said - she said, look, high or low grades, she doesn't really care – I mean she doesn't give much importance</i>
206	TF	certo certo certo certo  <i>of course of course of course of course</i>
207	MF	perché ha detto sa di averlo impegnato e quindi  <i>because she said she know she worked hard so</i>
208	TF	certo certo ma lo so pure io infatti  <i>of course of course but I know that too</i>

209	MF	<p>papà ha detto ma no secondo lui non è- non è giusto pensare così dovresti impegnare di più ha detto lei invece gli ha risposto ha detto non voglio darmi troppo peso ha detto</p> <p><i>dad said, but no, he doesn't think it's right to think like that you should work harder instead she answered him she said I don't want to put too much pressure on myself she said</i></p>
210	TF	<p>certo</p> <p><i>of course</i></p>
211	MF	<p>gli ha risposto così</p> <p><i>that's how she answered</i></p>
212	TF	<p>ma è quello che- eh ma io lo so ma io l'ho capita che lei si è impegnata però purtroppo nelle verifiche scritte eh- la- la cosa rimane è la modalità che deve essere diversa</p> <p><i>but that's what- eh but I know but I understood that she worked hard but unfortunately in the written tests eh- the- the concept is the same is the type of test that must be different</i></p>
213	MF	<p>mh mh</p>
214	TF	<p>nel suo caso non perché lei non s'è impegnata</p> <p><i>in her case it is not because she did not work hard</i></p>
215	MF	<p>mh mh</p>
216	TF	<p>è la modalità di richiesta che deve essere diversa</p> <p><i>it's the type of test that must be different</i></p>
217	MF	<p>mh mh</p>
218	TF	<p>proprio per dare eh: mh:: per dare adito a quello che lei sa eh</p> <p><i>just to give eh: mh:: to give credit to what she knows eh</i></p>
219	MF	<p>mh mh</p>
220	TF	<p>perché lo so che lei lo sa ma me- me lo deve dimostrare allora devo- devo trovare il canale giusto per dimostrarlo</p> <p><i>because I know she knows but she has to show it to me so I have to find the right channel to let her show it</i></p>
221	MF	<p>Okay</p>
222	MF	<p>这是老师的，就是她老师用她的就是想到这种方式来更好的去(.)就是说(.)呃来给你打分嘛</p> <p><i>this is the teacher's, I mean the teacher has used her type of test I mean using this type of test (.) I mean (.) eh to assess you and give you marks</i></p>

223	CHIF	啊我知道 <i>yes I know it</i>
224	MF	知道你那个学习的内容，就是说，不是说你比别人差，这个你要注意，老师说希望能理解她，不是说你意大利语不行干嘛，或者是用这些简单的，这些不简单，老师说内容水平就是说难度是一样的，okay只是换一种方式而已 <i>to know what you have to study, I mean, it does not mean that you are less good than the others, be careful, the teacher would like you to understand her choice well, it doesn't mean that your Italian is not good, or that you use simple texts, they are not simple, she said that the topics and the level of difficulty are the same, okay it is just applied differently</i>
225	CHIF	啊我知道 <i>yes I know it</i>
226	MF	Okay
227	TF	bene okay <i>well okay</i>

## 7. Conclusions

During interviews, children emphasized the importance of **support from translators or mediators** who help with communication during the first days at school, demonstrating the value of employing this type of support which benefits children, parents, and teachers. The data from the survey shows that this support is not sufficiently diffuse in the European countries. It is clear that language mediation is important for CMB and their parents who have problems of language proficiency. Language mediation for parents cannot be done “ad hoc”, by some more competent migrant speakers, such as a relative or the child. Rather a professional interpreting/mediation should be provided. The recorded data in Italy show some characteristics and constraints of professional mediation, thus providing relevant information about the need for interpreting/mediation in schools.

### 7.1 Mediation with parents

The general orientation of mediators seems to be that of supporting the interaction between migrant parents and teachers by searching solutions, rather than insisting on problems only. The mediators' renditions mitigate negative teachers' comments and include suggestions for parents about what they can do to support their children. These renditions also highlight mediators' agency both in complex dyadic sequences, involving teachers and migrant parents, and as renditions taking the form of summaries or developments (formulations). The mediator's exercise of agency is based on formulations (renditions), autonomous requests for clarification (non-renditions), and minimal feedback showing active listening and acknowledgment of interlocutors' points of view. These actions show mediators' attempts to include the migrant parents' voices by summarising the teachers'

critical assessments and to provide support and suggestions to parents. This shows the mediators' efforts - and also difficulties - in reducing the impact of teachers' monologues to give migrant parents a chance to contribute to, showing their point of view even when it is not required, and help their children improve their school performances, by suggesting them how to do so. In other words, it shows mediators' attempt to empower the migrant parents, while avoiding judgemental discourse, and the risk of direct rejection of teachers' monologues.

In few cases, above all in nursery schools, teachers' actions are much more supportive and empowering. However, in primary schools, where role performances and their evaluation are considered more important, mediation requires an exceptional effort, based on three reasons. First, teachers do not ask for information to parents, thus not involving them sufficiently in the interaction. Second, teachers only focus on negative evaluations, not easily transferable or answerable by parents. Third, teachers do not suggest solutions for migrants' problems, only describing problems which are beyond migrants' possible intervention. Thus, migrant parents may feel accused and disoriented, and are left with no actual possibility to cope and collaborate in the institutional discourse. Against this background, mediation can enhance the suggestion of possible solutions to these problems, by formulating the gist of teachers' monologues through renditions and negotiating these monologues through non-renditions. Thus, mediated interactions take the form of intercultural mediation by narrowing the gap between migrants' problems and the educational context, i.e. by empowering migrants' exercise of agency in the constitution of education.

### ***7.2 Mediation with children***

In these mediated interactions, children are unrati ed and unaddressed. The focus of teachers' monologues is always on parents' commitment in children's education and children are almost all the time silent or give minimal feedback in the infrequent cases in which they are involved. When children take initiatives, showing autonomous production of knowledge (agency), these initiatives are not supported and their contribution gets back to minimal feedback. Mediators' attempts to involve the children are weak, since they are harnessed in the teacher-parent - or parent-child - interaction and are compelled to follow it rather than supporting children's autonomous initiatives. Thus, children's agency is not constructed in this interaction, despite mediation. An important question for children's involvement in mediated meetings with their parents is the way in which mediators can encourage and support their agency. However, this problem is linked to the problem of the way in which mediators themselves can be agents in these circumstances. It seems that they are much more frequently able to exercise their agency with parents than with children, which shows that the involvement of CMB cannot be easily based on mediation.

### ***7.3 The problem of mediation***

The general problems shown in the extracts is the mismatch among different ways of exercising rights and responsibilities of production of knowledge. On the one hand, the teacher and the mediator do not coordinate the production of knowledge, so that the mediators renditions are attempts of mitigating the teacher's monologues. On the other hand, while this form of mediation can empower

parents' participation, although with limited effects for their agency, it is not effective with CMB whose agency is suppressed. The few cases in which teachers and mediators coordinated, since teachers renounced to monologues, parents' agency was much more empowered. However, in these cases children did not participate in the interaction.

## Chapter 8. Communication on (hybrid) integration

### 1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the intercultural dimension of communication in schools. In general terms, intercultural communication relates to the possibility of filling the gap between CMB and the education system. In this sense, all activities facilitating CMB's exercise of agency are "intercultural". However, this chapter analyses the meaning of intercultural communication as production of cultural diversity. In particular, intercultural communication is based on the production of different personal cultural trajectories which show hybrid integration. Thus, intercultural communication is expressed as interlacement of different personal cultural trajectories, which can construct difference of personal cultural trajectories as either enrichment or problem.

### 2. Teachers' training in multicultural issues

Teachers are expected to be able to work with CMB and their families. Teachers should have in-depth first-hand knowledge of the needs of CMB. It is therefore crucial to focus teachers' needs to address gaps in competences that could allow a better support the hybrid integration of CMB in their classes. In particular, teachers' training can be considered important for enhancing effective intercultural communication in the classroom. Moreover, other professionals may need training to support teachers working with CMB, including interpreters/mediators and social workers. Table 1 concerns professionals' training in multicultural issues as it was shown by the survey. The data produces interesting differences between countries and professional groups. In general, 58.8% of teachers, 69.9% of social workers and 75.4% of interpreters/mediators received training in multicultural issues. This shows the different diffusion of professionals' preparation for intercultural communication, which is lower among teachers.

**Table 1. Professionals' training in multicultural issues\***

Country	Teachers		Social Workers		Mediators/ interpreters	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Belgium	12	41.4	-	-	-	-
Finland	27	45.8	30	81.1	4	23.5
Germany	60	43.5	100	72.7	17	85.0
Italy	50	59.5	62	74.7	27	77.1
Poland	35	100	5	23.8	7	70.0
Sweden	27	71.0	22	57.9	34	94.4
United Kingdom	36	100	11	100	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>69.9</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>75.4</b>

\* Respondents provided more than one answer

Table 1 also shows a gap between Poland, the UK and Sweden, where teachers' training is very frequent, and the other countries, where training is infrequent. In **England**, there are several initiatives of training teachers to support and work with CMB and 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). In **Poland**, all teachers have completed multicultural training, mostly as part of their formal education. Moreover, several NGOs and local authorities offer programmes aimed at educating teachers in methods for working with CMB and some universities offer postgraduate studies for teachers working with refugee children. In **Belgium**, the discrepancy between regions is relevant: in Flanders, 60% of teachers did attend such a training, whereas the percentage of teachers in Wallonia was only nine. In **Finland**, several institutions offer continuing or additional education for teachers who teach CMB. In **Germany**, the university regulations for the qualifications of teachers varies by state, as does the content of the particular courses. In **Italy**, considering the rather low sensitivity for multicultural issues in schools, the percentage of teachers participating in training shows that many teachers who participated in the research were already interested in the CHILD-UP objectives.

The gap is also relevant for social workers' training. In this case, training is infrequently provided in **Poland** and to less extent in **Sweden** (data from Belgium are missing). In **Finland**, training is infrequent for interpreters, while in the other countries the large majority of mediators/interpreters received training in multicultural issues (data from Belgium are missing).

### 3. Cultural awareness and cultural differences

It is considered important that teachers are able to use **cultural diversity as a resource** through which all children can feel welcome to contribute with their ideas. In particular, knowledge of the culture of origin should enable CMB to keep in touch with their families and to build relationships with people from their country of origin both outside and within school. **During the interviews**, many teachers claimed that for CMB the cultural background is extremely important, including contact with peers from the country of origin, especially at the beginning of their stay in new country. This was confirmed by CMB.

Boy1: We go to the Mosque and we just had the Eid celebrations which I love because it is like Christmas

I: it is important to you to take part?

Boy1: My family, we meet many friends and relatives.

Girl: We had Christmas, before Covid, and it is a bit later than the Christmas here because we have that different calendar so it is like having two Christmas. They are a bit different, but the message is the same I think. (UK\_F25\_CH\_BG)

CH1: You connect to the person directly that we come from the same country, we have the same background. So you get a connection with that person.

CH2: I think that is the case with everyone, even here in Sweden. Swedes too. If you see someone, maybe you connect. That's when you feel, 'Yes, we come from the same country' so. (SWE\_F2\_CH\_B)

CH: It's like important to me that we're like (..) that I maintain [culture X], that I can talk about it and like the traditions still exist in our family. (FI\_F6\_CH\_B)

However, the survey (Table 2) shows that teachers' perception of their own efficacy is rather low level in reducing ethnic stereotypes in the classroom (39.8%), raising awareness for cultural differences (42%) and adapting to children's cultural diversity (47.8%). Only the level of efficacy perceived in the **UK** is very high. **Italy** scores after UK for promotion of collaboration; however, Italian teachers experience difficulties with cultural awareness and above all stereotypes. In **Belgium** teachers' perception of efficacy is very low. **Finnish** teachers are rather positive about efficacy, with the exception of awareness of cultural differences, while **Swedish** teachers rarely perceive efficacy. **Polish** and **German** teachers are substantially aligned with the mean values.

**Table 2. Teachers' assessment of efficacy (a lot)**

	BEL	FIN	GER	ITA	POL	SWE	UK	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Adaptation to children's cultural diversity	6.9	54.2	50.4	47.5	50.0	20.5	88.9	47.8
2. Promoting collaboration between native children and CMB	20.7	54.2	66.2	72.5	50.0	34.2	88.9	60.4
3. Raising awareness for diversity	6.9	33.9	42.5	37.0	52.9	33.3	91.7	42.0
4. Reducing stereotypes	3.57	45.8	38.3	31.7	41.2	30.8	91.7	39.8

Narratives of cultural differences are important to explain the way in which professionals and parents give (or do not give) value to intercultural communication and hybrid integration. Table 3 shows the ten mainstream narratives, proposed to respondents through specific statements<sup>21</sup>. These ten narratives were proposed in a way to be aggregated in four "factors".

The first factor is **celebration of cultural difference**. This factor includes three narratives. The first narrative concerns **positive cultural variety** and the statement is "This country would be a better place, if members of different groups kept their own way of life alive". The second narrative concerns **support of cultural difference** and the statement is "It would be good to see, if all the groups in this country retain their cultures". The third narrative concerns **cultural variety as solution of problems** and the statement is "A society, which has a variety of groups, is more able to tackle new problems as they occur".

The second factor is **ethnocentrism**, which includes four narratives. The first narrative concerns **assimilation to we-identity**, represented by the statement "People who come to this country, should change their way of life to be more like us". The second narratives concerns **assimilation as privatization of cultural difference**, represented by the statement "If the members of different groups want to maintain their own culture, they should keep it to themselves, and not bother other people in this country". The third narratives concerns **negative representation of cultural difference** and the statement is "It is best for this country if all immigrants forget their cultural background as

<sup>21</sup> Some of these statements are also used in van Dick, Wagner, Adams & Petzel, 1998. See <https://zis.gesis.org/skala/van%20Dick-Wagner-Adams-Petzel-Einstellungen-zur-Akkulturation>

soon as possible”. The fourth narrative concerns **cultural difference as a problem** and the statement is “Having many different cultural groups in this country makes it difficult to solve problems”.

The third factor is **hybridity**, which includes two narratives. First, **preference for cultural mélange** represented by the statement “Mingling different cultures would be the best way of managing differences”. Second, **personal and cultural trajectories** represented by the statement “Cultural influences and personal expressions always mingle”.

The fourth factor is **cultural irrelevance**, which includes the narrative of **primacy of personal trajectories** with the statement “Culture is not important to explain people’s personal behaviour”.

It might have been expected that respondents choose to agree only with the narratives of one specific factor, disagreeing with the others. However, contradictions and ambivalences were frequent.

**Table 3. Comparison between the representations of integration by parents and different professionals.**

	Teachers %	Social workers %	Mediators %	Parents %
Positive cultural variety	59.5	<b>69.3</b>	<b>73.8</b>	52.6
Support of cultural difference	72.1	74.2	78.6	74.5
Cultural variety as solution of problems	78.1	<b>88.7</b>	<b>85.8</b>	75.8
Assimilation to we-identity	49.9	44.9	48.6	<b>69.0</b>
Assimilation as privatization of cultural difference	15.0	29.1	<b>44.0</b>	<b>53.8</b>
Negative representation of cultural difference	4.5	2.3	<b>14.4</b>	<b>15.9</b>
Cultural difference as a problem	33.8	30.8	29.4	<b>45.3</b>
Preference for cultural mélange	<b>81.0</b>	<b>84.8</b>	84.4	<b>72.5</b>
Personal and cultural trajectories	79.5	<b>80.9</b>	<b>68.6</b>	77.6
Primacy of personal trajectories	37.9	34.9	43.1	<b>56.2</b>

Teachers’ narratives are ambivalent. On the one hand, the very large majority of teachers celebrated cultural mélange and personal and cultural trajectories, showing a strong commitment to hybrid integration. On the other hand, however, the large majority of teachers also stressed the importance and support of cultural difference, as a solution for problems. The ethnocentric narrative of assimilation to we-identity was anyway chosen by 49.9% of teachers; however, teachers did not approve the narratives of assimilation as privatization of culture and negative cultural difference.

The ambivalence among social workers is similar to that of teachers, but celebration of cultural difference is more frequent and ethnocentrism is very infrequent (2.3%). On the other hand, assimilation as privatisation is more frequent than among teachers (29.1%). The ambivalence is increased by the fact that more than one third of both teachers and social workers declared that personal trajectories are not influenced by culture.

Interpreters and mediators more frequently celebrated cultural difference but also the primacy of personal trajectories. Ambivalence is also evident because interpreters/mediators showed a surprising preference for the narrative of assimilation and also consideration for the narrative of negative cultural difference. It is interesting to note that Italian mediators are an exception, since the choice of cultural differences and ethnocentrism is much lower than in the other countries, while the narrative of hybridity is almost the norm.

Finally, among parents, ethnocentrism, and personal trajectories negating cultural differences are much more frequent than among professionals, although ambivalences persist.

To sum up, contradictions and ambivalences characterise the narratives of all categories of respondent. However: (1) the narrative of hybridity is particularly frequent among teachers, social workers and interpreters/mediators; (2) the narrative of cultural difference is particularly frequent among social workers and interpreters/mediators; (3) the narrative of ethnocentrism is (surprisingly) relatively frequent among interpreters/mediators; (4) the narratives of ethnocentrism and negation of cultural diversity are particularly frequent among parents. This picture suggests that, despite the tolerance for ambivalences, there can be difficulties in communication between professionals and above all between professionals and parents, given the different narratives.

#### **4. Facilitating the production of narratives of personal cultural trajectories**

This section concerns the production of narratives of personal cultural trajectories and their interlacements during facilitated classroom activities, based on the facilitators' and teachers' enhancement and support of children's agency in narrating their personal trajectories. This production of narratives show hybrid integration in the classroom produced through both CMB's agency in narrating and the interlacements of different narratives in the classroom. The characteristics of facilitative actions in these extracts were described in Chapter 5.

Extracts 1-3, recorded in the same primary school class in Italy, shows the production of narratives about "acceptance". Two CMB (F1 and M3) frequently express their views and tell about their personal experiences. Sometimes they lead the conversation.

In extract 1, M3 tells of his trust in classmates' acceptance and his interest in having friends and meeting people (turn 1). Then, F1, starting from the story introduced by the facilitator, stresses her positive feeling of being in a group and the importance of acceptance. The facilitator formulates F1's contribution and asks for confirmation, thus upgrading F1's epistemic authority. However, in turn 10, F1 says that the facilitator did not understand her and the facilitator invites her to say it again. In turns 14 and 16, M4 asks for clarification about F1's contribution, then M2 provides an interpretation of it (turn 21), which is confirmed by F1. Finally, the facilitator confirms that she understood well but she formulated badly (turn 24). The two CMB show their agency in producing narratives and native children are committed to interpret F1's contributions.

Extract 1<sup>22</sup>

01	M3m	I am (a little hurt) (.) I am already sure that my classmates have already accepted me as I am for how I do things, and therefore I am (to be) - more to meet new people. I like having friends, classmates, but meeting new people is nice to discover new things too. I don't want to be - that is, to be happy you have to know it's not like you have to stay with your usual friends, with your classmates, you have to be with other people, even those people they know and who don't all get along
02	F1m	then I (.) am a little bit all three more to: Luca than Filippo, because in any case Aurora says she has the anxiety to study a lot but if you follow the lessons and do what you have to do, in the end it is not hard
03	FACf	mh
04	F1m	and (second) in any case I look more like Filippo, because it is important to feel good in a group, (.) because in any case and: it is nice to be accepted by others, because if you are accepted first, now you feel like you have improved (0.2) like before I said that sadness makes you grow (.) in fact some children (.) and: like before they were not accepted but just with sadness and people have managed to improve and therefore now they are accepted
05	FACf	but sorry I can think of something compared to what she says then she, if I understand correctly, you said that these children have managed to be accepted because they have improved (..) so the acceptance is from you who accept, but also from the person who (.) improves?
06	F1m	(?) [it's not
07	FACf	[no? (..) I got it wrong?
08	F1m	yes because [(?)
09	FACf	[I got it wrong yes or yes I got it right?
10	F1m	no it seems to me that you did not understand what I meant
11	FACf	then say it again
12	F1m	I mean that and: a person improves himself (.) also with the help of others but more alone (..) no because it seems to me that you said that the other person improves (.) therefore: ((gesticulates)) that is, I mean I (..) impr[ove
13	FACf	[help me because I don't understand (.) a little bit I don't understand because of the noise from outside
14	M4	(?)
15	FACf	go on then
16	M4	I don't understand a thing about what F1 said
17	FACf	yes

<sup>22</sup> The names in the Italian extracts are fiction names used in the narrative proposed by the facilitator

18	M4	and: earlier what she said earlier that about the sad child that if you are sad it helps you to grow
19	M2	can I say it? I (understood it)
20	FACf	go on
21	M2	then F1 in my op- that is, from what I understand she means that if one is sad and is perhaps excluded by others, she tries to improve her behavior to be accepted by everyone
22	?	ah:
23	F1m	yes
24	FACf	yes then it that was what I understood well
25	F1m	ah

In extract 2, F3 tells of her brother's experience in a lower secondary school and the importance of being in a group in which feeling good (turn 1). F2 adds her view of homework and relations with classmates. In turn 7, M3 intervenes about a previous suggestion stated by F1 on the importance of personal improvement. He says that not everything can be improved, providing an example (I was not accepted because I was brown but it's not like I can improve my colour). F1 replies that she was referring to personal character (turn 8) and the facilitator formulates this discussion with some irony about M3's statement (turn 11, you cannot whiten yourself to be accepted, maybe others can get tanned), enhancing children's laughs. In turn 13, she also formulates F1's contribution and F1 takes the floor again to stress that the choice of the group is important (turns 14 and 16), receiving the facilitator's confirmation. In turn 18, F3 takes the floor to comment on M3's contribution, saying that if one behaves badly should change and M3 confirms.

#### Extract 2

01	F3	a bit of all three I mean because in any case Aurora looks a bit like me because: I have a brother who goes to the eighth grade and he tells me that (.) they give him a lot of homework, but I don't think they are so much that maybe he doesn't even have a free minute I mean (.) and then I look like Luca and Filippo because in any case they want to feel good in a group e e: in middle school it is bad that is to stay three years in a group that you feel bad about it so it is important
(0.2)		
02	F2	well I agree most of all with Filippo and Aurora
03	FACf	Filippo and?
04	F2	and Aurora (.) a bit because well (.) m: for homework: and: with Filippo because I want to- I'd like to be happy with my classmates (even with the new ones)
05	M3m	I wanted to say something that F1 said to improve but [there are things
06	FACf	[I didn't understand sorry

07	M3m	one thing that - since you said that we have to improve to be accepted, (.) I meant one thing (.) there are some things you can improve but others not (.) for example I mean I am a person- me at first I was not accepted because I was brown but it's not like I can improve my color ((gesticulates))
08	F1m	M3, however, it is not that I mean that I mean the character (.) That is, they have to change- both me [and (the others) have to improve
09	FACf	[sorry F1 also the others have to hear and me too
10	F1m	((nods)) I said M3 said that and: it's not that he can improve his skin but I mean the character because I have to improve both myself, but also the others to feel good in a group
(0.2)		
11	FACf	you agree- that is, she says there are some- I mean certainly that (.) you cannot whiten yourself to be accepted, maybe others can get tanned
12	Some	((laughs))
13	FACf	if we want to make those bad jokes that Berlusconi had made, however, and: I mean and: it is true about certain things (.) if acceptance depends on whether I am tall or short, eh I can't do anything about it I can't shrink and I can't get up (.) but she said that she didn't mean physical characteristics she meant personal situations, of character but situations that you can work on ok? Not those things there on this we agree right?
14	F1m	but if you must necessarily improve a:nd the physical appearance, in my opinion in that- you shouldn't be in that group
15	FACf	mh
16	F1m	I mean even if you have to change your physical appearance, and you don't want to, (.) you don't have to f- you don't have to force yourself, to be with someone
17	FACf	sure
(0.2)		
18	F3	then in my opinion on the example that M3 did, however, it is the people who are wrong not to accept you because as you said you cannot change I mean at least on the example you did you cannot change then if maybe- I don't know it's an example which is not true, if you if someone asks you (.) and: can you lend me that? No you don't get it soon then you play bad with someone, then it's you who should change
19	M3m	eh yes

In extract 3, the narrative shifts to the link between acceptance and emotions. According to M3, happiness is linked to acceptance and respect, and to the feeling of being part of a group, in which it is possible to express feelings, desires, ideas (turn 1). Reacting to this, F1 says that happiness is not the only important emotion since anger and sadness are equally important (turns 4 and 6). The facilitator offers a minimal response without commenting, and both F3 and M2 stress the importance of happiness, ignoring F1's comment. The facilitator asks if there are other opinions or doubts (turn 10) and M1 intervenes to disagree with F1 (turn 13), then explaining the reason for disagreement

(turns 19, 21 and 23). F1 tries to answer back, but M3 overlaps (turn 25) and, despite the facilitator's invitation to wait, he takes the floor (turn 27) stressing that if one is accepted and respected, there is no reason to be angry, and adding, as an example, his past negative experience when he was not accepted. In turn 28, F1 explains the meaning of anger and sadness that she intended. Without any verbal contribution of the facilitator, F2 takes the floor to confirm F1's contribution about the importance of sadness (turn 33). Then, F4, F6 and F5 support this point of view (turns 34, 35 and 36). In turn 37, the facilitator provides a long formulation regarding the previous conversation, which is confirmed by F1 who thus upgrades her own epistemic authority as the person who has the last say. The facilitator confirms this epistemic authority asking for further confirmation and F1 confirms again. The facilitator closes this conversation with a new formulation and an appreciation before changing topic (turn 41).

### Extract 3

01	M3m	so in my opinion it means yes to be happy means this because (.) if I think I am accepted I am respected I am part of the group I am happy to be part of the group, I am happy not to be alone (.) as before but I am part of a group I can express myself- express my feelings, my desires, my ideas, that's what being happy in my opinion
02	F1m	raise her hand
03	FACf	((it can't be seen but FAC gives her the floor))
04	F1m	in my opinion, yes, however, happiness is not the only important emotion
05	FACf	happiness is not?
06	F1m	the only important emotion because to move forward you need other emotions such as sadness and anger
07	FACf	mh
08	F3	((also with her hand raised)) in my opinion happiness is made precisely by respect and em:: by someone who accepts you for who you are, and: I mean in my opinion if these elements are not present, you ca: you cannot be happy (?)
09	M2	so in my opinion yes because: you are happy when someone is polite to you, speaks well of you, and: expresses ideas of :: and: yours: your ideas, and: when: does not: does not make fun of you and he doesn't treat you badly
(..)		
10	FACf	all done? (.) Some doubts?
11	M1	always me
12	FACf	go on
13	M1	I disagree a bit with F1
14	FACf	with?
15	M1	with her

16	FACf	yes (.) I don't remember what's her name
17	F1m	F1
18	FACf	F1
19	M1	and: because yes, in any case we have to adapt- that is, we are human therefore [we
20	FACf	[are?
21	M1	we are human and therefore it is normal to get angry and sad, but I do not think it serves to move forward in life
22	F1m	in my opinion yes because in life you cannot always be happy
23	M1	yes not in that sense always happy and always cheerful but like anger if you are angry, it is as if (.) you were another person because you have the impulses, and: you isolate yourself because you are angry and you do not want to be with others and this it can also provoke: m: I don't know but bad things anyway. Even sadness same thing
24	F1m	yes b[ut
25	M3m	[and then
26	FACf	wait wait
27	M3m	and then if you are respected, if you are accepted why should you be angry? (.) Indeed I would be very happy (.) I am already accepted but in the first class when I was not yet accepted since I wa:s (.) of another color, I was sad, I played alone, but now that I have been accepted it is not that I'm sad, it's not that I'm angry, of course human beings get angry and sad, but if you are accepted if (you are a great thing) why do you have to be angry? Why are you sad? In fact you have to be- you have to be happy
28	F1m	yes but i don't say you have to be angry when you have to be accepted, when you have to be - when you are accepted you have to be happy, but I say to be angry and sad about: other topics, which then can make you happy later in life
(0.2)		
29	F2	in my opinion
(.)		
30	FACf	(?)
31	F2	in my opinion so: sometimes sadness helps you (.) because when you are sad a friend arrives and from that moment you feel happy
32	F3	in my opinion, you also need sadness for another thing maybe it is also like a friend but also learn how to get up from a sad thing alone, also believe in yourself more too
33	M1	F2 is right because to me it happen- she was the one who spoke earlier, because according – to me it happened that I was sad and ((name)) came which is the one over there, and let's say

		it gave me some comfort so let's say it's like a test, to see if friends are true friends and if they notice you you
(..)		
34	F4	so in my opinion and it is right what my companions said, because anyw- we must also be happy not sad but sometimes we also need to be sad, and: but also to believe in ourselves
(0.2)		
35	F6m	in my opinion and: the fact of being sad and angry then makes you grow so (in my opinion) F1 also meant that from there you are happier and you are also more grown up
36	F5	I wanted to say the same thing but in my opinion and: for example when you are sad and: it makes you think and: you ask yourself questions, why am I sad? em: and then go to clarify maybe
(..)		
37	FACf	well it seems to me that you have managed to put the two thoughts together (.) that is not that we have excluded one thing or the other, (.) but we have accepted what she said that is and: it is important to be respected it makes you happy, but even in the moments when you are not happy because there may be a problem or because you are angry etc., you are respected even if your anger and sadness are accepted (..) I understand it correctly?
38	F1m	Yes
39	FACf	do you think it's okay in this sense?
40	F1m	yes yes
41	FACf	then it is very true what you said that is I am happy because I was accepted (.) this seems true to me and that (.) it is beautiful eh? all right? (nice) then I lost the questions

Extract 4, recorded in a primary school in London, shows narratives of personal experiences and family memories about war and war-torn areas. Although the teacher oscillates between facilitation and mixed facilitation (see Chapter 5), CMB provide important and rich narratives. In turn 1, M1 tells of the war in Sierra Leone, criticising another child's comment with a rather complex contribution. The teacher acknowledges this contribution in an interrogative form, thus inviting M1 to expand. The child briefly expands his narrative and the teacher provides a formulation that develops the meaning of his reference to the war in Sierra Leone. The teacher's final question invites M1 to co-construct new relevant knowledge. Thus, M1 continues his narrative, and the teacher first acknowledges M1's epistemic authority, then he expands the narrative adding contents about aspects that were not included in M1's narrative, concluding with a new question. In turns 8 and 10, the teacher recognises M1's epistemic authority and M1 continues to narrate. The teacher acknowledges again his contribution by repeating the information provided by the child (turn 12), then, he provides more directive actions (turn 13-18) concluding with a question. However, M3 takes the floor to share a personal story, based on his family memories in Afghanistan (turn 19). The teacher accepts M3's initiative, embedding it in the theme "war to access resources". M3 aligns with the teacher's question, but he relates his narrative to personal/family knowledge. The teacher develops this theme, but M3, again, produces new knowledge by adding a comment (turn 24). The teacher appreciates children's

agency and produces a series of questions to promote their reflection and participation (turn 25). In turn 34, M1 once again upgrades his epistemic authority, which is confirmed by the teacher. This confirmation enhances M1's new narrative based on his family's experience (turn 36). The teacher claims that his knowledge is based on learning from the older brother of M6 (turn 37) and M1 contextualises the knowledge shared by the teacher (turn 38). Then F4 takes an initiative and F5 asks a question to M6, who responds showing again his epistemic authority. Finally the teacher attributes epistemic authority to M6, inviting the child to confirm (turn 42). M6 confirms, but avoids an explicit acknowledgement of the teacher's epistemic authority.

Extract 4

01	M1	my statement is, so you know how we were doing the group economics thing? From M2 point of view, you know how England is a very first world country? Sometimes they want more than they have, so they take from poor countries which have good resources. No offence, but England is like a first world country but it isn't well resourced in like food and other stuff, so they take from different countries, so people started to think that they didn't want to do that so that's how war broke out
02	Tm	ok?
03	M1	like in my country, in my family's country, Sierra Leone
04	Tm	so Sierra Leone said we shouldn't be giving all our resources to these rich countries, and others said we have to. And some people are trying to keep it to themselves, and that's how the war break loose?
05	M1	families were torn apart. I think there was almost 2 million people that died in that war
06	Tm	((to children)) Did you hear that? Because of one resource, one natural resource, almost 2 million people died in Sierra Leone. Even going back to the diamonds, the blood diamonds is probably one of the most famous well-known single type of resource. I mean, there's still people that mine the diamonds and gold, and they have illegal mines, and people die I would say if not weekly then certainly monthly. Because they work in terrible conditions and they get stuck underground and no one saves them, and I've just watched a documentary on this actually, people go and attack their mines, and these miners are unarmed and work for like a penny a day, a penny a day. But are they armed, these miners?
07	F1	No
08	Tm	they're armed with like a shovel. But is their shovel any good against a gun? So it's still going on today. That war was probably, I don't know, do you know?
09	M1	it was 1997 because that's what my family was telling me about
10	Tm	end of 1997 ((to children)) do you know how long it spanned for?
11	M1	my mum said it was something like 7-5 years
12	Tm	7-5 years. To lose 2 million people in 7-5 years is an awful lot of people in the country, and all over a natural resource which, think about the apocalypse we are reading about in that book, all of us agreed that a diamond necklace became absolutely (.) absolutely

13	Children	useless
14	Tm	useless, but 2 million people died just because someone with a lot of money in another country wanted it. Is that right?
15	F1	No
16	Tm	but again, during that war, if it's going on for 5-7 years, is anyone supporting them to finish it from the rich countries?
17	M1	No
18	Tm	the UN might have tried to get involved. Was it the UN?
19	M3	mister? In Afghanistan my grandad always says that they tried to get, I think, resources or something, they said no but then it was a war a long time ago before this one. I think it was for less than 20 years and 1.5 million people died
20	Tm	but again, it's a war about natural resources by the sounds of things, and money. So what's driving this?
21	M3	money. My grandad says it was for money, the Russians and the American and English people before want to take all from Afghanistan
22	Tm	wanting more. Wanting more. Wanting more. What's that?
23	Children	Greedy
24	M3	greed can lead to war
25	Tm	this is a good chat we're having. If we all sort of shared, and found better systems, then would this happen? We say that, but then I give it all to a really nice year six class bunch, if you got it all and another group nothing, any of you would feel naughty? Nasty?
26	F1	No
27	Tm	but if, what would happen in the group left with nothing?
28	M4	Anger
29	F2	Frustration
30	Tm	anger, frustration and fighting. Fighting, interestingly, in a poor country, [civil
31	F3	[war
32	Tm	can you see how it plays out? Are any of you sitting there going 'Oh my goodness'? I had rich countries getting richer, poor countries getting poorer, and one poor country kept getting poorer and poorer and poorer to breaking point, and they couldn't agree on what to do next and the best thing to do for their resources, they started to argue, but really upset, which is basically the same as having a [civil
33	M5	[war
34	M1	exactly the same as Sierra Leone
35	Tm	exactly the same as Sierra Leone
36	M1	but they didn't have their independence taken like Afghanistan I think. My mum told me that they got their independence in like 1970 something
37	Tm	often, fledging countries, young countries, your brother taught me so much about that, by the way ((the older brother of M6, now in secondary school)), your

		brother, I'm an expert now. But when countries breakoff into smaller countries, they can then often be fighting over resources, land
38	M6	Kosovo
39	F4	it's happened all over the world, but sort of, Israel and Palestine
40	F5	I wanted to ask M6 what happened in Kosovo?
41	M6	yeah, they had a war, Kosovars and Serbians
42	Tm	they have been at war for ages over who owns which bit of the country. Kosovo and Serbia, haven't they M6?
43	M6	there was a big war there

Extract 5 was recorded in a second language class in Finland. The teacher succeeds in giving all children the opportunity of exercising agency through the narratives of “congregations”. First, the teacher asks the meaning of congregations and two children provide answers (turns 2 and 3). The teacher confirms M2’s answer, adding a definition. However, M2, a CMB, corrects the teacher (turn 5) who recognises her incorrect use of the term “church”. This exchange opens the floor to M1, another CMB, who initiates a narrative about his attendance of the mosque (turn 7). Then the teacher asks for F2’s attendance at church and asks the class about religious commitment. M2 gives a very vague answer and the following conversation involves F2 (turns 13-16). The teacher comments on commitment in congregation (turn 17) and in the following turns (18-30), some CMB contribute autonomously and collaboratively to narrate commitment with the Islamic congregation, while the teacher gives minimal feedback. In turn 31, the teacher asks a question which is followed by other children’s contributions about the Islamic congregation (turns 32-37) and also in the following turns the CMB continue to show their epistemic authority in narrating about the Islamic congregation. Finally, the teacher introduces the Evangelical Lutheran church in Finland (turn 42), but in the following turns, F2 and F3 assess negatively this church. The teacher, after an initial hesitation, explains the opportunities offered by the Finnish church (turn 47). She does not contradict the children although she does not completely agree with them.

#### Extract 5

01	Tf	clubs and organisations into the same group cause they’re bit of the same (.) congregations (.) what does it mean
02	F2	House
03	M2	Church
04	Tf	yeah (.) it has to do with church alright. So a congregation is the (.) well in Christianity it is like erm a place in ((name of municipality)) there’s like a congregation you can join and affect things so also in your Muslim culture there are congregations so you go to church
05	M2	Mosque
06	Tf	ah Mosque of course
07	M1	I go there myself (.) pretty often
08	Tf	yeah (.) erm (.) F2 you go (.) to church
09	F2	((nods))
10	Tf	how do you think you can affect things there

11	M2	erm I don't know I just go there (?) and then I'm out like I don't care like going (deep) into what's going on there
12	F2/F4	((look at each other, grinning))
13	Tf	but erm (.) were did you go for the period of work experience
14	F2	I am (.) at ((name of church)) there
15	Tf	yeah (.) and erm what is it at ((name of church)) it was you were weren't you at the flea market and stuff
16	F2	I was there (?) to pass out food
17	Tf	yeah (.) really (.) that is like the most you can do to influence so the congregation where you go it had like wonderful ways of affecting society (.) in a concrete way by distributing food (.) how about Mosque how can you affect through Islam what kind of a channel is it for influencing
18	F3	we also sometimes (?) eat there together
19	M2/M1	((introduce an Arabic term and repeat it))
20	F2	((laughs))
21	Tf	together
22	F2	it means the Imam
23	Tf	yeah (.) yeah
24	?	((giggling))
25	F3	we read something together
26	M2/M1	pray together
27	M1	we can vote who (.) should have power there
28	M2	we make sure (.) to vote who sees over things there
29	Tf	yeah
30	M1	who helps in shopping for groceries
31	Tf	yeah (.) do you get to vote or is there like an age limit
32	M1	erm
33	F3	adults usually
34	M1	adults usually (.) like all our parents so not everyone not even those who are like twenty or thirty
35	F3	well usually
36	M1	really old
37	M2	like forty plus
38	Tf	and like (.) to these things how the congregation like works there
39	M1	they collect money there so everyone gets to eat (.) every week (.) my brother once paid for everyone
40	Tf	for everyone (.) who were present
41	M1	yeah
42	Tf	so (.) in Finland the church is Evangelical Lutheran so if you are a member you pay tax so in Islam you don't have like this taxation
43	F3	but we have it like you give (Imam) you can decide for yourself to give money for food
44	F2	this is so unfair like if you don't have money you can't come to church cause you don't pay tax
45	Tf	let me hear you again I didn't quite understand that what is unfair
46	F2	If I don't have money and I belong to the Lutheran church so they can sack me if I don't pay
47	Tf	We::::ll (.) you can for sure use church services even if you're not a member (.) I can go to church even if I'm not a member they don't ask to see your papers so there are many services that the church provides like family counselling in many towns it is pretty (.) like loose (.) so (.) what else

Extracts 6-8 were recorded in an Italian vocational school and participants are all CMB who narrate their personal stories. Extract 6 shows F1's narrative of her drawing as including her values, in written form, a little house and an important date. After explaining the content of the drawing, F1 asks if she should explain its meaning (turn 1). FACf2 confirms and F1 produces an expanded narrative of the meanings of the values and date (turn 3). The facilitators appreciate the narrative and thank, then FACf2 develops the narrative with a formulation regarding the house and asks for more detail (turn 6). F1 talks of her parents' family (turn 7) and then, invited to continue by FACf2's minimal response, she explains that her parents' families come from different places. In turn 10, FACf2 makes this content more explicit through a "so"-prefaced formulation (Hutchby 2007), shows appreciation and thanks F1 (turn 12).

Extract 6

- 01 F1 well, I did this, I don't know if you can see ((shows the drawing)) well, here I wrote my va- the values, I made a little house, that I will explain later, and here I put an important date. Shall I try to explain it?
- 02 FACf2 yes go
- 03 F1 so I wrote three values that I think are very important for me, sincerity, family and ambition, em I chose ambition because in my opinion every person should believe in something, be ambitious at least, about what he/she wants to do, and sincerity because every that is, the truth must be told for better or for worse, because a friendship or even another relationship cannot be a close relationship or something without sincerity, and the family because in my opinion friends are there for you, then it depends on who you have at your side, there can be real friends or not, but the family is the only one that will always be by your side, for better or for worse. I have chosen a date which is 19 April 2019, where I and two other friends of mine have really become a group of best friends so far, and they are very close for me. I've designed a house which is the house in a place in Albania, ah because every summer I go there with my whole family, we get together ah that is I'm fine there in the end, and that's it
- 04 FACf2 ah: nice th[anks
- 05 FACf1 [thank you
- 06 FACf2 is it a house which is near: mountains: tell us so that is where is it? not the place itself but around that what to imagine it
- 07 F1 I have the family of both my father and mother
- 08 FACf2 [mh mh
- 09 F1 [my father this one I did, is more in the country, instead my grandmother on my mother's side is in the city
- 10 FACf2 ok so you have the chance to see two: to be in two parts, in two houses [with: either city or countryside
- 11 F1 [right
- 12 FACf2 nice thank you
- 13 F1 you're welcome

In extract 7, F2 provides a narrative of her drawing as including an important date in which she met her best friend, a house with herself and her grandparents, whom she defines as the most important people in her life. F2 explains the drawing (turn 1), and FACF2 acknowledges this explanation (turn 2). F2 continues to describe her feelings for her grandparents and FACf2 appreciates her clarity, making the gist of her narrative explicit with a formulation (turn 4). After confirming, F2 takes the initiative to clarify the importance of her best friend as close and supportive (turn 7). FACf2 develops the gist of this contribution defining F2's friend as very precious and showing appreciation (turn 8), then she warmly thanks F2 (turn 10).

Extract 7

- 01 F2 so well ((she shows the drawing)) so practically there is an important date 2017 which is when I met my best friend, then there is a house which is in Manila, with three people which would be my grandparents and me, who: practically they are: the most important people, because they are like a- like my family like my second family like parents, because they raised me as a child so for me hh they are parents
- 02 FACF2 sure
- 03 F2 em then well there is a heart that: means that for me they are family is the most important thing the thing that comes first, (3) ah ((smiles)) nothing m I finished
- 04 FACFf2 ok no no, you have been very clear, therefore the family, also the grandparents, because they are all those who have been close to you and have helped you to grow up
- 05 F2 yes
- 06 FACF2 including [also
- 07 F2 [yes the people who have always been close to me in the difficult moments I mean in fact my best friend has been a very important person who has always been close to me always always so for me she is the sister that I m a sister that I lost when I was little so, she was practically my twin sister that I lost, so she is like my sister because she has always been close to me and she supports me in everything
- 08 FACf2 she's very precious it's very nice
- 09 F2 mh mh
- 10 FACf2 thank you A. thank you for [sharing even the most difficult things
- 11 F2 [you're welcome

In extract 8, FACf1 asks a question about the meaning of inclusive class. M1 answers stressing the importance of respect and mutual help and includes an example of support concerning language proficiency (turn 2). This narrative is appreciated by both facilitators (turns 3 and 4), then FACf1 expands on her appreciation asking about M1's condition as a migrant. M1 answers that he has not arrived recently and the facilitators acknowledge this contribution. FACf1 asks about M1's personal experience and M1 answers that he felt supported and respected. FACf1 provides a short but complex final turn (turn 13), including repetition and acknowledgement ("also respected ok"), appreciations

(“good I am pleased”, “very good”), a formulation which makes M’s contribution explicit (“so mutual help, and respect also”) and thanks.

Extract 8

- 01 FACf1 Tell us what is an inclusive class for you?  
02 M1 ah: in my opinion it is like respect and help others like no help like someone you know Italian well and like new student, who no he/she doesn't sp- you don't know how to speak Italian well, help him like he doesn't understand something well or doesn't do the homework the problem of understanding something  
03 FACf2 [very well very clear  
04 FACf1 [ok I understand you were very clear so for you it is - an inclusive class is a class that helps you like whe- [are you a new classmate? Did you arrive now? This year?  
05 M1 [yes no no no no  
06 FACf1 ah ok  
07 M1 before  
08 FACf2 [ok  
09 FACf1 [ok did you feel helped?  
10 M1 ah yes  
11 FACf1 from your class?  
12 M1 and respected  
13 FACf1 also respected ok good I am pleased so mutual help, ((writes)) and respect also ((writes)) very good thank you M12

Extract 9 was recoded in another Italian vocational school. The two facilitators invite M3, a CMB, to take the floor through a question about his appreciation of his own class (turns 1-4). M3 stresses mutual trust and links it to the fact that the class is “multi-ethnic”, which is very positively evaluated by the adolescent (turns 5-11). The facilitators support this narrative through a repetition (turn 8) and an interrogative formulation developing the gist of M3’s turn (turn 10). FACf turns to a question on the adolescents’ origins (turn 12) and formulates the answer about Ghanaian origins and birth in Italy (turn 14). M3 takes the floor to add a comment about the place of birth of other adolescents in the class (turn 15), and FACf confirms that this is usual then she goes back to the multi-ethnic class asking for clarification about its meaning. M3’s hesitation brings the facilitator to clarify about her question and to stress the difference between facilitation and teaching (turn 18). M3 clarifies the importance of learning different languages collaboratively and FACf appreciates then providing an interrogative formulation which makes what M3 said explicit (turn 22). This is followed by an appreciation (turn 24) and a joke (turn 25 and 27), which however is not confirmed by M3 (turn 28). This response enhances FACm’s repair by stressing that it was a joke and that he himself did it in the past; then, he asks a question changing the direction of the conversation towards possible negative aspects of the class. However, M3 rejects the question, adding to the insistence of FACf to “be informal”, that he is the quieter in the class. The facilitator appreciates the answer and upgrades M3’s epistemic authority commenting that it is important to have someone quiet in the classroom.

Extract 9

01	FACf	come over to the phone for a moment and tell me your name please
02	M3m	M3
03	FACf	M3 fine
04	FACm	fine! M3 can you tell us something you like about the class?
05	M3m	that I like about the class?
06	FACm	Yes
07	M3m	tha::t we all know each other (.) we are- we trust each other
08	FACf	we know and trust each other yes::
09	M3m	tha::t that we are a multi-ethnic class
10	FACm	is this a thing for you- a good thing? (0.4) Right? Is diversity within the classroom good for you?
11	M3m	yes it's a strength of our class
12	FACf	oh::: please tell us why (.) I mean where does this positive you you originate:: what is your origin?
13	M3m	I have Ghanaian origins but I was born here a::nd
14	FACf	fine your family is Ghanaian but you were born in Italy fine a-
15	M3m	even if in this class there are also those who were born here we a::re always friends
16	FACf	ah this thing is clear everyone says it and then obviously it is so (.) and instead this thing that you said that according to you the fact that there are different ethnic groups is a richness in what do you see it? Where is it that you enrich yourself with diversity?
17	M3m	tha:t (0.6) mh::
18	FACf	there is no right and wrong M3 not- there isn't- there is no emptiness there is nothing what you think is the right thing take it easy
19	M3m	tha::t in every moment we always learn different languages
20	FACf	((laughs)) eh this surely-
21	M3m	(?) of other languages a::nd each of us says the meaning
22	FACf	nice so you often confront yourself wondering how do you say this thing in your language of origin how is this said in yours?

23	M3m	yes
24	FACf	here we are this is a funny game
25	FACm	starting with the bad words I bet
26	FACf	Sure
27	FACm	bad words are the first
28	M3m	it depends
29	FACm	it depends ((laughs)) no yes it's joking eh but come on I did it come on I think everyone did it
30	FACf	oh come on
31	FACm	fine and something M3 that you like a little less?
(0.4)		
32	M3m	I can't tell you, I mean
33	FACf	no guys be informal please (?) do you like everything? Is there never a thing that makes you a little nervous about any of your classmates?
34	M3m	no no I'm the quietest prof
35	FACf	are you the quieter?
36	FACm	(?)
37	FACf	excellent well good for you and good also for all those who are next to you because having a quiet person next to you:: it's not a small thing (0.3) thanks M3
38	M3m	you're welcome

In extract 10, FACf invites M2 to say what he likes in the class. M2 tells a story of mutual respect and sharing, despite different ethnic groups (turn 2). FACf acknowledges his contribution and M2 reiterates the importance of different ethnic groups and different thoughts (turn 4). FACm shows his interest in and surprise for this narrative of ethnicity, adding a question about classroom problems (turns 5 and 7). However, M2 claims that he stays away from them (turn 11). After FACf's new acknowledgment, M2 adds that he and his classmates have never done serious damage to the school (turn 13). FACf comments on this answer, but suggesting her interest in relational problems, rather than damage, and asking if M2 has experienced such problems (turn 14). M2 confirms his experience of problems as a CMB at an earlier age. Unfortunately, this narrative is interrupted by a negotiation about confusion that makes what follows inaudible (data not shown).

## Extract 10

- 01 FACf M1 tell us something you like about your class
- 02 M1 it is a class in which you really respect each other because eh and there are many ethnic groups in this class however you can still find a point on which everyone agrees that there is no non- not- not no- nobody creates problems and we respect each other
- 03 FACf Fine
- 04 M1 as far as we can be (?) a large class full of ethnic groups of different thoughts
- 05 FACm eh you're the very first one to use- but maybe even in all the classes I've been in you're the first to use the word ethnicity
- 06 FACf it's true
- 07 FACm you are the first that has ever happened to me to me personally so you surprised me M2 I have to say it and you said there are no problems for you there are none relevant so what is for you a problem in the classroom?
- 08 M1 I didn't hear you
- 09 Tf a problem for you
- 10 FACm problems no you said there are no problems inside the class
- 11 M1 usually I always try to understand what the problem is to try to stay away from it right? I always manage to see the negative side of- of things but no matter how hard I try I do not see I do not see things - I do not see things that can (seem like problems that are) negative in this class yes eh as I said before we are really very different but we manage to respect each other and no matter how much I try to find something that is not is not good- it may be perhaps the the noise we create
- 12 FACf Fine
- 13 M1 if anything that because we have never done serious damage to the school we don't- we don't break things we don't paint the walls
- 14 FACf no oh well wait wait that is, we are pretty sure that you will not do it also because otherwise it would be a very big problem but sometimes we talk about problems in a class also because maybe I just give an example there are groups that do not integrate with each other then maybe they remain how to say? three people are always the three of them other four are always the four of them this thing is not a tragedy but it happens very often in the classes that there is no homogeneity has it ever happened to you?
- 15 M1 yes I had this problem when I was younger that I was jus- because I was not born here I arrived in Italy after a while and I had this problem because I did not know the language

## 5. Conclusions

The **development of hybrid integration** is based on the combination of cultural elements of both the country of origin and the host country in an original and unique synthesis. This implies a space for expression of the personal cultural trajectories, regardless of whether the child speaks the language

of the country of emigration fluently or not. Taking this into account, CMB's agency leads to hybrid integration through the interlacement of narratives of personal cultural trajectories. However, a stereotypical and ethnocentric communication about cultural differences can negatively influence hybrid integration. The insufficient training in multicultural matters, the sense of difficulty in approaching multicultural classrooms and the ambivalent narratives about hybridity, cultural differences, assimilation and irrelevance of cultural trajectories can influence the support of CMB's personal cultural trajectories and dialogue in the classroom. Moreover, parents' frequent ethnocentric positioning can be a serious obstacle to the production of conditions of hybrid integration in schools.

Against this background, facilitation of narratives including personal cultural trajectories can be relevant to enhance hybrid integration in the classroom. CMB are able to express themselves, to take the floor, to lead the conversation, to defend their positions and to reject possible undesired interpretations. This can happen through a dialogic form of communication.

Professionals' training could be productively oriented to facilitation of narratives of personal cultural trajectories and their interlacements, rather than to recognition of cultural difference. This could also support effective communication among professionals and with parents, given the present differences in terms of narratives about cultural differences. The relevant aspect regards communication in the classroom rather than individual awareness of cultural diversity. An approach to facilitation of classroom communication can also mitigate teachers' perception of difficulties in dealing with cultural differences in the classroom, since facilitation is based on a general competence, which can be applied to facilitation of narratives showing different personal cultural trajectories, thus encouraging and supporting dialogic interlacements among these narratives and hybrid integration in the classroom.

## Chapter 9. The COVID-19 pandemic

### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the educational systems of all countries, affecting accessibility to education, the curriculum and teaching methods, as well as the support offered to children (see Chapter 2). All these processes affected the functioning of schools and especially children's participation and their learning achievements. Although the effects of the pandemic were experienced by all children, children from societally disadvantaged groups, including children with migrant background (CMB) were especially prone to being negatively affected. This chapter summarises evidences about effects of the pandemic based on the qualitative phases of research which were done after the outburst of the pandemic.

### 2. Children and professionals' views of the lockdown

In the UK, Germany and Belgium, teachers noted that children with a lower socio-economic status were especially at risk of experiencing limited participation in education. Professionals in Italy, Belgium and Poland also argued that younger children suffered more from the drawbacks and downsides of online teaching since they particularly need direct, non-verbal, face-to-face communication with teachers and classmates as well as the teacher's support, which were difficult to provide during remote teaching: "Children in kindergarten need physical contact [...] what was missing is precisely this contact. Children need this, not only a hug but also a look" (IT\_T42\_F). As a result, those who had already been vulnerable before the pandemic struggled more with the effects of COVID-19, hindering their participation. In Poland and Italy, the professionals talked about the invisibility of CMB during online teaching. In Italy, professionals also claimed that some CMB disappeared because they returned to the country of origin of their parents or because their parents found sending them to school too dangerous to their health. In Poland, professionals stated that the **gender inequalities among CMB were perpetuated during the pandemic**, making girls more prone to patriarchal norms embedded in their parents' culture.

Professionals and children pointed out a **lack of proper equipment** and **digital illiteracy** as factors hindering children's participation during the remote learning period. In the initial phase of the pandemic, many children – and especially CMB, from large families and those with lower socio-economic status – faced difficulties in obtaining adequate equipment. Yet this was addressed over time by schools, teachers or NGOs. Nevertheless, low quality and speeds for broadband Internet emerged as the main issue (Poland, the UK). The Swedish, German, UK and Polish professionals also highlighted the poor conditions for learning. They talked about sharing a workspace with siblings and other members of family or the background noise of family life. This was confirmed by some children: "It was hard because my little brother, he makes chaos at home. He runs around and my mother she washes, and she talks to her siblings very loudly". (SWE\_F7\_ISCED2). However, working conditions improved over time.

Children explained that the remote teaching gave them limited interpersonal interactions and therefore they could not socialize with others. In Italy, children talked of boredom and tiredness caused by attending all classes online. Such a mode of teaching did not ensure their wellbeing and health.

In my opinion, being in front of a screen for five hours every day is not very good for our health in the sense that, both for our eyes and also psychologically, because it is also stressful to sit there and do nothing other than to look there and stay there all day, and then anyway getting up and going to school was part of the routine that we've now become used to. (IT\_F11\_CH\_G)

In Poland, Sweden and Germany, children complained about a perceived lack of engaging teaching methods and audio-visual materials. Their experiences of online teaching relied on the teacher's competences and adjustments to online teaching which they often found unsatisfactory, unprofessional and chaotic, especially during the first phase of pandemic. Gradually, however, classes became more professionally managed as teachers became more experienced in using online teaching tools. Thus, the pandemic had impact on children's perception of support from teachers. From their perspective, remote teaching was essentially lost time: **the quality of teaching was low and opportunities to learn were wasted**. In Sweden, Germany and Poland, children complained that they had to manage too much by themselves and felt overburdened with the responsibility for their education. Teachers were simply sending the materials or links to be studied in order to complete the tasks and the students were expected to go through the materials and to look for an explanation if anything was unclear. In such situations, children acknowledged that they looked for **non-institutional support**:

CH1: We barely got help during corona.

CH2: Yes, we kind of had to manage by ourselves.

I: What help do you get when it comes to difficulties?

CH1: Google. (SWE\_F2\_CH\_B)

Children consulted siblings, classmates, parents or used Internet resources or as part of external initiatives. If the institutional support was provided – as in case of Belgium – children reported that teachers were not available for them to provide additional explanation and answered their questions: “As we have to move forward in the course, the teachers do not have time to react and answer questions during class”. (BE\_I4\_G). Children in Poland and Italy claimed that it was hard to get the attention of their teachers: their raised hands, other reactions during lessons or non-verbal signals went unnoticed. Moreover, audio challenges negatively impacted students' ability to listen and hear well. As a result, children lagged behind as they neither understood tasks they were obliged to do, nor could they express themselves while explaining the problem.

Nevertheless, some children said that their teachers had provided help when asked. Such opinions were more in line with the narratives woven by teachers. It should be noted that in all countries (except Sweden) teachers sustained that they had to switch to online teaching overnight, without receiving much prior help or advice. They had to support and monitor the children during remote classes as well as addressing parental concerns, which frequently led to exhaustion after an entire day of working online. In this challenging situation, **interpreters/mediators/cultural assistants were more**

**involved in online meetings with parents.** However, they experienced various difficulties. In Italy, mediators complained about obstacles to maintaining contact with parents and children, which lacked skills or equipment at home. In Belgium, online meetings and also face-to-face meetings with the face covered by a mask frequently led to misunderstandings and impeded the use of body language. The interpreters/mediators/cultural assistants also reported newly available strategies and options, such as working with smaller groups or on-to-one, supporting them in doing homework by phone or organizing some social events like a painting contest: “Since then I've always been in school until Corona came and after that I helped the children with their homework on the phone. And it works”. (G\_M3\_F).

Teachers also highlighted the **risk of children dropping out due to lack of support from their parents.** In Poland, teachers expressed worries concerning the parental lack of language proficiency and ignorance of the educational system, as well as the impaired inability to maintain contact with parents due to their digital illiteracy: “Parents cannot support children because they do not know how the educational system works, or the language and also because of a lack of knowledge about how computers work”. (PL\_T14\_F). Teachers in Germany noted that parents with migrant backgrounds may not be able to support their children due to their inadequate cultural and language competences, often exacerbated by their lack of financial resources. Consequently, CMB had a greater risk of abandoning school or serving as translators and mediated between parents and teachers, a fact which placed even more responsibility on them.

Teachers and children also noted **limited opportunities for developing their interests and knowledge in extracurricular activities.** The regulations imposed on schools significantly affected indoor and outdoor play, decreasing the amount of after-school activities, clubs, contests, excursions and class trips or festivities. Teachers considered CMB as being more prone to negative consequences stemming from the closure of classes. First, the pandemic revealed the inability of schools to address children’s language development. In Finland, a safe space for receiving professional support in learning Finnish and doing homework in interaction with peers was no longer available. In Poland and Germany, teachers spoke of a deterioration of language skills among CMB. In Italy, L2 classes were often postponed or cancelled because the children who needed them were unreachable. Children could not practice the local language in the conversations outside classroom: neither at home nor with classmates: “Not good. I didn't speak much Polish, because there was no one to speak to, there were no friends, well [they were] only in those lessons [online] and that’s all”. (PL\_I17\_CH\_B).

The negative side-effects of the pandemic on children and schools in general were particularly salient in all countries, yet **positive experiences** were also reported, with online teaching seen by some children as having advantages. In Sweden, for instance, children emphasised that working from home was easier as there were none of the distractions which they faced in the traditional classroom. In Italy and Poland, children highlighted that attending lessons was easy and helped them to manage stress better – with no need to travel, they could get up later and wear whatever they wanted. In Poland, children appreciated the opportunity to use dictionaries and the fact that they could quickly go through their notes. They were also given more materials such as presentations, documents with additional information by teachers.

During online learning, the teachers often made presentations on the topic, they often prepared additional documents with notes in Word files. The geography teacher made presentations, notes in Word, and videos. The physics teacher made presentations at the beginning, then in a document [...] with notes, a teacher explained everything. Later on, there were still some videos. I think that there was a video, a presentation, a Word document in every lesson, there was a lot of that. (PL\_I4\_CH\_G)

The **pandemic hindered contact with classmates and friends**. Children felt that they were **deprived of space important for developing their agency**, as was noted especially in the UK.

CH: I think, I don't like how, during lockdown, like, we got separately. Got so used to being with my friends, having fun, and then Covid comes along

I: And stops it. And were you worried about it?

CH: Yeah. I was missing my friends because they have always been here for me.

I: Yeah, you would miss them. And how did you feel about it? Yeah.

CH: Two thumbs down.

I: Oh. Why?

CH: Because like [name removed] said, it makes me separated from my best friends (UK\_F5\_CH\_B)

Children maintained digital contact, but they emphasised that it could not replace face-to-face meetings. At the same time, as the case of Italy shows, a number of children admitted that they re-evaluated their friendships due to the pandemic; while some of them survived pandemic and appeared to be genuine and were cemented, others were destroyed as they were superficial.

I: what would have been different if there had been no Covid?

CH: the relationships between people, so even friends etc. would have been different, then in the first quarantine I came to understand many things about my friendships, I mean, I found out what the real friendships were, the people who were there and the people who didn't care. (IT\_F1\_CH\_G)

In Poland and Belgium, some children talked about the support they received from their classmates: they could rely on them while doing homework or preparing for classes and thus student solidarity increased.

When I didn't understand something in lesson, I would call G., he would tell me everything and give me homework. (PL\_I17\_CH\_B).

Before that it was not necessarily so strong, we helped each other but since that epidemic, as soon as we came back, we asked more questions of our classmates than of our teachers. Because we preferred to ask the questions to our classmates rather than to the teachers, because we work better with them and we help a lot, a lot I think, yes we are united. (BE\_FG4\_5\_G)

The negative impact of social distancing on children's socialisation was also emphasised by teachers. In Poland and Belgium, teachers talked about **missed peer-socialization**, with isolation leading to mental problems, stress and depression, above all in the case of CMB.

### 3. The effects of the pandemic on children's agency

The pandemic affected children's agency in different ways. In Poland, the pandemic hit those who at the earlier stages of their education doubly hard, negatively affecting their agency at school. In Italy and the UK, **children frequently depended on parental assistance** in managing the computer and Internet connection as well as in organizing their classes or homework.

I didn't like doing the lessons online either because I was annoyed when my parents weren't home and the connection was down and I didn't know what to do, and because it was a bit harder and there are older kids who are there [online] for longer. (IT\_F19\_CH\_G)

Parental support was seen as necessary but also a limiting factor in children's agency. However, some older children acknowledged that the pandemic was a period which enabled them to **develop their sense of autonomy, responsibility and self-control as they were responsible for their educational paths**.

M1: in my opinion the biggest difference between digital school and face-to-face school is that the digital school, in my opinion, makes you grow, for example it makes you mature in certain areas, for example in certain lessons that are done in class, the teachers can see if you are concentrating, but at home you can switch off in different ways and relax, or you can become more mature and recognize when you should do something or not. (IT\_F29\_CH\_B)

There are students who are very independent right from the start. You could see that now, um, in the time when we had the school digital now, during the Corona time. Uh, there were really even in the fifth-grade students. who have done everything independently and confidently, and, um, so it was really a dream to experience that. (G\_T5\_F)

Children's agency was also revealed in their contacts with teachers. As the children were more advanced with technology, they often took control of class activities. However, some children felt overwhelmed and **lacking the regular in-school classes and teacher guidance**. In Poland, the children expected to be cared for and complained about the shifting of the burden and responsibilities of educational processes on them. In the UK, older children faced difficulties in combining their own education with helping their younger siblings due to their parents' work commitments.

At first, at the first lockdown, everything was online, we didn't have online meetings like Google Meetings. So we did everything by ourselves. Even my parents didn't have time to help me, so I did everything by myself. And then, as like, sometimes I wouldn't even know what to do, so because I didn't know what to do, my parents would just tell me to teach my brothers. (UK\_F24\_CH\_not specified)

Children also felt **left out of decision-making processes**. Instead of being asked about their opinions, teachers – as in Belgium – referred to their parents or made the decision on their own based on the power relations and belief that they are more knowledgeable. Through such behaviour teachers revealed the underlying power relation and lack of interest in children's autonomy and the unwillingness to listen to them and support their agency.

It's very good but I do not understand why they ring our parents and we are not asked. It is us too. Management seeks the advice of parents rather than students. In itself, the idea is good, but perhaps it was necessary to ask

the students for advice, and then the parents. It's been a bit, you are the child, so they have to ask the parents how are you doing. (BE\_I7\_CH\_G).

But about the educators, sometimes they are just on top of us, they think they know everything. They don't even imagine what some of us are going through. (BE\_FG4\_CH\_G)

#### **4. Views from facilitated meetings**

While the interviews revealed a frequent negative assessment of the lockdown, some facilitated meetings revealed much more nuanced positions among the children. In London, during three meetings in primary schools, memories and feelings about the lockdown were shared by the children. Conversations focused on home online schooling and on feelings, such as frustration and anger, that might have developed during the lockdown. In Genova (Italy), conversations on the lockdown were enhanced and supported in three classes of primary schools and three classes of secondary schools. In the final phase of each meeting, facilitators supported the narratives about the experience of lockdown.

In the English case, the production of these narratives was rather frequently guided by the teacher. In the Italian cases, the narratives were frequently produced by the children. In all cases, facilitation was successful in enhancing the production of narratives on experiences and emotions about the pandemic. In almost all cases, facilitation produced controversial narratives. Here, we present two extracts from these conversations, one in England and the other one in Italy, which show the variety of children's points of view.

##### ***4.1 A conversation in England***

The co-construction of narratives starts in turns 3-15, with the expression of children's negative feelings (sadness, missing friends and family, anger), initially facilitated through a combination of open and focused questions that projects a specific theme of interaction (changes during lockdown) and inviting children's active participation (turn 3). In the next turns (turns 5, 7 and 9), the teacher acknowledges children's answers, invites other children to talk, asks questions (turns 11 and 13), provides a comment focusing on emotions (turn 7) and repeats expressions about anger (turn 9). Finally, the teacher displays empathic alignment to feeling of missing family, by sharing a personal view that promotes expectations of personal expression (turn 15). In turn 16, M4 tells a long story about his anger, based on his father's decision to renounce travelling to Kenya.

M4: in like July, at the end, we were supposed to go to Kenya the next day, but my parents found out there was a rule in Kenya, you have to stay in a government facility in quarantine in place for a few days. But my parents, felt we were more likely to catch Covid there than around, so, we didn't end up going. I was really angry. Then for my parents there was probably a different side to it, two months later, people who were on our flight had to stay for longer because they got Covid.

This story is followed by the teacher's formulation of sensitivity (I can understand you feel angry). However, F2 takes the initiative and shifts the interaction to missing shopping (turn 18), supported by the teacher with a new expression of sensitivity in a complex turn based on the combination of

formulation, personal story and a comment about the emotional aspects of the lockdown (turn 19). The teacher supports this narrative through questions in turns 21-25 and a formulation about risks of shopping (turn 27). While M1 fails in asking a question (turn 28), since the teacher does not pay attention to him (turn 29), in turn 30 M2 takes the floor to propose missing football as another problem, through a disclaimer ('it may sound silly') which shows his uncertainty about relevance. The teacher reassures the child and moves to the theme of physical activity through a question, thus upgrading the child's epistemic authority. In turn 33, however, the teacher includes educational content, thus upgrading his own epistemic authority. In turn 34, M1 takes the initiative of introducing the problem of going to the restaurant and the teacher makes a long personal comment, then he asks a new question moving to his own experience (turn 35), enhancing a child's supposition. In turn 37, the teacher explains his feelings and asks a new question moving to the children's new school experience. The children say that now they appreciate school more than before the pandemic and the teacher asks questions suggesting changes in the school experience. However M4 claims that school is not changed, thus stressing his feelings and perceptions (turns 41 and 44), with the support of the teacher's acknowledgements and further question (turn 45), which enhances M4's explanation of his claim (turn 45) based on his home experience which contradicts the idea of sadness during the pandemic.

M4: I was home at the same time as my brother. And I kind of, I don't really like going to school that much, so it was kind of happy and then I had to come back

The teacher acknowledges this explanation and develops its gist (turn 47, yeah, it does of course depend on how much you used to like, going to school). This formulation enhances M5's alignment to M4's point of view (turn 48, I actually felt good because I don't really like school) and 50 (in year five I still really liked lockdown because I stayed home. And also, I felt sad this morning because I had to go to school). These contributions introduce a narrative of positive aspects of lockdown which is enhanced by the teacher's puzzled comment and following question about what he sees as strange statements (turn 51). This turn allows M5's new personal expression (turn 53, 'I just like being at home'), which is acknowledged by the teacher who insists in exploring M5's point of view and formulates the gist of the child's confirmation, thus closing the session.

#### Complete extract

1	Tm	do we feel like we might have missed out on some of that? Yeah. But what you can do, or what could you do after lockdown to counteract some of that? So let's say you missed out on seeing someone, like you couldn't see an uncle, or you couldn't celebrate an anniversary or a party. What could you do as a family?
2	M1	we can celebrate afterwards
3	Tm	yeah, you could all celebrate afterwards, say you are allowed. And you can think about their lives and sort of, celebrate their lives. So that's really the astute bit, anything else about being at home for that long? Anything has changed? Because it's been a long time now since we spoke last, we last spoke in like early September
4	M2	I have missed my friends

5	Tm	yeah, I mean, and that's, what did that bring out? Missing them? Anyone else?
6	M3	feeling sad
7	Tm	yeah. The thing is, right (.) Let's be honest, although a lot of these emotions of sadness, and sort of missing someone, what else might you feel about seeing someone? What emotions?
8	F1	anger
9	Tm	anger. Has anyone else got angry?
10	Children	yeah
11	Tm	who else has got angry?
12	M3	me
13	Tm	tell me why you feel angry
14	M3	I can't see my family
15	Tm	oh okay. Yeah. I mean, that would make me angry. 100% that would make me angry. Also I would be upset, and also angry at the situation, if you couldn't come to my house and see my children. It does make you angry. Very rarely do you feel sad without failing a little bit angry about it.
16	M4	in like July, at the end, we were supposed to go to Kenya the next day, but my parents found out there was a rule in Kenya, you have to stay in a government facility in quarantine in place for a few days. But my parents, felt we were more likely to catch Covid there than around, so, we didn't end up going. I was really angry. Then for my parents there was probably a different side to it, two months later, people who were on our flight had to stay for longer because they got Covid
17	Tm	yeah. I guess, I suppose it's good that you missed that, but the original point was that you were going to Kenya to see family? But the fact you've lost that, I can understand you feel angry. Yeah
18	F2	I miss shops
19	Tm	I think that is a very good point. When you think about firstly what upset me, you think about, you think about the lost family moment, some special things that you missed out on, but actually, although lot of the stuff in the shop is rubbish and my daughters, I don't let them come into the shop with me because I see it as an unnecessary risk, they can't wear a mask, they shouldn't be going into the shop. But actually, shopping is one of the basic human rights. I think it is. You create, like, really nice memories of doing things like going for a meal with the family or going somewhere you weren't expecting, a lot of those things you can't do now, as well. Although I laugh, and it sounds funny, but in relation to like something serious like losing a family member, or some of us might miss a funeral, oh might not see your family, not being able to go to the shop, yes, it's quite annoying, but it makes the whole thing feel more like, what's the word? A bit flat. Going into the shop, it's like a basic right to go into a shop. People, that I can think of aren't allowed to go into the shop, what shop can't you go into and shop?
20	M1	hone shop?

21	Tm	yeah. So if you think outside of Covid, or group of people, can't go to the shop? Are you sure over 70's aren't allowed to go to the shop?
22	M1	I think so
23	Tm	so, can you think of any people?
24	M1	high risk
25	Tm	so, take Covid, who will be the only people who can go into the shop?
26	M1	people who are not high risk
27	Tm	so they've had [people at risk] that right temporarily put on hold. Do you have the right to shop? Do you have the right to clothing? Do you have a right to feel warm? But some of that liberty is temporarily taken away
28	M1	I've got a question. Why is, you know, how come you can have [lunch
29	Tm	[so, a lot of places where you go to eat are closed as well, they put on a take away menu
30	M2	mister, I want to say it may sound silly but the freedom of playing football has been taken away
31	Tm	I know it sounds silly, actually it's not silly at all. Doing exercise releases a chemical inside your brain that will make you feel?
32	M3	happy
33	Tm	happy and more upbeat. That chemical is released as part of doing exercise, being nice and warm, getting fresh air, that is going to, a lot of you, when you are indoors a lot of the time, you're obviously not going to get that. So people can get tired or sluggish
34	M1	you can go to a restaurant
35	Tm	it does seem ironic to me that you can't go outside. But you can go to a restaurant. Can see your frustration. I like doing a bit of exercise, but I like outside to get those endorphins. I have missed, you all know how I feel about football, and having that sort of liberty being taken away as well, it's angering and frustrating and it's good to talk about it, because on a day to day basis, since we've spoken about it, none of you have come in and gone 'Mr ((name removed)), I'm really not happy about this', which either means you're not that bad, you're not that sad about it. But when we went off a week ago, you know what I saw across the classroom?
36	F1	sadness?
37	Tm	I couldn't believe how you all looked. But you didn't look sad, you looked dejected. Do you know what that word means? Dejected means, it's a mixture of like, a little anger and a lot sadness. Can I ask you a question? Do you feel you appreciate school more or less than you used to?
38	F1	more
39	Children	more!
40	Tm	put your hand up if you kind of used to take school for granted, like you just hear sometimes. Put your hand up, whoever had times where they were like 'ughh school'? Since then, do you feel, slightly more: since you've come to

		school, who felt good this morning? Who feels that the way they teach at school is much different? So who feels that this hasn't really changed?
41	M4	not really
42	Tm	not really
(0.3)		
43	Tm	like the way you see school. Enjoying going to school come out wanting to go to school
44	M4	it's not really changed
45	Tm	okay. How come?
46	M4	I was home at the same time as my brother. And I kind of, I don't really like going to school that much, so it was kind of happy and then I had to come back
47	Tm	okay. Yeah, it does of course depend on how much you used to like, going to school. Yeah
48	M5	I actually felt good because I don't really like school
49	Children	[((laugh))
50	M5	[in year 5 I still really liked lockdown because I stayed home. And also, I felt sad this morning because I had to go to school
51	Tm	the thing is, right, I mean, you always seem pretty happy to me, so I'm surprised to hear that. What is it about school that you don't like? Is it the fact that you want to be at home, or is it something specific about school?
52	M5	I just like being at home
53	Tm	ok. So what you like more being home, better than school?
54	M5	being home, home
55	Tm	ok you like being in your own place
56	M5	yes
57	Tm	doing your own thing, ok
58	M5	yeah
59	Tm	ok, so you like home better than school
60	M5	yeah
61	Tm	good, thank you

After the activities, children did express appreciation for the possibility to share their stories and feelings about current and very poignant experiences.

#### ***4.2 A conversation in Italy***

In a conversation recorded in a primary school, the children produced a relevant series of autonomous narratives. The facilitator's initial open question leaves the floor to F2, who, in turns 2 and 6, making reference to the protagonist of the narrative presented by the facilitator, agrees about the "stolen" piece of life<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Elisa is the fiction name of the protagonist of the narrative proposed by the facilitator.

F2: I eh agree on what Elisa said, that is that we have been in lockdown and (that they have) stolen a piece of our life but I do not agree on the thing that they have taken away from us a little piece of our life because anyway (we were) there a year and me in this year of lockdown (?) [...] because we were there for a year anyway and I in this year (when) we went back to school I had a lot of difficulties (at first) because I didn't understand many topics

After turn 9, the facilitator disappears from the conversation, simply leaving the floor to the children through non-verbal feedback. For this reason, in what follows, we simply report the children's narratives, in the order they appeared to show the oscillation and ambivalences of children's narratives. Several girls agree with the negative narrative of lockdown, staying at home and living everything on the screen.

F5: I agree- like F2 (the same thing as F2) that from a certain point of view that it was hard for everyone the lockdown I agree (?) on the other side that it has taken away a little piece of our life no because yes there are days when I had fun at the beginning and I thought yes how beautiful we are all at home but then when the cases started to increase we were at home for many months (?)

F12: from a certain point of view I agree with Elisa that the lockdown was (?) but on the other hand I disagree that it has taken away a small piece of life because (it lasted) a year [...] it lasted a year and the school (?) in school I didn't eh (understood much) (?)

F3: I agree with F2 because:: however, being in front of a screen is much more difficult to understand and to hear (.) And I also agree with F2 because in any case it hasn't taken away a little piece of life it has taken a lot from us anyway

F14: I ehm agr- from one point- that on th- on the one hand I agree with both Elisa that it was difficult to stay: staying in lockdown even for the video lessons because maybe the connection (sometimes) worked and didn't- you couldn't understand well (0.3) and yet- [...] I also agree with eh F2 that mh did not take away a small piece of our life but a large piece of our life because we spent a year

F15: I agree with F2 and eh that eh m with video lessons with a screen it was not understood very well (?) I also had the covid and therefore I was a- two more months at home and it's not so nice with a screen seeing your mates there and you stay at home instead

However, M3 expresses his different point of view about the positive side of the lockdown for family life. This contribution initiates a new narrative, about the positive side of the lockdown for family life. F11, adapting the narrative of M3, stresses both positive and negative aspects of the lockdown, but basically insisting on family life.

M3: for me- from all their words I can understand that I am the only one who enjoyed staying at home for a while to disconnect from school because after four years you always do the same routine (stay) always at school for eight hours you hardly ever see your parents it is better to stay at home for a year with your parents and your family and have fun with them

F11: eh the first month of the lockdown I was very happy because I woke up late I did more or less what I wanted obviously at home - that is not (?) Oh well but after the first month I started to say (.) me too I want to see my mates again I miss these things here (or my grandmother) (the rest was) so nice because my father eh was at home from work eh we spent more time together because he now (he really works a lot) and therefore I see him very little

Following these contributions, another child introduces a variation in the narrative on family life during the lockdown, stressing its negative aspects, such as nostalgia for classmates. Moreover, F10 tells of her negative experience of family life, since parents did not change their working conditions and the child was left alone with her grandmother.

M?: I agree with F11, M9 and F1 because I mean to me for– firstly (?) finally I stay with my family a little bit and I detach a little from school and then after a month I realized that I had a bit of nostalgia for my mates because I missed them

F10: more or less the same as F11 felt because (also) my parents work a lot (.) but I don't understand his feeling of having his dad always at home because my dad (?) and therefore he went to work and my mom too and so I was at home alone with my grandmother and: my sister wasn't there I never remember because she wasn't there I think she slept all day and [...] and therefore I (I was anyway) alone with my grandmother who cannot do anything (?) She only knew how to make me pasta sit on the sofa and watch TV (.) I had to (.) In fact I have some of my companions (.) have anyway they learnt from mum or dad to make video lessons and instead I clicked all possible and imaginable buttons of the ipad in order to be able to enter (classroom)

F2 and F5 provide two very long narratives about the negative aspects of the lockdown concerning their learning experience. F2 also adds some details about the difficulties of being in presence in a space which prevents her to understand what is said, introducing the post-pandemic experience of school.

F2: however, this year too (fifth grade) I had a bit of difficulty because in any case, being tall, I'm always at the bottom because we are in a canteen that is very large and then we are (arranged) in a row so when I am at the bottom ( I don't hear many things) and maybe I don't even notice that the teacher said (?) then I lose some pieces (?) a::nd then I wanted to say something else, that is, I agree with (?) and the others because: (.) at the beginning I was very happy (because finally) I can rest (.) and only then eh (3.0) are that is, I missed them all I missed them too I missed the teachers- that is, in any case I missed doing my homework because (.) it was no longer my life because I was- I'm used to finishing school even now- I go home I do my homework and then I rest and instead (staying) at home I did the video lesson and and then I never knew what to do (after)

F5: I meant that I agree with (F10) and with M? (.) because at the beginning I was a little bit: that is I was- I was happy to be with my parents with my family (.) and then eh another thing that when during lessons the video lessons maybe (?) the file you can't hear the lesson well and then I wanted to say that I always agree with F2 because my sister and I (we) missed school so much so (we) played at school that there was like the bad headmaster who sent students (0.2) to punishment

M6 and F12 also stress the negative effects of the lockdown for relations with classmates, but M6 also remarks that the experience of distance teaching was interesting. M1 summarises the ambivalent aspects of his experience: missing classmates, enjoying remote connections and enjoying family life. On the contrary, F13 stresses the problems of remote connection.

M6: I totally agree with Elisa because eh in any case even in my opinion it is a small piece of life because in any case yes we have not seen the classmates face-to-face but we saw them in the video lesson and then I also wanted to say that (.) that for a month I too thought "yeah how nice to stay at home for a while" and then (?)

F12: eh during the quarantine as I have already said I had fun in the first months but then I was sad but anyway now I still have the nostalgia to be able to hug the classmates touch our hair we did the hairstyles for example with the F? and all such things and therefore also- even now that we can't do these things anyway it's a pain for me because I've always liked touching myself with my classmates to do (things like this)

M1: I wanted to say that I agree with Elisa because : it is not that it has taken away a - that is a large part of our life because yes obviously it is not the same to see our classmates from the lessons or face-to-face though mh let's say that (.) anyway we saw them and we had fun and anyway we (.) eh: mh we had the chance to stay with our parents because my mom (she works in a dental studio) so I never see her because she works from morning to night and I only see her when I go to sleep so it's nice to have (?)

F13 for me the lockdown at the beginning was good the school (?) doesn't eh I didn't enjoy it because the video lessons were not understood (you could hear everything) intermittent and then anyway (?)

M10 resumes the problem of the negative conditions of going back to school. M? introduces the narrative of the possibility to stay connected remotely with classmates, thus maintaining contact and friendship, followed by M4.

M10: I (.) agree with F? that but the first days- that is the first- the first week here (.) I felt a p- (.) happy but then all the other months I felt very thoughtful (.) I thought about school (?) but do- but then when we went back to school I didn't expect all this (.) that (.) because- because before- I mean, yes (the last few months) we started and went to the bathroom all- (they sent the whole class into the bathroom) (and we queued) and there was one who gave toilet paper, soap and paper towels and already (we had to put on) the mask we had to put the gel (?) and (after four me -) for a couple of months then (?)

M?m: (?) all year because we were alone finally eight hours here (we got tired) we had only one hour of class at last for at least a year and then we heard each other- we always heard each other- we always heard each other (2.0) ((interrogative gesture with right hand)) because I- aft- after the lesson of the teachers the teacher went we were still there:: we were still there talking and playing then (the teachers) came back and left immediately (?) ((interrogative gesture with right hand)) we made a video- we made video calls thousand- ((interrogative gesture with right hand))

M4: we have always been on video call every hour every hour I was on the phone on video call

F14 resumes the negative narrative of isolation without the relief of staying with family, while on the contrary F15 resumes the positive effect of lockdown on family life.

F14. That the first ones too the first weeks I said eh how nice no school for a while but then as time went by I realized that it was ugly, that is, it was very ugly because you had lessons but not being able to see the teachers really (?) eh mh then I couldn't have so much fun with my family a few times because they were always working

F15: I am – I mean I understand F- is F? is F2 because eh:: my parents work a lot my but- and they work together (in a bar) and my mom works whe::n some mornings she works from five to ten in the evening and and my dad comes in at eight (.) and before the covid my parents worked very hard and my mother would arrive at like four in the evening and I was already asleep for a long time and therefore staying three months together with my parents it was very nice

F11 provides a long narrative about the negative aspects of being isolated in the period between childhood and adolescence, during the last year of primary school, also stressing the limitations of wearing masks when going back to school and being prevented to continue the previous normal life.

F11: I- I want to say on something from before that I disagree with M1 because in any case it has not taken a small piece of life away from us but (?) also because we are in-between childhood and adolescence and therefore we could have done many things together but instead the covid hit us in the penultimate year of school and that we will all see together and now we are forced to stay with masks in the last year of school

with distances and it's bad because thinking about it when we won't see each other again and that we spent the last year like this and we expected it in another way maybe we could all be together singing (?) (all this) it's bad because we can't do anything all together practically hug each other and (.) (play on top of each other) things that (were) normal before

M11, a CMB, tells an unusual negative narrative of his playful experience. F2 and M1 resume the narrative of family life and school experience, in a rather unclear way, which is however neither corrected nor commented by the facilitator. F5 resumes the narrative about going back to school with masks and with the prohibition of touching each other and the disappointment for losing opportunities of relations.

M11 (m2): you can't even (?) I was very happy because I was at home and I didn't give a damn about everything (else) I played every day every day I did nothing else and I don't have thought of nothing (?) when I was sad (I didn't play)

F2: anyway (?) my parents because they were always at work and therefore- above all my father therefore in any case knowing that I could see them every day and playing all day with them (?) and I also meant mh I don't remember

M1: eh me eh when I was in lockdown I mean I liked the lockdown so much but eh (?) my classmates (?) I with my mom and my father in the car we went (?) To look for at the G. ((name of a place)) eh at the (?) if there was someone and there was no one

F2: I meant that I remember when we were (?) and was- I was looking (?) and I saw about this covid thing and (?) we immediately changed the search and started doing the research (?) and (we were) half an hour washing our hands (?) a house underground- underground and (.) and it seemed (a thing to) joke now but eh e- it was sad to know that (we had thought of these things to have fun) and now we don't have fun anymore [...] (?) That is always on (?) I was (?) on the truck some small tablecloths (?) and my father and I saw (?) and now know that (we are carrying it every day) and always being with the mask for eight hours is bad

F5: I agree with M? of what he said before that anyway now we have to put on the mask we can no longer touch each other and in any case also for my sister who is in the third grade eh she is losing a year in which she could- in which she could play- in which she could play (?) do whatever she wanted because she is still a bit small

Later, during the same meeting, M6 and F2 stress the risk of being absorbed by the media.

M6: before I met that boy I was more on television and on the phone so (.) mh:: I practically did not do physical activity at all after when I met him (.) we were able to (go) to play football and:: (.) one minute I couldn't run anymore I was exhausted

F2: I don't know if this has ever happened to anyone but in the lockdown I wrote long messages like this to my friends and mh::: I liked it because then maybe they would reply with an even longer message.

The facilitator concludes the conversation stressing the importance of resilience.

FACf: so this for example is another food for thought in my opinion, that is what can be done to (.) rebuild a piece of life in case this piece of life should fail us that is to find personal solutions (.) to be able to continue living OK? That is fine.

## **5. Schools after lockdown**

As some comments during the facilitated meetings stress, the long-awaited return to school disappointed several children. Children longed for contacts with friends, being and playing together but when schools were re-opened, the limitations imposed on social distancing made the contact between children still difficult. Although some children rationalised the changes as necessary for their learning, well-being and health, others (especially in Italy, Germany and the UK) voiced their concerns regarding physical separation from their peers, wearing masks (except the UK) or not having the opportunity to bring their own personal belongings to class. The school seemed very different than before: desks were separated from each other, activities were organized in smaller groups, each group of children was allocated a separate time and section to prevent children from interacting with each other. Children were not allowed to come close to each other. The organization of school and the school's rhythm also changed. According to some children, the school had become a sadder place than before lockdown:

It wasn't nice because you couldn't get close to anyone, for example, we can go at the blackboard to write down a calculation only if we have our own chalk, we have to sanitize ourselves, well it's not nice to be at a distance. (IT\_F32\_CH\_G)

The limitations were even more restrictive in the case of the unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy, who were still not allowed to take part in the activities outside their communities. In some cases, however, the new organization of school life had positive effects. In Germany, some children appreciated that due to smaller number of children in class they received better support from teachers, more space and better contact with classmates. Others reported that the experience of working in small groups helped to create bonds between children and strengthened them as a class.

What I found nice during the Corona time was that we grew together more, because we were together more often, also in the after-school care. Before the first lockdown, we always had separate compartments here on the property, and we all had to stay together in the after-school care, just one class, and we grew together much more. Well, I think that's just nice. (G\_F30\_CH\_F)

Teachers also benefited from these changes, although they pointed to different positive outcomes. For example, in Germany they appreciated working with smaller groups, since they found easier to manage, teach and address the needs of CMB. In the UK, relations with parents, especially those of younger children, improved as they had few moments to talk to each other when the child was picked up – something impossible during lockdown.

## **6. Conclusions**

The interviews stressed that the pandemic has especially affected children from vulnerable groups and at the risk of exclusion. One of the solutions implemented by all European countries to deal with the pandemic, albeit to varying extents, was remote teaching. CMB were seen as invisible during the period of remote teaching. Their lack of participation was primarily caused by digital divide and

digital illiteracy (of both children and parents), but also insufficient support from teachers and peers were important.

Despite some positive effects of remote teaching being mentioned by children and professionals, the dominant opinion was negative. For most children in all countries, remote teaching resulted in fatigue, difficulties in maintaining well-being, health and social relations. It also negatively affected interpersonal relations, limiting the opportunities for children to spend time together as well as adversely affecting the language skills of CMB. In terms of agency, the impact of the pandemic was two-fold. On the one hand, the pandemic limited the children's agency: their voices and opinions were not taken into account, and teachers consulted their parents on issues related to their education. On the other hand, the older children saw this period as one which developed their sense of autonomy, responsibility, and self-control.

When facilitation left the floor to conversations among the children, they were able to express personally, displaying their agency in narrating the experiences of lockdown and, although marginally, the experience of going back to school. Children talked of their personal experiences and sometimes denied the negative aspects of pandemic and the positive aspects of returning to school. The experience of lockdown was very relevant for children, as it could be expected, but this experience was not always completely negative. The difference between negative and positive narratives depended on three factors regarding children's experience: (1) the intensity and importance of the experience of family life; (2) the relevance of relations with classmates; (3) children's interest in school and learning. These three factors were combined differently in different narratives as basic elements to evaluate personal experiences. Although the negative experience of lockdown may be predominant and based on negative feelings about isolation, lockdown was also seen by some children as an opportunity for affective relations and autonomous management of personal actions. This rather ambivalent result is important to reflect on the ways in which children leave their family and schools relations.

It is also important to reflect on the impact on children's narratives of the difference between a more guided form of invitation to reflect and narrate, as in the case of interviews, and an autonomous narratives and reflection, as in facilitated meetings. A difference was also evident between the English and Italian cases of facilitation. In the English case, narratives were more fragmented, as interlaced with teachers' frequent contributions, although these contributions did not prevent children from taking the floor and showing agency. In the Italian case, children's narratives were continuously and fluidly interlaced, showing their interest in taking the initiative on their experiences and emotions and thus showing their exercise of agency.

## **Chapter 10. Children's evaluations of activities.**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter reports the analysis of post-test questionnaires and focus group interviews with children to provide a general overview of children's observation and evaluation of the activities. The evaluation of successful practices necessarily includes the children's point of view, if children's agency is taken seriously. This does not mean that children's evaluation does necessarily correspond to what is a good practice from the point of view of a researcher. Moreover, the necessity of data aggregation, which responds to the necessary respect of ethics regarding sensitive data, does not allow specific and refined analyses of evaluation of single activities. The analysis of aggregated data is anyway important to understand if classroom activities are affective from the children's point of view. However, several factors suggest being careful about the children's evaluation of the data, including:

1. The different impact of pandemic and voluntary participation of children and teachers in different countries.
2. The relevant differences in terms of numbers of participant in different local contexts, ranging from very few to more than 500.
3. The different distribution among types of school, age and school experiences.
4. The differences between social e and cultural contexts.
5. The differences between types of activities and teaching/facilitation.

These factors lead to renounce to highlight differences about activities in different countries, which are not shown in tables and should be considered very carefully. Some data will be carefully commented in the following analysis

### **2. Post-test questionnaires: evaluation of the activities**

In this sections we shall use prevalently the post-test questionnaires, which concerned the activities. Occasionally, we shall also compare the results from these post-test questionnaires with the results of the pre-test questionnaires concerning the school experience before the activities. However, the comparison between these two types of data is also problematic since the pre-test questionnaires regarded what happened in the classroom in general, while the post-test questionnaires concerned specific activities.

For reasons of simplification, we shall only present the percentages of "positive" evaluations in post-test questionnaires, although comments on the negative evaluations will be stressed when relevant. In the case in which the values were three - "very much", "not so much" and "not at all" – only the value "very much" is shown. In the case in which the values are four – always, often, sometimes, never - the positive value is the sum of "always" and "often".

Table 1 shows the children's evaluation of personal outcomes of the activities. More than 60% had fun, learned new things and got easily involved during the activities. Almost 60% did something new.

On the contrary, only 46.5% discovered new thing about others and 33.3% about themselves. However, only 14% of children did not discover new things about others at all, and 27% about themselves. It may be added that in the German and (small) Finnish contexts, personal outcomes were much less frequently positive than in the other local contexts.

**Table 1. Personal outcomes of the activities**

	Very much		Not at all	
	n.	%	n.	%
I did something new	767	59,50	114	8,84
I had fun	733	<b>63,14</b>	97	8,35
I learned new things	882	<b>68,96</b>	83	6,49
I discovered new things about others	598	<b>46,50</b>	180	14,00
I discovered new things about myself	428	<b>33,31</b>	348	27,08
It was easy to get involved	826	<b>64,73</b>	96	7,52
Total	4539	54,57	1225	14,73

Differences among ISCED are rather scattered and it is important to bear in mind that they are differently distributed among the research areas. ISCED 1 children had rarely fun (in particular fun was not very frequent in the UK context) and learned new things less frequently than ISCED 2 and 3 children. However, they discovered new things much more frequently (in particular in the UK context). Adolescents claimed less frequently that they did something new. It was a bit more frequently easier to get involved for ISCED 2 children.

**Table 2. Personal outcomes by ISCED**

Very much	ISCED1		ISCED2		ISCED3	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
I did something new	382	60,16	249	57,24	136	<b>45,18</b>
I had fun	244	<b>38,43</b>	305	70,11	184	61,13
I learned new things	376	<b>59,21</b>	294	67,59	212	70,43
I discovered new things about others	324	<b>51,02</b>	163	37,47	111	36,88
I discovered new things about myself	301	<b>47,40</b>	72	16,55	55	18,27
It was easy to get involved	373	58,74	281	<b>64,60</b>	172	57,14

Gender differences were not relevant. A rather limited difference only concerned discovering new things about others which was more frequent among boys.

**Table 3. Personal outcomes by gender**

Very much	Female		Male	
	n.	%	n.	%
I did something new	412	56,05	345	56,93
I had fun	396	53,88	326	53,80
I learned new things	481	65,44	391	64,52
I discovered new things about others	308	41,90	278	45,87
I discovered new things about myself	224	30,48	197	32,51
It was easy to get involved	439	59,73	374	61,72

There were neither substantial differences between CMB and native children. However, learning new things and above all discovering new things about themselves were more frequent among CMB. **This shows that the activities were important for CMB’s self-awareness in more than one third of cases.**

**Table 4. Personal outcomes by migrant/native condition**

Very much	CMB		Native	
	n.	%	n.	%
I did something new	377	56,61	380	55,31
I had fun	352	52,85	375	54,59
I learned new things	449	<b>67,42</b>	425	61,86
I discovered new things about others	292	43,84	300	43,67
I discovered new things about myself	243	<b>36,49</b>	180	26,20
It was easy to get involved	395	59,31	425	61,86

Table 5 compares the outcomes during the activities and classrooms relations as shown by the pre-test before the activities. Relations during the activities concerned a short period of time and were based on specific objectives. Differences were somewhat relevant in few cases. It is interesting to note that problems were higher during the activities. Telling stories, self-expressing and expressing points of view were also a bit less frequent. However, these differences depended above all on variations between local contexts.

**Table 5. Comparison of personal outcomes during and before the activities**

Always + often	During activities		Before activities	
	n.	%	n.	%
I felt well	1182	86,22	1232	84,85
I had some problems	569	41,50	405	27,38
I liked to talk	1042	76,00	1100	75,76
I shared opinions	922	67,25	965	66,46
I told stories to others	680	49,59	801	55,70
I learned from others	883	64,40	968	66,66
I could express myself	916	66,82	1040	71,62
I could express my point of view	847	61,78	960	66,12
I expressed different points of view	888	64,77	-	-
I shared experiences with others	801	58,42	913	62,88
I shared feelings with others	703	51,28	722	49,73

A simplified version of personal outcomes regarded ISCED 0 children in Germany and Italy. Table 6 shows that in the Italian context children very frequently felt fine and learned something new, while in the German context they above all got on well together. While the values are not very high, in the Italian context children “could say” much more frequently than in the German context.

**Tab 6. Personal outcomes during the activities for ISCED 0 (%)**

Very much	IT	DE
I felt fine	73,63	56,72
we got on well together	32,97	62,69
I could say, what I want	56,04	35,82
I learned something new	80,22	47,76
I could say, if I did not like something	39,56	11,94

Table 7 shows that, during the activities, ISCED 1 children had much more frequently relational problems, when compared with ISCED 2 and ISCED 3. Once again, this seems to be linked to the UK context. However, other relational outcomes, such as liking to talk, sharing opinions, learning from others, above all telling stories, sharing experiences and feelings, were much more positive among ISCED 1 children. This shows that these children did not consider these relational outcomes

as relevant for enjoying the activities and for their personal outcomes. Almost all ISCED 3 adolescents felt well during the activities and very few had problems, despite scarce levels of sharing stories, experiences and feelings.

**Table 7. Relational outcomes of activities by ISCED**

Always + Often	ISCED1		ISCED2		ISCED3	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
feeling well	520	81,89	380	87,36	282	<b>93,69</b>
having some problems	402	63,31	112	25,75	55	<b>18,27</b>
liking to talk	504	<b>79,37</b>	320	73,56	218	<b>72,43</b>
sharing opinions	490	<b>77,17</b>	264	60,69	168	55,81
telling stories to others	450	<b>70,87</b>	138	31,72	92	30,56
learning from others	481	<b>75,75</b>	232	53,33	170	56,48
expressing	494	<b>77,80</b>	199	45,75	223	74,09
expressing points of view	495	<b>77,95</b>	272	62,53	80	26,58
expressing different points of view	469	<b>73,86</b>	251	57,70	168	55,81
sharing experiences	471	<b>74,17</b>	196	45,06	134	44,52
sharing feelings	437	<b>68,82</b>	154	35,40	112	37,21

Table 8 shows a specific question about relational outcomes proposed to ISCED 0 children. In the German context, it is confirmed the importance of mutual listening, while in the Italian context mutual help, educator's support asking and saying, being together were more frequent. It may be noted, however, that in Italy there was also a more frequent perception of hierarchical relations (educators said what to do).

**Table 8. Relational outcomes for ISCED 0 (%)**

Very much	IT	DE
we listened to each other	29,67	<b>50,75</b>
we helped each other	<b>45,05</b>	38,81
educator helped me	<b>51,65</b>	43,28
could I ask, if necessary	<b>47,25</b>	37,31
I could say, if I did not want something	<b>60,44</b>	28,36
I could say, if I wanted something or had an idea	29,67	25,37
educators said what to do	<b>48,35</b>	11,94

I liked to be together with the other children	<b>60,44</b>	38,81
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Table 9 shows that during the activities, girls and boys were almost on the same line. Boys told stories more frequently and girls expressed themselves more frequently, although boys expressed more frequently different points of view and shared more frequently their experiences.

**Table 9. Relational outcomes of activities by gender during the activities**

Always + Often	Female		Male	
	n.	%	n.	%
feeling well	641	87,21	518	85,48
having some problems	300	40,82	261	43,07
liking to talk	551	74,97	471	77,72
sharing opinions	490	66,67	413	68,15
telling stories to others	351	47,76	317	<b>52,31</b>
learning from others	467	63,54	401	66,17
expressing	501	<b>68,16</b>	392	64,69
expressing points of view	454	61,77	378	62,38
expressing different points of view	467	63,54	408	<b>67,33</b>
sharing experiences	404	54,97	383	<b>63,20</b>
sharing feelings	371	50,48	320	52,81

Table 10 shows that differences between CMB and native children. First, CMB perceived much more frequently problems than native children. However, CMB also tended to express and share feelings more frequently. CMB also declared more frequently to learn from others, while native children more frequently expressed their points of view. In general, there are no other differences between CMB and native children.

**Table 10. Relational outcomes of activities by CMB/native condition**

Always + Often	CMB		Native	
	n.	%	n.	%
feeling well	578	86,79	595	86,61
having some problems	323	<b>48,50</b>	238	34,64
liking to talk	514	77,18	519	75,55
sharing opinions	451	67,72	464	67,54
telling stories to others	343	51,50	332	48,33

learning from others	447	<b>67,12</b>	429	62,45
expressing	480	<b>72,07</b>	431	62,74
expressing points of view	378	56,76	468	<b>68,12</b>
expressing different points of view	448	<b>67,27</b>	433	63,03
sharing experiences	401	60,21	392	57,06
sharing feelings	365	<b>54,80</b>	330	48,03

Table 11 shows that respect, understanding, appreciation, consideration and sharing have been more frequent during the activities than before the activities. It may be noted that during the activities the German context and the Finnish context to some extent, were much less favourable for what concerns the perception of others' reactions

**Table 11. Comparing perception of others' reactions**

Always + often	During activities		Before activities	
	n.	%	n.	%
Respected	1174	<b>85,63</b>	1139	78,44
Understood	1124	<b>81,98</b>	1081	74,45
Appreciated	1088	<b>79,36</b>	1083	74,59
Considered as important	960	<b>70,02</b>	847	58,33
Shared	1010	<b>73,67</b>	952	65,56
Assessed	709	51,72	761	52,41

Table 12 shows differences between ISCED are rather relevant. ISCED 1 children perceived more frequently respect, appreciation, importance and sharing; this was clearly influenced by the appreciation shown in the London context. ISCED 3 adolescents also perceived respect in a high percentage of cases and this was probably influenced by the Belgian - and more marginally Sweden - contexts. ISCED 2 children observed much less frequently assessments, but also less frequent appreciation. By the way, others' reactions to children's actions were perceived much more positively during the activities than before the activities.

**Table 12. Perception of others' reactions by ISCED**

Always+ Often	ISCED1		ISCED2		ISCED3	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Respected	539	<b>84,88</b>	362	83,22	273	<b>90,70</b>
Understood	524	82,52	350	80,46	250	83,06

Appreciated	526	<b>82,83</b>	326	<b>74,94</b>	236	78,41
Considered as important	490	<b>77,17</b>	277	63,68	193	64,12
Shared	507	<b>79,84</b>	298	68,51	205	68,11
Assessed	401	63,15	139	<b>31,95</b>	169	56,15

Table 13 shows that gender differences are irrelevant also for what concerns the perception of others' reactions.

**Table 13. Perception of others' reactions by gender**

Always + Often	Female		Male	
	n.	%	n.	%
Respected	633	86,12	518	85,48
Understood	611	83,13	492	81,19
Appreciated	584	79,46	486	80,20
Considered as important	515	70,07	429	70,79
Shared	549	74,69	441	72,77
Assessed	387	52,65	309	50,99

A very interesting result concerns the difference in perception of others' reaction between CMB and native children. Table 14 clearly shows that higher percentages of CMB perceive all reactions, thus respect, understanding, appreciation, consideration sharing and finally, with a very large difference, assessment. This shows CMB's high sensitivity for the interaction both in positive and negative (assessment) terms, but also that the activities did not present differences among CMB and native children.

**Table 14. Perception of others' reactions by CMB/native condition.**

Always + Often	During activities			
	CMB		Natives	
	n.	%	n.	%
Respected	585	<b>87,84</b>	577	83,99
Understood	566	<b>84,98</b>	549	79,91
Appreciated	550	<b>82,58</b>	528	76,86
Considered as important	480	<b>72,07</b>	473	68,85

Shared	521	<b>78,23</b>	481	70,01
Assessed	433	65,02	268	39,01

Table 15, shows that there were few relevant differences between reactions to others' self-disclosure during the activities and before the activities. The most interesting differences concerns the reduction of mocking. Another interesting difference concerned asking questions which were less frequent. Finally, also telling of themselves was less frequent. This is probably linked to the difference between the general condition of being together in the classroom and the formal activities during the project. In the German context, all percentages regarding the activities were lower.

**Table 15. Reactions to self-disclosure during and before the activities**

Always-often	During activities		Before activities	
	n.	%	n.	%
I found that nice	1128	82,28	1184	81,55
I got bored	511	37,28	559	38,50
I was amused	1010	73,67	1094	75,34
I mocked them	485	<b>35,38</b>	665	45,79
I asked questions	751	<b>54,78</b>	984	67,77
I told of myself too	709	<b>51,71</b>	818	56,33
I felt annoyed	462	33,70	428	29,48
I found their talk interesting	1088	79,36	1098	75,62
I believed them	1088	79,35	1105	76,10
I joined them in their talking	967	70,53	1015	69,90

Table 16 shows that ISCED 1 children get bored, felt annoyed and mocked much more frequently than ISCED 2 and 3. This may be surprising when it is compared with the other ISCED 1 children positive reactions. Together with negative reactions, ISCED 1 children were also much more frequently amused, asked much more frequently questions and above all told much more frequently of themselves and joined much more frequently others in talking. Once again, the results from the London context strongly influence these results for ISCED 1, but for what concerns the positive results, the Italian context is also relevant. It is also important to stress the very positive reactions of ISCED 3 adolescents.

**Table 16. Reactions to self-disclosure by ISCED**

Always + Often	During activities		
	ISCED1	ISCED2	ISCED3

	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Finding nice	515	81,10	355	81,61	258	<b>85,71</b>
Getting bored	377	<b>59,37</b>	88	<b>20,23</b>	46	<b>15,28</b>
Being amused	519	<b>81,73</b>	284	65,29	207	68,77
mocking	380	<b>59,84</b>	58	<b>13,33</b>	47	<b>15,61</b>
asking questions	464	<b>73,07</b>	182	41,84	105	34,88
Telling of myself too	457	<b>71,97</b>	144	33,10	108	35,88
Feeling annoyed	373	<b>58,74</b>	55	<b>12,64</b>	34	<b>11,30</b>
Finding talk interesting	519	<b>81,73</b>	342	78,62	227	75,42
Believing	513	80,79	347	79,77	228	75,75
Joining in talking	527	<b>82,99</b>	270	62,07	170	56,48

Gender differences were almost irrelevant. However, it is interesting to notice that boys mocked and got annoyed more frequently than girls and girls found more frequently self-disclosure nice as well as interesting and believable than boys.

**Table 17. Reactions to self-disclosure by gender during the activities**

Always + Often	Female		Male	
	n.	%	n.	%
Finding nice	630	<b>85,71</b>	478	78,88
Getting bored	268	36,46	234	38,61
Being amused	549	74,69	442	72,94
mocking	244	<b>33,20</b>	233	<b>38,45</b>
asking questions	395	53,74	344	56,77
Telling of myself too	374	50,88	327	53,96
Feeling annoyed	237	<b>32,24</b>	220	<b>36,30</b>
Finding talk interesting	602	<b>81,90</b>	467	77,06
Believing	600	<b>81,63</b>	467	77,06
Joining in talking	513	69,80	437	<b>72,11</b>

Table 18 shows that for what concerns reactions to others' self-disclosure, the percentages of CMB are higher for almost all variables. However, these percentages also show some negative aspects, concerning mocking and above all getting bored and feeling annoyed. On the one hand, CMB confirm their sensitivity for the interaction, on the other hand, this sensitivity does not always lead to positive outcomes.

**Table 18. Reactions to self-disclosure by CMB/native condition**

Always + Often	CMB		Natives	
	n.	%	n.	%
Finding nice	563	<b>84,53</b>	555	80,79
Getting bored	286	<b>42,94</b>	221	32,17
Being amused	503	<b>75,53</b>	498	72,49
mocking	271	<b>40,69</b>	213	31,00
asking questions	386	<b>57,96</b>	359	52,26
Telling of myself too	373	<b>56,01</b>	332	48,33
Feeling annoyed	264	<b>39,64</b>	195	28,38
Finding talk interesting	531	79,73	548	79,77
Believing	525	78,83	553	80,49
Joining in talking	479	71,92	479	69,72

For ISCED 0 children, simplified questions were used to investigate relations. Only very few children answered in the German context, while many more answered in the Italian context with very positive outcomes (57.75% of very positive relations).

Table 19 shows that the activities were most frequently defined by children as dialogic teaching and support of self-expression. However, evaluation was observed by 32% of children. In the German context, dialoguing teaching, support of self-expression and dialogue were much less frequent.

**Table 19. Definition of activities (more answers possible)**

	N.	%
Dialoguing teaching	949	<b>69,22</b>
Evaluation of children's tasks	442	32,24
Support of children's expression of experiences, views, feelings	822	<b>59,96</b>
Dialogue	674	49,16
Another way	99	7,22

Table 20 shows that ISCED 1 children gave more frequent answers for all variables, once again under the influence of the London context, but also of the Italian context for what concerns dialogic teaching and support of personal expressions. Thus, they more frequently considered activities as dialogic teaching and above all much more frequently as support of their expressions and as dialogue. However, they also considered much more frequently the importance of evaluation, which was instead observed very rarely by adolescents.

**Table 20. Definition of activities by ISCED**

	ISCED1		ISCED2		ISCED3	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Dialoguing teaching	455	<b>71,65</b>	298	68,51	196	65,12
Evaluation of tasks	307	<b>48,35</b>	93	21,38	42	<b>13,95</b>
Support of expressions	517	<b>81,42</b>	180	41,38	125	41,53
Dialogue	405	<b>63,78</b>	141	32,41	128	42,52
another way	42	6,61	45	10,34	12	3,99

Gender differences were minimal in defining the activities. Only evaluation is more frequently chosen by boys than girls.

**Table 21. Definition of activities by gender**

	Female		Male	
	n.	%	n.	%
Dialoguing teaching	501	68,16	432	71,29
Evaluation of children's tasks	218	29,66	210	<b>34,65</b>
Support of children's expression of experiences, views, feelings	454	61,77	356	58,75
Dialogue	369	50,20	292	48,18
Another way	46	6,26	48	7,92

Table 22 shows that CMB chose less frequently the definitions of activities as dialogic teaching and support of expression, and more frequently the definition of dialogue. They also perceived less frequently the evaluation of tasks.

**Table 22. Definition of activities by CMB/native condition**

	CMB		Natives	
	n.	%	n.	%
Dialoguing teaching	467	63,54	471	<b>77,72</b>
Evaluation of children's tasks	225	<b>30,61</b>	210	34,65
Support of children's expression of experiences, views, feelings	407	55,37	408	<b>67,33</b>
Dialogue	379	<b>51,56</b>	286	47,19
Another way	40	5,44	53	8,75

The last tables regard the experience of the whole activity. Table 23 shows that the experience was defined positively by 68.8% of children and negative only by 7.5%. A number of children (17.7%) decided to avoid a clear evaluation of their experiences. Positive evaluation was much less frequent in the Finnish and German contexts. However, while respondents from the German context might give some contribution to the overall result, respondents were very few in the Finnish context. Conversely, positive experience was particularly frequent in the (small) Swedish context, in the Polish context and in the very numerous Italian context.

**Table 23. Experience of activities**

	n.	%
Positive	944	<b>68,85</b>
Negative	103	7,51
Neither positive nor negative	243	17,72
Missing	81	5,91
Total	1371	100

ISCED 0 children in the German context were more frequently positive than the other children in the same context and ISCED 0 children in the Italian context were also very frequently positive.

Experience was more frequently positive for adolescents, which is a very interesting result, and less frequently positive for ISCED 1 children who were also much more frequently negative. This evaluation of the experience is strongly influenced by the UK context (20% of negative evaluations).

**Table 24. Experience by ISCED**

	ISCED1		ISCED2		ISCED3	
Positive	390	<b>61,42</b>	312	71,72	242	<b>80,40</b>
Negative	86	<b>13,54</b>	16	3,68	1	0,33
Neither positive nor negative	108	17,01	85	19,54	50	16,61
Missing	51	8,03	22	5,06	8	2,66
Total	635	100	435	100	301	100

Once again, gender differences were irrelevant in the evaluation of the experience.

**Table 25. Experience by gender**

	Female		Male	
Positive	518	70,48	413	68,15

Negative	49	6,67	54	8,91
Neither positive nor negative	124	16,87	108	17,82
Missing	41	5,58	31	5,12
Total	735	100	606	100

Finally, experience of activities was substantially the same for CMB and native children.

**Table 26. Experience by CMB/native condition.**

	CMB		Natives	
	n.	%	n.	%
Positive	467	70,12	474	69,00
Negative	51	7,66	50	7,28
Neither positive nor negative	117	17,57	119	17,32
Missing	31	4,65	44	6,40
Total	666	100	687	100

### 3. Analysis of focus group interviews

In all focus group interviews, the very large majority of children declared appreciation for the activities in which they were involved. This shows that in this type of collective sharing of assessments, the majority who considered the activities in a positive way prevails on the small minority, although in some cases, dissonant voices emerged, helping to explain what could not work. Thus, focus group interviews are important to highlight the reasons for positive and (sometimes) negative assessments of activities provided through the questionnaires. In Poland and Sweden, it was not possible to realise this type of focus group interviews.

Focus groups were not possible in all countries, either for the conditions of access to schools and for other reasons determined by the school constraints. In particular, focus groups were not realised in Poland and Sweden and were not realised for all activities in Belgium and Germany. In Germany, at least a focus group was conducted in each involved class. An important general observation is that children's assessment of activities, relations and teacher/facilitator way of acting are influenced by the different social and cultural contexts of school experiences. Thus, different forms of teaching may be seen differently in different situations and teacher's interest in promoting children's participation may be seen differently in different contexts.

### ***3.1 General level of appreciation of activities***

In **Italy**, activities were appreciated. The activities were fun and allowed children's learning of new skills and competencies, children's discovery of something about classmates that they would not have discovered otherwise and that were sometimes surprising. Children were happy to have time to spend talking to each other and to express themselves, their experiences, opinions, emotions and feelings, with both classmates and teachers. Appreciation mostly concerned knowing classmates better, learning to communicate better with classmates, talking about everybody's ideas, solving conflicts and improving mutual openness and support. They appreciated talking about different things, to tell their stories and opinions, listening to classmates' stories and decentralizing their points of view, through storytelling and reflection on different perspectives or through group activities. This was made possible by the relaxed atmosphere and trust created during the meetings: children felt free to express themselves and felt accepted in all their expressions. The activities promoted opportunities for sharing experiences, not only with close friends but also with people with whom children were not very familiar. Some children claimed they were so involved in discovering others' experiences and new things that they shared less about their own. Even those who did not share much claimed they always felt accepted. Some children claimed for some changes: more but shorter meetings, autonomous involvement based on individual research, and better adaptation of activities to their needs, for instance dealing with conflicts and problems between classmates instead of reflecting on abstract examples and cases. Lack of appreciation was rarely expressed. In particular, in two classes attending the same type of workshop, almost half of children expressed perplexities, since they found the activities boring or embarrassing. In two classes, children also expressed their embarrassment in being videorecorded during the activities. Preschoolers did not appreciate sitting for too long and disagreeing with others. In one ISCED 1 class, some children claimed they had not many opportunities to talk about personal experiences. In another class involved in the same type of activity, some children said that they felt more skilful in expressing themselves with words, and thus they would have liked to talk more frequently rather than using the body.

In the **UK**, the positive evaluation of activities was based on three points. First, children appreciated the possibility to share their experiences during the pandemic, a truly shocking time of their lives. Second, children appreciated the opportunity to listen to other children's stories. Third, children appreciated the possibility to observe similarities and differences and to empathise with their classmates, after long and often repeated period of separation. The possibility to express feelings and opinions was the most appreciated characteristic of the activities. Children positioned themselves as competent participants in communication, without any contribution that suggest possible difficulties in contributing to the activities. However, due to the size of the focus groups, some children did not contribute much or did not contribute at all to the discussion. It is interesting to observe that some children did mention the efforts of teacher in making everyone feel safe and comfortable, for instance by emphasizing that there are not right or wrong stories or that a story, short or long, simple, or richer is valued the same. Across all focus groups, children affirmed that it was easy to share stories, without being preoccupied about sharing personal experiences.

In **Belgium**, children liked the special classes to improve language. They said they were developing their skills and they appreciated that they could express themselves, joke and laugh. They also liked

being free to talk and to make choices during the activity. Some children said that they liked the activity because they could help each other. Children also said they liked learning new things and doing different things. Only two children reported not liking the activity. However, it was difficult for the children to answer in regard to their possibility of expression in the specified activities. The activities did not lend themselves well to expressing opinions and feelings. In general, across all of the focus groups, the children said they felt they could express their opinions and speak out. Therefore, although none of the activities focused on the sharing of experiences, in general the children said they felt they could express themselves and that they all listened to each other. However, several children – mostly female – stated that they were either too timid to speak out in front of the group, or that they were afraid of being made fun of. They explained that sometimes there were disputes or someone would make fun of what they said.

In **Finland**, the main reason for enjoying the activities was the use of discussion as the main way of teaching. Pupils felt it gave them a low-threshold opportunity to participate and learn actively. Teaching created a comfortable atmosphere in class which encouraged talking, sharing, and participating. Children felt that there was enough time for learning and there was no hurry. Children felt that dialogue gave room for them to express their views and opinions, and, in many cases especially on ISCED2 level, this was a must as there were a lot of activities building on self-expression in pairs or in small groups. Even ISCED 1 pupils did find ways for self-expression although activities were more teacher-led than on ISCED 2 level.

In **Germany**, children especially liked the activities when they were able to achieve goals they had set for themselves, when they experienced self-efficacy, when they were allowed to decide things themselves and had active opportunities to participate, when group-strengthening games were played, and when the teachers were seen as sympathetic. The children felt comfortable when they were appreciated, not only by the teacher, but also by their classmates. This respectful atmosphere allowed the children to speak freely about their opinions and feelings. Some children emphasised that they did not say very much, but that there was the possibility and atmosphere to do so. The children were able to formulate their points of view and verbalise their needs. The activities always gave the children the opportunity to reflect on their own situations.

### ***3.2 Peer relations and expression of different points of view***

In **Italy**, group work was appreciated as an enjoyable activity, and as a new skill. In particular, activities dealing with cultural diversity were appreciated since they allowed children's learning on differences and similarities. Relationships with peers were evaluated positively, especially because children had fun together and had a chance to listen to each other. In particular, in Genoa, children observed how group work enhanced expression of different perspectives, collaboration and promotion of participation even of those classmates who were shy. The activities improved peer relationships because they allowed children's engagement in communication with peers and expressions of perspectives in the group. Some children in an ISCED 1 class found some activities useless because they already knew very well their classmates and they did not know them better. However, there was a polarization based on gender between those who appreciated the activity and

those who did not: all girls expressed a positive evaluation and almost all boys a negative one. The majority of children observed expression of different views during the activities. While the ISCED 0 groups expressed disappointment for this, in the other focus groups expressing different points of view was considered normal, different opinions were seen as an enrichment, an opportunity for growing and knowing better classmates. Children also expressed their favour of dialogue and choice of a shared solution which did not leave any of the participants disappointed. For some children, the value of different perspective depends on the way they are expressed. However, different perspectives were mostly expressed and treated with respect, avoiding comments and everyone had a chance to express and compare different views. Only some children in two classes in Genoa expressed discomfort in group work including conflicts between different perspectives. Only few children thought that the activities were not positive since there were conflicts, for instance related to gender or difficult negotiations: these children preferred to make their choices autonomously.

In the **UK**, there was a general agreement on the recognition of positive, non-conflictual relationships with classmates during the activities. Children in the English settings constructed a positive image of social relationships at school, where conflicts are rare and generally inconsequential. No children expressed discomfort in the participation in the activities due to fear of being mocked, or made fun of, from others. It is possible that the activities were designed to facilitate active participation in the sense of sharing personal stories rather than opinions, thus making conflict and disagreements less relevant.

In **Belgium**, children appeared to be at ease and willing to share openly in front of each other. It was rare for a child to remain silent for the duration of the meeting and in the cases where children were particularly hesitant to speak out, it tended to be children who did not yet feel comfortable speaking French. Children talked over each other sometimes, but eventually everyone who wanted to speak was able to. They joked with each other and asked one another questions sometimes. Children said that, in general, everyone got along well. However, as soon as someone spoke up to say they were afraid to speak out during the activity because they might be mocked, others in the group agreed with them. Then the consensus in the groups shifted and children said that mostly they got along, but sometimes people made fun of each other or there were disputes. In general, children saw the classroom as a place where it was safe to make mistakes because mistakes were a part of the learning process. A major theme was that classmates helped each other and they enjoyed helping each other. A technique used by all the teachers was to ask the class if they agreed with a child's answer. During the focus groups, the children said it was not a problem to disagree. They said that they were in school to learn, so disagreements were normal. One focus group, however, said that disputes often arose in the class. They said that the teacher would intervene in these instances, and that she wanted everyone to calmly listen to everyone else. They reported finding this reassuring.

In **Finland**, the groups had already formed well-established relations during the year, and some during the years. They expressed favour for group dynamics as children said they got along well. Interviewees said that differing opinions are a norm in class and that they emerge on a daily basis. Everyone's opinions are heard and respected unless they are offensive to others.

In **Germany**, the children stated that they perceived the relationships in their class to be very good

and supportive. They especially liked it when they could choose group members for individual activities. In this way, everyone could decide who they preferred to work with in that activity. Especially through class discussions, the children could solve problems and difficulties among themselves and fairly. They had these discussions either alone or together with the whole class and the teacher, also during activities. The teachers were mainly divided by the children into nice and stricter. Stricter had no effect on freedom of expression, only on volume tolerance and 'punishments'. In addition, integration staff or extra pedagogical staff in the classroom were particularly appreciated by the children. CMB and children experiencing language difficulties said that they were sometimes not understood properly. If it was a familiar language, such as English, they had the opportunity to ask questions and express difficulties in their own language. With other languages, this was more difficult and so was the expression of opinions.

#### **4. Evaluation of facilitation**

In **Italy**, children recognised that facilitation made it possible to establish communication rules that encouraged dialogue and mutual listening. They helped to respect turns of talk, rather than talking one over the other. Sometimes the facilitator was seen as a mediator trying to find shared solutions. Especially in Genoa, all facilitators gave voice to different views, allowing children to give reasons and motivations behind their answers. This approach gave children the chance of communicating better with classmates, especially those who were usually more silent because they feared judgments from other children. The large majority of groups expressed satisfaction about the relations with facilitators. The ability to establish affective relationships, which supported the expression of children who felt free to speak and listened, was emphasised by many children. Sympathy as well as explaining things in an effective, fun and playful way, were appreciated by the children. Helpfulness, kindness and patience were also stressed by the children. In few cases, some children reported problems. In one case, children claimed that the facilitator sometimes used terms that they found too difficult. The group that worked remotely about music stressed the limits of the interaction between the children and the facilitator, in particular highlighted some problems of understanding. Finally, in the theatre workshop, some children stated that the facilitator was sometimes too severe and cold, and some felt too much under control.

In the **UK**, children described their relationship with teachers during the activities as positive and free from conflicts. Interestingly, children's observation of differences/similarities between ordinary teaching and the activities was complex and multi-layered. Children did appreciate the possibility to share personal stories, accessing the role of active contributors to the generation of knowledge. This was signalled by participants in the focus groups as a difference with respect to ordinary teaching. However, when asked about the relationships with teachers, children did not seem to notice a similarly strong difference between "normal" teaching and the activities. During the activities, teachers were still acknowledged by children as the leaders and the managers of communication, introducing topics and managing turn taking. Whilst the opportunity for personal expression was recognised by children, *how* this opportunity was practiced relates to a teacher-centred management of participation.

In **Belgium**, children generally reported having good relationships with the teacher and stated that they felt comfortable during the activities and could ask questions. They generally also felt that their teachers listened to them and supported them in instances when someone tried to make fun of them.

In one focus group, the children appreciated that the teacher punished people who made fun of others. In another focus group, they said the teacher made them sign contracts with her if they misbehaved. The children in a third focus group said that during the activity the teacher yelled less than she normally does. This came as a surprise to the researchers who had both written in their observation notes that the teacher was unusually forceful and she yelled a great deal to discipline the children. The children said that the teacher does not often leave them to work on their own like she did today, and that she yells a lot, but it does not usually bother them. They said they felt like they could ask questions, but they hesitated sometimes because the teacher might be annoyed. They know she does not like being asked the same question multiple times. They said they know it is ok to make mistakes, because they learn from their mistakes, but the teacher does not like it when they make the same mistake over and over. They ended the discussion by saying they felt the teacher worked hard for them, and they thought she had spent a lot of time preparing the games that they enjoyed so much.

In **Finland**, most interviewees valued the teacher as a responsive, respectful, and an understanding figure who could be easily approached and talked to. There was no fear of giving a “wrong” answer, for example.

In **Germany**, teachers and educators were seen as supporters and companions. The teachers saw themselves as learning guides. From the children’s point of view, the teachers knew the framework conditions and were responsible for ensuring that they are adhered to. In the public school, the children saw the teachers as mediators of knowledge.

## 5. Conclusions

The combination of post-test questionnaires and focus group interviews highlights the children’s important point of view on the activities in which they participated. The questionnaire reveals that a large majority of children appreciated the activities and CMB in particular considered them enjoyable and effective. Thus, it seems that the promotion of hybrid integration worked well. Moreover, there were very few gender differences in participation, although boys more frequently mocked others and were more frequently bored and annoyed. Several positive results seem to regard ISCED 1 children, but some data are not positive and the final evaluation is less positive among these children. This result was influenced by the London context, in both positive and negative ways, and by the Italian context in positive ways. It is also interesting that adolescents showed interest and enjoyment for several aspects and above all that they did not signal mocking, annoying and boredom. Although with more oscillations, ISCED 2 children also took advantage from the activities. The point of view of ISCED 0 children was only investigated in Germany and Italy and in a simplified form; there were positive results above all in Italy where children responded more frequently and CMB were numerous.

Questionnaires and focus group interviews showed the importance of dialogue, dialogic teaching and support of personal expression: dialoguing and sharing expressions, both with teachers/facilitators and with classmates, were the basic ingredient of successful activities, as we have also seen in Chapters 5, 6, 8 and 9. Dialogue did not always happen and it did not happen for all children, but it seems clear that this is the indication emerging from the research. This result depended from the type of activity, a factor which could not be analysed in details for ethical reasons. In the Italian context,

however, during the focus group interviews it was possible to distinguish between many successful and few less successful activities, which probably influenced the overall evaluation of activities.

The most intriguing aspect concerns the difference among local research contexts. The difference between contexts is rather evident in the post-test questionnaire and much more nuanced in the focus groups. However, some data shows coincidence between analysis of the activities, questionnaires and focus groups. This is particularly true in the Belgian context, where teachers were directive, as confirmed by both recordings and focus groups, but children appreciated improvements of teaching during the recorded activities. This explains the results of the post-test questionnaire in Belgium, which was negative for some aspects, but positive for others. Similar considerations can be done for the UK context, where children recognised teachers' superior epistemic authority, thus they provided some negative responses to the questionnaire, but evidently appreciated the way in which teachers enhanced and supported their participation. For what concerns the Finnish context, where results were less positive, a possible explanation is that children already knew each other and were used to work in the same way, so that innovation and change were not seen as relevant. It is also important to acknowledge that respondents in Finland were very few. Finally, the most negative result regarded the German context. If we look at the recordings, it seems that many children observed rather negatively forms of participated but rather hierarchical teaching, in which teachers upgraded their own epistemic authority. Thus, children observed few opportunities to enjoy the activities and constructed positive relations.

## Chapter 11. Tools

### 1. The Archive

**CHILD-UP archive** (<http://movio.child-up.eu>) is hosted on a platform based on MOVIO software. MOVIO is an open source and user-friendly software that was originally designed to create online exhibitions, where visual materials and documents are accompanied by multimedia narratives that describe them. MOVIO is a project funded by the European Union and its use for CHILD-UP archive is a convincing example of cross-project and cross-discipline collaboration, offering an instance of the impact of EU support to applied research.

CHILD-UP archive includes contents, for instance research report, transcripts of video-recorded interactions or interviews, videos. Each file in the CHILD-UP archive is accompanied with a description that explain its context, its position in the research, the characteristics of individuals involved and its content. MOVIO allows to upload research materials such as transcripts of interactions, video files and audio files in a very intuitive way. MOVIO combines the tool to create flexible uploading pages to upload materials as well as to upload the narratives that describe them. The upload of materials and their narrative descriptions to the CHILD-UP archive is made possible by an uploading page created with MOVIO. The back-end of MOVIO is the area where administrators and content creators create and manage the contents. In the MOVIO back-end area administrators and content creators can upload materials and their narrative descriptions as well as linking them with the use of descriptive tag, for instance the age or gender of participants in an uploaded video, that serve as point of reference for hyperlinks.

MOVIO includes a set of tools and services in addition to the main ones, that is, the Media Archive and the CMS MOVIO to create uploading pages. Although the MOVIO archive is easily browsable using mobile devices also its standard desktop version, the MOVIO kit can be used to enable the generation of apps on mobile platforms with the CMS MOVIO for mobile devices. Another tool offered by MOVIO consists in online tutorials and interactive training on the use of the kit and implementation of the guidelines for the creation of archives that combine materials and their narrative descriptions. The online tutorials and interactive training play a pivotal role for a project such as CHILD-UP: they secure the sustainability of the archive over time, because they are available to support new administrators and content creators in case of changes of personnel.

The back-end in CHILD-UP MOVIO is the area dedicated to the management of the ontology and the contents, which will be then visualized on the CHILD-UP MOVIO web site (the public web site). The ontology refers to the architecture of the archive, for instance its sections, devised by the administrators, the contents refers to the files and their related narratives that the content creators upload within the limits imposed by the ontology of the archive. Administrators and contents creators can use the back-end to manage document and multimedia objects that constitute the Media Archive. The Media Archive can be accessed by clicking on the Media Archive in the left side of main menu. The Media Archive also includes the interface, that is, the uploading page, that can be used to perform key-task for populating and maintain the archive. The metadata records, that is, the possible component of the narrative descriptions, are easy to edit. The interface allows to delate, revise, or

add metadata associated to any media content uploaded to the Media Archive. Media contents can be searched via the embedded search box.

CHILD-UP MOVIO front-end is the web site accessible to the public, through password-protected log-in. A user-id and a password are generated through a registration procedure, managed by the project leader. The CHILD-UP MOVIO front-end allows access to 124 written documents, as well as to 32 audio-video files. The documents and files were produced across CHILD-UP Work Packages. Through the front-end, the registered users can view in a systematic way the results of the background research (WP3), the results of the surveys (WP4), the results of the Interviews and focus groups (WP5) and the results of the analysis of interaction between children and professionals working with them (WP6). The front-end users can also access transcribed excerpts from audio or video-recorded interactions collected for WP6. For several selected interactions, the related audio- or video-video is also available. The possibility to link each media file with a rich array of meta-records is of great importance for the usability of the archive from the front-end user angle. Each meta-record can be used as a tag in a front-end user search, allowing to access at once all files that share the meta-record inserted in the search box. This allows, for instance, to gather at once all research result pertaining to a country or to a local setting within a country, across all WPs, so that to reach with a single meta-search quantitative data, qualitative data and, if available audio-video file. The same process of advanced search based on meta-records can be of course performed by the front-end user regarding other variables such as age, gender, ISCED grade, or any combination of these, and more.

## **2. The guidelines**

The **guidelines** aim to give some orientation to those teachers, educators, professional working with children who are interested to enhance dialogue, agency and hybrid integration in multilingual and multicultural contexts. The guidelines do not aim to prescribe a step-by-step work programme; rather, they aim to support the planning and design of activities that are inspired to innovation following the results of the CHILD-UP research. For this purpose, the guidelines are devised as a practical tool, easy to understand and quick to read. Nevertheless, the guidelines aim to combined usability with the capabilities offered by the deep data-driven knowledge produced by CHILD-UP; to achieve this general aim, the guidelines are well structured following a logical order across several sections. The sections that make up the guidelines are:

Section 1. Summarised presentation of the objectives of projects based on the CHILD-UP's approach. This section is key to contextualise the mission of the guidelines, that is, the ethos and methods of working with children that they can support.

Section 2. Summary of the key concepts guiding the innovation that the guidelines are designed to support.

Section 3. Based on scientific evidence produced by the complex CHILD-UP research, the support to plan and design activities that can enhance dialogue, agency and hybrid integration in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Section 4. At the level of specific actions within the contexts of the activities, section 4 of the guidelines underpins the design of the activities with the methodology of facilitation. This choice is based on the scientific evidence produced by CHILD-UP that indicated how actions that are described

in the literature as facilitative actions make activities more likely to enhance dialogue, agency and hybrid integration in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Section 5. Connected to the CHILD-UP training package', Massive Online Open Course, and self-evaluation package, the reflective description of (a) the training programme; (b) the materials that can be used within the training programme; (c) the Massive Online Open Course; (d) the self-evaluation package.

Section 6. Description of the CHILD-UP archive ([www.movio.child-up.eu](http://www.movio.child-up.eu)). Section 6 of the guidelines also include support to reflect on the use of the CHILD-UP archive as a tool and a resource for activities to promote hybrid integration through children's agency.

Section 7. Suggestions and possible directions for the dissemination of activities developed: (a) utilising the guidelines to design the activities; (b) the training to prepare for leading the activities; (c) the archive as a source of material; (d) the self-evaluation package for reflection in and on action towards continuing, context-sensitive improvement.

Following the introductory section 1, section 2 of the guidelines summarises the key-concepts underpinning innovation in working with children that a project like CHILD-UP aims to support. It is a pivotal section, because it clarifies the ethos, methods and the intellectual milieu of innovation that evidence from CHILD-UP can promote. Summarising key-concept helps understanding they type of activities that the guidelines, the training, the archive and the self-evaluation can support. The key-concepts discussed are agency; epistemic authority, facilitation and dialogue (see Chapter 1 of this report).

Sections 3 and 4 of the guidelines concern the plan and design of activities whose ambition is to apply the knowledge generated by CHILD-UP. It has been anticipated that the results of CHILD-UP research, in particular WP6 (also corroborated by the results of WPs 2 to 5) indicate that actions which can be described in literature as component of facilitation prove to be the more effective in enhancing dialogue, agency and hybrid integration in multilingual and multicultural contexts. The plan and design of activities must be adapted to local conditions, which are different both in terms of policy framework and cultural construction of intergenerational relationships, as suggested by the results of WPs 2 to 5. However, due to the consistent success of facilitation across the contexts of the research, both in terms of age and localisation, it is possible for section 3 of the guidelines to offer directions for the preliminary organisation of activities and the implementation of activities. Additionally, the guidelines in the position to indicate some general indications with regard to the activity format that proved more successful.

Section 4 of the guidelines is concerned with the 'how?' question. How to promote children's agency towards the construction of hybrid integration, which is considered by CHILD-UP the most preferable form of integration, because it combines agency with respect of cultural differences? Section 4 thus concerns the methodology of the activities and in particular the facilitative actions and the interlacement of facilitative actions and children's actions/initiative that are connected, in the CHILD-UP corpora of data, with successful promotion of children's agency. Whilst the guideline's mission is to offer a summarised, at-a-glance overview of the methodology of facilitation, the training resources further expand the discussion. The guidelines introduce invitations to talk/openings; questions (both as invitation to talk and support of ongoing talk); minimal actions of feedback to

support the status of children as legitimate authors of knowledge; complex actions of feedback, such as formulation, to position the children as epistemic authorities in a stronger way than minimal feedback; adults' personal contributions to reinforce expectations of personal expression, equity and affectivity. Section 4 will summarise how different combinations of facilitative actions underpins a variety of facilitative styles, each of them favouring different forms of children's active participation. Finally, section 4 discusses, driven by data, children's reaction to facilitative actions as well as children's personal initiative, the latter representing, if diffused in the context of the interaction, the most evident cue for the success of facilitation. The importance of adults' reaction to children's personal initiatives is presented as a pivotal aspect of facilitation which determines the viability of facilitation over time and its sustainability after initial success.

Section 5 introduces the training package developed to support professional working with children to put the guidelines in practice. This section presents what CHILD-UP offers in terms of data-driven training, including the Massive Open Online Course as well as the resources for training. The aim of section 5 of the guidelines is to invite attention towards the training package and to offer some initial direction to maximise its benefit. However, it is important to highlight that the guidelines do not lend themselves as training material per se.

Section 6 is dedicated to present the main features of CHILD-UP archive ([www.movio.child-up.eu](http://www.movio.child-up.eu)). This section is devoted to offer direction for a reflective approach to the use of the archive as an important resource to plan and design activities aiming to promote hybrid integration through children's agency.

Section 7 of the guidelines is interested in supporting activities of dissemination of activities based on the guidelines and training developed from CHILD-UP research. Whilst there is a whole component of the CHILD-UP project specialising in the most effective strategies for dissemination (WP8), the guidelines offer a quick outlook on the basic component of successful dissemination. 'Successful' here refers to the capability of dissemination to generate impact, for the benefit of children and stakeholder. Dissemination of innovative, research-led and evidence-based practices may concern the activities themselves, the underpinning methodology and the outcomes of the activities. The guidelines thus invite reflection on the need to start dissemination of a project of innovation in working with children from its early stages, developing it as a continuous process. The guidelines also invite reflection of the different levels of dissemination, from the most local level, e.g. the school community to the level of the institutions that are responsible for overseeing the general direction of working with children. The point is that through dissemination, any project of innovation can be transferred into policy actions, for instance in schools and educational services, becoming a driving force in the implementation of dialogic practices and agentic participation.

### **3. The training**

The training package is designed to support professional working with children to implement the guidelines in practice. The project CHILD-UP offers data-driven training, including a Massive Open Online Course. The archive (cf. 11.1 and dedicated deliverable) is another important asset for the

implementation of the guidelines. The training package is based on extensive research findings (developed over three years). Such findings invite to recognise in facilitation the form of communication that proves more successful in enhancing dialogue, agency and hybrid integration in multilingual and multicultural contexts, thus fulfilling the overall aim of CHILD-UP.

The ambition of the training package led by CHILD-UP data is to offer practical tools to transform facilitation from an aim to a methodology to promote children's agentic participation in the most important contexts of their lives. Training is meant to support those who want to engage with facilitation as the most effective methodology to promote agency and, through agency, hybrid integration. Users of the training resources are invited to critically analyse the processes and themes linked to facilitation and provoked to reflect how skills and communication strategies based on the results of the CHILD-UP research can be transferred to their professional practice with children to promote children's autonomy, voice and participation within a variety of social spaces. Engagement with training resources will hopefully enable each user to access the role facilitator of children's agency' furthermore, training resources also aim to empower each user who successfully engage with them to become an agent of innovation in working with children, as trainer of others.

Facilitation is not a purely technical device. Facilitation only works if its philosophical and ethical underpinnings are accepted. This is clearly indicated by literature as well as recent EU-funded research projects, such as SHARMED ([www.sharmed.eu](http://www.sharmed.eu)). The demand for genuinely embracing the philosophy of facilitation explains the dedication of a section to the key concepts of innovation in working with children as understood by CHILD-UP. If such key-concept are not shared or understood, it will not be possible to successfully design activities based on facilitation. Also, it will not be possible to fruitfully undertake training.

Training to the use of facilitation is meaningful only if children are viewed as autonomous and authors of knowledge. Across all modules, the training package provokes users to explore their own professional position and beliefs relating the position of children as epistemic authorities and authors of valid knowledge, whose agency can be consequential, that is, make a difference in the contexts of their experiences. For this reason, a general objective of the training package is to promote reflection on how children are positioned within educational, as well as other, social contexts, with regard to their epistemic status which represents the most important indicator of their agentic status. Training thus enables users to undertake self-audits of their own practice, context and professional impact to construct (i) a development plan towards the use of facilitation (ii) develop teaching strategies (iii) identify/sum up pedagogical philosophy and position that underpins practice.

The training package consists of three elements: (a) the training guidance, delivered as handbook; (b) the Massive Online Open Course (MOOC); (c) training resources. The training guidance/handbook (a) include modules power point slides and MOOC material to access training offline for the purpose of continuous professional development (CPD) in an array of professional settings, schools. The training guidance/handbook offers opportunities for dissemination of facilitative skills via the 'train the trainers' approach. Train the Trainer empower dissemination of research-led and evidence-based facilitation, offering readily usable opportunities for face-to-face staff training and continuous professional development (CPD), which can surrogate or complement the online version via MOOC.

The MOOC Online training (b) is an online course that lends itself as an opportunity to learn about and engage with the concept of facilitation, based on data from the CHILD-UP project. Modules 1-8 of training introduce the art of facilitation to unpick how specific interactions, cues and questions promote children's epistemic authority during activities. The training guidance thus complement the MOOC, offering the opportunity to localise and contextualise the MOOC making it accessible for face to face delivery in any context. The training guidance also support flexibility of training to meet the needs of each user. For instance, starting from the guidance provided, each module can be tweaked or reconstructed as each setting sees fit. The mission of the training is to enable users to practice a methodology such as facilitation that celebrates the voices of children and position them as epistemic authorities: for this reason, the role of the training guidance/handbook to secure flexibility and adaptability is of crucial importance.

The training guidance fulfil also a second important, function: each module is presented and thoroughly explained with regard to its aim, its position in the architecture of training, its methodological underpinnings, its specific learning objectives. By showing 'what is behind each module' not only promote critical reflection; even more importantly, it also enable users to internalise the methodology of the training, facilitating them in accessing the role of trainer of trainers.

The architecture of the training, which supports the MOOC as well as the guidance, is modular, with each module offering insight into characteristics, traits and processes found within facilitation. Users can choose to work independently or share their training with colleagues to analyse materials included in this handbook to explore what facilitation is and how it might look within a classroom context. The training modules address: (1) an introductory module to illustrate the ambition of CHILD-UP, the results of the research and the case for facilitation as the methodology to promote children's agency; (2) a series of 'applied' modules that discuss the 'how to' and implications of a wide range of facilitative actions, backed up by evidence from the CHILD-UP research. Such modules engage with facilitative actions that proved successful in:

- promoting engagement;
- supporting sustained participation and extending participation;
- upgrading children's status as authors of knowledge;
- promoting personal expressions

When relevant for training, the possible differences related to children's age are given due consideration. The training also discusses the support of participation in situation of linguistic diversity and different levels of linguistic skills.

Driven by data, the training presents mixed forms of facilitation, where facilitation is mixed with more directive and hierarchical forms of adults-children communication. In such situations, the position of children as epistemic authority is not consistent, because facilitative actions are mixed with actions that pursue adult-centred and adult-controlled forms of communication. By presenting mixed forms of facilitation and their implication for children's agency, the training can combine

supporting the understanding of what facilitation is, and how it works, with supporting reflection on ‘what facilitation is not’ and the implications of more directive methods of working with children.

Training Resources include tools for SWOT Analysis, tools for Action Plans and transcripts of real adults-children interactions, collected as part of the from CHILD-UP research activities. SWOT Analysis is chiefly addressed to identify challenges/strengths in relation to practice implementation of facilitative activities. SWOT analysis enable reflection and self-audit of personal and professional skills. SWOT analysis can be further developed using a personal development plan. Personal Development Plans offer opportunity to focus on identified challenges or barriers within practice so that small steps or supportive resources can be planned and sought.

Transcripts of real adults-children interactions activities are available as a learning companion the modules. An adequate number of transcripts are provided for each module, taken from the different contexts of CHILD-UP research. Transcripts provided are accompanied by analytical notes to support trainers/trainees. Further transcripts to support training to be used for activities or further examination can/should be taken. Materials, transcripts, analysis/notes for the modules are offered to be utilised, according to user’s judgement, as (a) a resource to support knowledge (b) aid memoire (c) resource for dissemination facilitative methodology, as they capture the impact of facilitation in the reality of live practices.

The **methodology of training** is based on the VAK (Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic) philosophy, to meet and respect different learning styles. The VAK philosophy secures inclusivity of training towards equality of opportunity and sustainability. VAK philosophy recognises how learners engage with learning in their own unique way moving between a combination of preferred learning styles, experiences and perceptions.

Auditory learners may prefer to talk to peers or ‘self’ either talking out loud or via internal dialogue (moving their lips with no sound). Auditory learners enjoy listening and hearing what has happened or will need to be done. The methodology of training integrates this style by:

- a. F2F with tutor contact, discussion and briefs
- b. Peer/Tutor discussion opportunities
- c. Socratic method role modelled during activities via questions and answers to elicit learner knowledge and thinking
- d. Include auditory activities – Q&A, Critique training observations
- e. Articulate and verbalize questions/answers/thoughts

Visual learners may prefer visual linguistic or spatial linguistic learning and interaction. Visual-linguistic prefer to learn through written language during reading or writing activities. These learners tend to remember what has been written down and may like to doodle or watch (observe videos or peers). Visual-spatial learners may prefer not to write in a linear style but may prefer to construct or interact with diagrams, photographs, and videos. These learners tend to remember how people, places and contexts look using imagination and creativity. The methodology of training integrates this style by:

- f. The use of video
- g. Transcripts and activity handouts - ‘doing’ activities and note taking
- h. opportunity for group work or individual self-assessment to record and write down discussion points or development plan ideas

Kinaesthetic learners like to be tactile, to touch, do and physically move whilst learning. Touching and doing supports concentration. Reading, discussion, listening and observing offer differentiated levels of ‘doing’. The methodology of training integrates this style by:

- i. Note taking
- j. Reading/Analysing Transcripts
- k. Writing/recording observation
- l. Tasks
- m. Quiz
- n. Developing a SWOT Analysis or Development Plan

Face to face training and the MOOC share the aim to support users exploring the concept of facilitation and related themes to plan and use facilitation in their professional practice as a methodology to promote children’s autonomy, voice, and participation. Face-to-face training, as devised by the guidance in the handbook, is designed to be delivered through a combined learning approach based on workshops to allow reflection on examples of facilitation relevant for the topic of the specific module. Workshops allow to work independently, in pairs or in small groups to analyse materials. Training is therefore mostly ‘group-led’ with trainer’s role modelling ‘facilitation’. Transcripts of facilitation example to be discussed are available as an appendix to the training handbook. Transcripts provided in the handbook are accompanied by analytical notes to support trainers in leading the discussion. Modules can be delivered all together or separately depending on local circumstance. During delivery, the trainer will manage timing, style and how tasks flow, depending on cohort input and needs. The training handbook provides example of modules planning meant to guide the adaptation and organisation of modules and activities for each module towards a context-sensitive training.

The MOOC is based on the same structure and philosophy of the face-to-face training. From a pedagogical perspective, the MOOC is a tool for self-learning based on a modular framework, promoting autonomous learning with videos and documents such as transcripts and slides. The MOOC and its materials are available for an unlimited number of users with different backgrounds, professional profiles and aspirations. The only condition is the interest in expanding knowledge on the application of facilitation to promote children’s agency as a condition for hybrid integration. The very nature of a MOOC allows trainees to learn at home conveniently, flexibly and at their own pace.

The organisation of modules will follow the organisation of modules in the face-to-face training. In the MOOC, each module will be followed by activities for self-assessment to support the trainees to verify the achievement of the module’s learning outcomes. Self-assessment consists in short quizzes. The successful achievement of all MOOC learning objective will depend on passing the threshold of a final test, summarising the themes of the overall MOOC.

## **Chapter 12. Summary and conclusions**

### **1. General legislation and political climate**

According to the UN and European principles, all migrant children, independently whether separated, unaccompanied or accompanied, should enjoy the same rights, should have access to education and should be given child-friendly information about any procedure that involves them. The contribution of public services is crucial to ensure that the best interests of migrant children are determined and considered in identifying a long-term solution for them. Being in touch with neighbours and local actors of civil society is also considered as essential for an early integration process. Relevant NGOs should have access to reception centres where their services are needed, and children and their families should be encouraged to interact with the local community.

However, administrative and logistic barriers can block or delay access to services for children with migrant background (CMB). The comparative analysis among the seven countries participating in the CHILD-UP project shows that policies supporting CMB's hybrid integration are still facing challenges. In particular, the political situation is coloured by negative attitudes towards migration and changing policies and political climates. Frequently, public narratives are about security concerns and fears of being overwhelmed by migrant flows. The recent crisis of Ukrainian refugees confirms rather than denying this situation. The focus on Ukrainians underscores the importance of migration flows in general, and some political discourses have explicitly mentioned the difference between the "real" motivations of Ukrainians and less legitimised types of migrations. Implicitly, through an exclusive focus, or explicitly, through a narrative of difference, this crisis confirms that the political support of migration is certainly not generalised.

There is a paradox in regards to treatment of CMB. International agreements aim to protect them, ensure they are treated as vulnerable, and have their point of view considered in decisions about their lives. Countries sign these agreements with very little controversy. However, the treatment of CMB in policy and programming shows the complicated position they occupy in policy and public opinion. Efforts are being made to improve integration measures, but their efficacy is often hindered by strict immigration measures and the lack of support in areas that are critical to the wellbeing of CMB.

### **2. The school experience**

The preliminary investigation on national policies supported the narrative that barriers to accessing school can hinder CMB's wellbeing and can negatively impact their ability to be included in the community. CMB may experience significant delays in starting school. Several CMB do not benefit from pre-school and kindergarten classes. Once they enter a classroom, they face stereotyping and discrimination. They may not be placed in a grade level or programme that is commensurate with their experience and needs. There is a lack of support of their learning and maintenance of mother tongues, and there are different approaches to incorporating them into mainstream classes, some schools offering separate programmes for language learning and teaching subjects in mother tongues.

A common obstacle is that there are not enough qualified language teachers. Finally, CMB have lower school performance outcomes than non-migrant children.

Despite this general narrative, the survey has shown that most CMB, who have responded to the questionnaire, are quite positive about their competences. Most of them believe they understand teachers, have good skills for schoolwork or can manage school tasks as well as other children do. In general, CMB and non-migrant children tend to answer along similar lines. CMB are slightly more positive in their general feeling towards school, but they are slightly less confident with their skills. The data varies between different countries, which means that more attention must be paid to national contexts in European countries. For instance, problems seem to be more frequently perceived (or at least declared) in Italy, and less frequently in Finland, Poland and Sweden. It is also important to note that, despite these generally positive responses to school experience, 30% to 40% of children do not find schoolwork positive. **This means that problems concern the education system in itself.**

The individual and focus group interviews show that children value school as a meeting place, in particular a space for contact with friends. Children value greatly those activities that enable personal expression or group work and collaboration. They expect more opportunities for co-determination in matters concerning them, as well as the possibility of disagreeing on certain tasks. Children wish a friendly school, which is non-hierarchical and promotes good relations for all. A friendly school should reduce the distance between children and teachers, promoting a more relaxed atmosphere and including children's personal narratives and feelings. Children feel that they are able to take responsibility for their educational process and would like to be included as partners in teaching and learning, rather than being treated as passive recipients of teachers' activities. The change advocated by children concerns their participation in their own education by bringing personal experiences and knowledge in the classroom.

Against this background, children express their support for methods of teaching open to children's needs and interests. However, their level of confidence in the educational system can be undermined by hierarchical relations with teachers, teachers' lack of engagement and solidarity in case of discrimination, teachers' priority of obligations and rules above children's needs. Teaching is criticised as more focused on evaluation than on dialogue and valorisation of children's competences. Although most teachers are seen by children as source of support, there are cases of indifference towards CMB or even discrimination, such as inappropriate reactions concerning CMB's problems. According to some children, CMB's limitations in the language of instruction are not taken into sufficient consideration. Some CMB report being unfairly treated by teachers, mentioning labelling and discrimination, which undermine their ability to learn. Thus, CMB refrain from sharing their troubles to avoid any potential negative consequences.

Children consider peer relations as extremely important for their school experience. CMB report receiving support from other children, both speaking their mother tongue and speaking the language of the host country. However, it seems easier for CMB to build relationships in open, less formal spaces where they can engage in activities related to their interests.

### 3. Children's expressions of agency

The survey shows that CMB are more frequently respectful of hierarchical relations with teachers than non-migrant children. In particular, they more frequently listen carefully to teachers and let teachers know their needs and wills. Most children feel they can speak freely about what they think feel and prefer, but less children report that they feel they can participate in decisions about school activities and that they can express their ideas about the classroom design. There are not relevant differences between CMB and non-migrant children. CMB perceive more difficulties in speaking about their feelings and preferences, but they feel more frequently involved in decision-making and designing the classroom. **Thus, there are differences and relations between children's autonomy on the one hand, and collaboration and help from teachers on the other.**

Focus group and individual interviews show that internal hierarchies in school strongly limit children's agency. Some experiences, such as student council in Sweden, are positively evaluated by children, since they can change something at the classroom level. In London, activities in which children can express their personalities are considered particularly important. In Belgium, children mention the importance of supplying their input about how the school and classroom should function. The possibility of contesting rules that children find unfair or unnecessary is viewed as an expression of agency. Agency also means the ability to influence how difficulties are resolved. Finally, children raise the importance of peer networks to support their exercise of agency. These networks go beyond the school context and spread to personal sphere.

To sum up, children's agency is expressed in terms of taking decisions about themselves, having a sense of influence on school activities and rules, being listened to, and being able to form social relationships according to their own needs.

### 4. Parental involvement and parent-teacher communication

A frequent narrative in the education system is that migrant parents are not well acquainted with school systems and that they are less involved or less interested. However, lack of understanding of how the school system works, language barriers and failure in school communication can be important factors in recuing migrant parents' participation. While, parental involvement is built on the assumption that parents are fully informed and have the interest and willingness to actively participate, the problem is if educational institutions provide the conditions for parents to be able to participate. The preliminary investigations showed that, in most cases, schools communicate with parents by organizing parents' meetings, but web-based communication tools are becoming ever more popular. Many migrant parents do not know how to navigate the digital portals, so that these parents 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 tools. Moreover, without clear expectations and structures that guide parental involvement, there can be a discrepancy between schools' expectations of parents and the extent, to which parents participate.

The survey confirms a mismatch between parents and teachers opinions about parent-teacher communication. First, parents' positive assessment of communication with teachers is much more frequent than teachers' positive assessment of communication with parents. Second, the perception of obstacles in the functioning of teacher-parent communication is different. Thus, exchanging views about parents and teachers' differing narratives is important to enhance collaboration.

Interviews show that teachers are aware of migrant parents' problems. They confirm that one of the biggest barriers is language, being a crucial factor that influences the capacity of parents to support their children in the school context. The lack of language skills has also a limiting effect on parental understanding of the requirements of the school. Engagement with migrant parents can also encounters several other obstacles, such as pushback from teachers who may feel their autonomy in the classroom is threatened, and power imbalances in councils, which may not represent the voice of parents. The different ways of organizing the education system as well as ways of handling the educational process can also be problematic from the point of view of teachers.

Interviews to CMB show that parents and family are a great source of support in the school context. However, CMB also confirm that their parents are not always able to be a source of significant support in school matters. In this context, older siblings are frequently mentioned by CMB as family members who can help in school matters. Professionals support the idea that the discrepancies between CMB's own view of their educational path and their parental expectations may influence the support they receive.

## **5. Teachers and other professionals' narratives**

Teachers are expected to promote CMB's integration, to be culturally aware, and to support CMB's language learning. However, the lack of teachers trained in "intercultural competence", qualified in language teaching and trained in teaching in other languages, is an important obstacle. Teachers' level of awareness of CMB's conditions can have consequences for CMB's learning and participation. The availability of language support services varies a lot in the seven countries, from almost non-existent to fairly good. School initiatives more frequently concern L2 learning, while language and intercultural mediation and above all support of native language are less frequent. A monolingual approach is widespread in schools and classrooms. There are also problems about the ways in which teachers face cultural stereotyping and discrimination and how they enhance sensitivity on these topics. These factors have consequences for CMB's agency and hybrid integration.

Nevertheless, professionals claim that they are able to support children's agency and to face children's challenges. Teachers and other professionals recognise the children's need to express agency in school life, concerning participation in making decisions about the appearance of the classroom, organisation of work, grading and scheduling deadlines. In particular, teachers stress open and safe atmosphere in the classroom and teaching methods based on dialogue as key factors positively affecting children's agency, in general and in particular CMB's agency. They also claim that they undertake actions to help CMB to overcome marginalization.

The importance of establishing personal relationships with children and recognizing children's capabilities are underlined by most of the teachers. Teacher also recognise the need for flexible teaching style, they recognize the need to be welcoming and open-minded towards CMB, responsive to their needs and ready to modify their teaching methods to fulfil CMB's needs. All professionals recognize children's need to fit in the group of local children and their willingness to create social bonds. They state that through the contacts with their peers, CMB gain more opportunities to develop their knowledge of the local language through, among others, peer mediation of the native language.

However, agency is considered from a variety of points of view, which are not always coherent with the value assigned to children's autonomous choices. Teachers frequently associate agency with educational needs, highlighting children's need of listening and social spaces in which children can express their needs, opinions and fears, paying attention to children's interests, which can motivate them to learn the language and to participate in school activities. Moreover, active and open dialogue is rejected by some teachers as too unconventional.

The survey shows that professionals' support of agency is mixed with the traditional ways of teaching. In the best case, this support is claimed by just above 50% of teachers and other professionals. Just above 50% of teachers support creative new ideas about teaching, encourage expressions of children's interests, allowing for autonomous discussions, and encourage children's questioning of teachers' thoughts and decisions. Only a few teachers declare to enhance children's activities that are not connected to teaching. Moreover, only a minority of teachers declare to support children's initiatives that are not linked to teaching and encourage them to realize them, support and coordinate autonomous proposals about initiatives/activities, and support the implementation of creative, new ideas about teaching or other issues regarding to school. Just above 50% of social workers and interpreters/mediators encourage children to articulate and enforce their interests. Just above 50% of social workers support autonomous discussions; social workers are a bit more supportive than teachers for what concerns expression of creative ideas and above all encouragement of initiatives not connected with social work. Support of interpreters/mediators is very infrequent for children's activities that are not connected to their work and children's questioning of their thoughts and decisions.

According to the teachers, the potential to express CMB's agency can be limited by lack of language skills. Teachers observe the importance of work in small groups, mediation, extra-curricular activities that do not involve the extensive use of the language of the host country. Moreover, teachers suggest that **structural barriers**, such as lower expectations regarding academic performance, lack of resources, deficiencies in competent staff, may negatively influence CMB's agency. Mediators stress the need to be open to children's needs and difficulties, not only with CMB but also with migrant families and their expectations towards children's academic development. CMB's gendered agency is underlined by some professionals, who suggest **diverse family expectations** regarding careers and education towards migrant boys and girls.

Teachers also highlight the importance of peer networks in enhancing children's agency. In particular, peers, both older local and migrant students, are seen as an important source of support for CMB. Peer networks can help CMB to better understand cultural norms as well as comply with school rules

and regulations. Peer networks play important role in particular in a context of problematic situations, conflicts and the way of resolving them. In informal spaces, CMB establish relationships with other migrants who share similar experiences, but also with non-migrants. They can engage in activities they like, express themselves, develop their own interests. However, according to the social workers, assistance to unaccompanied minors can be hindered by their difficult experiences and feelings of abandonment. Children living in residential care have the right to choose how they spend their free time, but they often choose to keep in touch with family members by making a phone call or sending messages.

## 6. Language barriers

Professionals underline the importance of unstructured contexts offering activities that do not require language skills, as particularly helpful in supporting CMB's self-esteem when they experience many challenges in the educational space due to the language barrier. Language is however a controversial issue in hybrid integration of CMB. Clearly, knowledge of local and national languages in the country of immigration is very important to attend schools, create relations with peers, and for any lived social experience, avoiding marginalisation and segregation. However, the relation between national language as second language and preservation of native language is dealt with in a rather unclear way. First, the survey shows that few CMB only speak their native language, while a large percentage of CMB only speak local/national language or speak a mix of local/national and native languages. Against this background, schools are prevalently monolingual, despite the claim of the importance of multilingualism from some teachers. Nevertheless, several children feel to be supported in their language use, although prevalently in their learning of second language, and less frequently through language mediation.

The analysis of classroom interactions shows the different modes of teaching second language, while no case was found for what concerns use of native language. In Sweden, switches from national language to English are allowed, but "translanguaging", i.e. use of different languages in the classroom, is rather limited and is tailored on the teachers' good knowledge of English.

### 6.1 *Can language mediation overcome language barriers?*

In the Italian context, the analysis of language mediation in the interaction between teachers and parents, sometimes with the participation of children, in primary schools (ISCED 1) shows a recurrent problematic structure, which is summarised below.

1. **Teachers' long monologues.** Teachers did not ask parents to comment or explain their children's behaviours, nor did they propose any form of collaboration.
2. **Teachers' mostly negative assessments.** These focused on: (a) the poor Italian language competence and scarce motivation of CMB, and (b) the lack of parental support and the necessity that parents help their children more.
3. **Mediators' attempts to include the parents in the interaction** by summarising the teachers' assessments and by providing support and suggestions to the parents.

4. **Mediators' mitigations of teachers' assessments** both by highlighting positive aspects in their renditions and by talking with parents in their language to explain how the system functions and what they can do with it.
5. Parents' minimal feedback when reported about teachers' negative assessments about their children's performance.
6. **Parents' defensive reactions** when accused of giving little support to their children.

It seems that language mediation requires twofold effort: (1) choosing how to render the negative evaluations; (2) suggesting something the parents may plausibly do to help. When teachers provide positive assessments of children and of their parents' support, mediation seems to be easier. In the primary school data, there is only one such occurrence, with just one teacher praising the child's behaviour. Although the interactions in preschools are only two, they show that the teachers involve the parents by asking them questions or giving them instructions about what to do for and with their children.

When the children participate in mediated interactions, the teachers mainly addressed the parents by talking about the children indirectly. On those rare occasions when they are addressed directly by teachers or through mediators' initiatives, children do not respond or only provide minimal feedback. Mediators' attempts to involve the children are weak since they are harnessed in the teacher-parent - or parent-child - interaction and are compelled to follow it rather than support children's autonomous initiatives. Therefore, children's participation is not empowered even despite mediation.

This analysis raises an important reflection. Mediators take actions to support the dialogue between migrants and institutional representatives, thus acting as facilitators. Mediators' mitigation and suggestions partially help to avoid judgemental discourse and the consequent risk of direct rejection of teachers' monologues on the part of the parents. With the children, however, the mediators' agency does not work likewise, showing that the condition of children in the education system cannot be easily changed through mediation.

## **7. Dealing with cultural differences and intercultural relations**

Teachers are expected to be able to work with CMB and their families. In particular, teachers' training can be considered important for this purpose and other professionals (social workers and interpreters/mediators) also need training to support teachers' work with CMB. However, the survey shows that less than 60% of teachers, 70% of social workers and 75% of interpreters/mediators have received a training in multicultural issues.

Despite poor training, during the interviews, many teachers claimed that for CMB the cultural background is extremely important, including contact with peers from the country of origin, especially at the beginning of their stay in new country. However, the survey shows that teachers' perception of their own efficacy is rather low level in reducing ethnic stereotypes in the classroom, raising awareness for cultural differences and adapting to children's cultural diversity.

Moreover, the narratives of cultural differences and intercultural relations are different between professionals (teachers, social workers, interpreters/mediators), and between professionals and parents. In general, these narratives show ambivalence and disorientation between hybridization, celebration of cultural difference, observation of problems related to intercultural differences and situation, and, to a lesser extent, assimilation. Against this background, while teachers are more frequently open to hybrid integration, interpreters/mediators working in schools show a more frequent essentialist narrative of cultural differences and parents are more frequently interested in assimilation.

The **development of hybrid integration** is based on the combination of cultural elements of both the country of origin and the host country in an original and unique synthesis. This implies a space for expression of all children's personal cultural trajectories. In particular, CMB's agency in narrating their personal trajectories can be important for hybrid integration. Hybrid integration is enhanced and supported through the interlacement of narratives of personal cultural trajectories. However, a stereotypical and ethnocentric communication about cultural differences can negatively influence hybrid integration. The insufficient training in multicultural matters, the sense of difficulty in approaching multicultural classrooms and the ambivalent narratives about hybridity, cultural differences, assimilation and irrelevance of cultural trajectories can influence the support of CMB's personal cultural trajectories and dialogue in the classroom. Moreover, parents' frequent ethnocentric positioning can be a serious obstacle to the production of conditions of hybrid integration in schools.

Against this background, facilitation of narratives including personal cultural trajectories is relevant to enhance hybrid integration in the classroom. CMB are able to express themselves, to take the floor, to lead the conversation, to defend their positions and to reject possible undesired interpretations. This can happen through a dialogic form of communication.

## **8. Practices enhancing agency and hybrid integration**

### ***8.1 Facilitation in schools***

The analysis of the activities in classes and groups of children show several interesting results regarding facilitation of CMB's agency and hybrid integration. Facilitation is a general term used to identify the observed activities as methodologically aiming to provide enhancement and support of children's agency. For this purpose, facilitation is based on the design of a variety of actions that should upgrade children's authority in producing knowledge (epistemic authority). In our data, facilitation has been provided by both teachers and external educators or professionals. Ethics requirement did not always allow a direct identification of CMB. We have observed three conditions of facilitation.

1. Facilitated second language learning, in which all children are CMB.
2. Facilitated activities in which CMB were either identified in collaboration with the teacher or through their narratives of personal cultural trajectories.

3. Facilitated activities in which CMB were numerous in the class or group, but it was not possible to identify them; in these cases, enhancement and support of CMB's agency can be inferred from the general conditions of dialogue in the classroom.

Types of facilitated activities and distribution among ISCED have been very different in the research areas in the seven countries, also as consequence of the pandemic, which compelled to change research plans in several cases (see Chapter 2). Despite these difficulties, the collection of data has been very rich, showing a variety of ways and obstacles for facilitation of CMB's agency and hybrid integration. The careful analysis of these data has enhanced a classification of four forms of interaction:

1. **Forms of facilitation.** These forms include a mix of: (a) questions that enhance participation, showing a genuine interest in children's points of view and their clarification; (b) formulations that summarise, explicates or develop the gist of children's narratives or contributions; (c) minimal responses that show active listening and attention, favouring fluidity of the interaction. Some forms of facilitation include frequent questions and formulations. Other forms include frequent minimal responses that support children's continuous and systematic contributions.
2. **Mixed forms of facilitation.** These forms include some facilitators' guidance. Facilitators expand their turns including comments or explanations that stress the relevant and positive narratives produced by the children. Frequently these comments or explanations are provided at the end of sequences including several children's contributions.
3. **Directive forms of facilitation.** These forms include more frequent, sometimes systematic, facilitators' comments and explanations, and some normative recommendations. They decrease the potential of children's agency, assuming that teachers/facilitators need to provide relevant knowledge for children, thus establishing a mitigated form of authority in the classroom.
4. **Forms of participated teaching.** These forms are based on facilitators' superior authority in producing knowledge, shown by their questions that aim to guide children's answers, and their scaffolding that avoids negative evaluations. These forms help children to feel more comfortable with their participation, but children's agency cannot be exercised since facilitators' ask for alignment. However, when children reject alignment, facilitators' avoid negative sanctions. These forms tend to transform facilitation into teaching.

Children's agency decreases from forms of facilitation to forms of participated teaching. Thus, while all these forms may be effective in the classroom, in accordance with local conditions, they have different effects on hybrid integration. Forms of facilitation represent the most effective way of enhancing and supporting CMB's agency and hybrid integration (see Chapter 8). Forms of facilitation and mixed forms of facilitation were more frequent with the coordination of external, expert facilitators. In nursery schools, mixed and directive forms of facilitation were more relevant, probably because children show less language fluency and less ability in dialogue, thus they can be seen in need of guidance.

**Fluency in using local language** has an important impact on facilitation, in particular in classrooms of second language. When CMB are not fluent, it is more difficult to upgrade their authority in producing knowledge and to enhance dialogue. However, fluency is not the only important factor in second language groups. An important factor is the difference between the modes of facilitating second language learning: use of materials (texts, slides, videos, and so on), enhancement of skills and systems and communication in the classroom context. Materials mode and skills and systems mode imply a more hierarchical interaction between teachers and children. The material mode is used to enhance children's contributions, to check these contributions and provide answers to children, to clarify and evaluate, although showing some flexibility. The skills and systems mode is used to check children's use of language, giving correcting feedback or validating correct answers, although corrections and validations are not systematic and this mode may be used to support children's participation. The **classroom context mode** is useful to encourage conversation. The data show that forms of facilitation are more probable when a classroom context mode is applied, since it encourages the production of children's narratives. However, children's exercise of agency also depends on the facilitator's introduction of themes that are relevant for them.

It is important to stress the importance of autonomous interactions between children, although they have been rarely recorded. These interactions are interesting because one important objection that can be done to facilitation is that children's agency cannot be completely exercised and dialogue between children cannot be completely realised when an adult coordinates the interaction. It is however clear that children's complete autonomy in an educational context is not possible. Children's autonomous work groups are based on the tasks that are assigned by facilitators. Thus, it is interesting to observe if this assignment can promote autonomous interaction among children. We suggest that outcomes of autonomous work depend on the type of task assigned by the facilitator. For instance, if the task is organising a competition (as in Germany), the outcome may be a hierarchical interaction in which some children, as organisers, take the lead. If the assigned task is to construct a text collaboratively (as in Sweden), the outcome is a more complex interaction. Facilitative assignments can promote different forms of interaction in children's autonomous work groups, enhancing or underestimating agency and dialogue.

The production of children's narratives is also important in facilitated interactions. Five factors are relevant in this production.

1. The variety of narratives depends on the agency exercised by children, i.e. on children's choices of ways and contents of narratives.
2. Narratives about children's self or personal experiences are more frequent when children's agency is supported.
3. Children contribute to narratives in different ways, as tellers, elicitors, co-tellers or listeners, but children's agency is more clearly shown by their actions as tellers and without facilitators' direct elicitation.
4. Children's interest in conversation enhances their spontaneous telling of stories and their initiatives.

5. When children's agency is enhanced and supported, interlacements between narratives are more frequent and fluid. Children can choose whether to rely on personal narratives and if and to what extent interlacing it with other narratives.

The production of personal narratives of experiences and memories related to CMB's migration and diversity are an important outcome of facilitation. In our data, we have observed narratives about:

- The struggle in being accepted because of CMB's skin colour or other differences.
- Memories of the past in a different country, experiences of changing country and school and fears of losing school years.
- Different origins within the class and experiences of growing and returning in places of birth or parents' origins.
- Food and other aspects of different cultural life.
- Strategies to learn local languages.
- Differences and similarities between countries and international conflicts.

A final important aspect of facilitation to consider when organising activities that aim to enhance and support agency and hybrid integration, is the use of materials. Facilitation can be based on use of written texts, drawings, images, videos. The choice of materials is important to promote agency and dialogue

## ***8.2 Children's evaluation of facilitation***

Post-test questionnaires show that a large majority of children appreciated facilitation. In general, the most positive appreciation was in ISCED 1 classes/groups with the relevant exception of the London context. ISCED 3 adolescents have also shown interest and enjoyment. Positive results also concern ISCED 0 children, above all in Italy, where children responded more frequently than in Germany and CMB were numerous.

CMB have considered these activities enjoyable and effective, in the same ways as native children. This equal evaluation of activities means that hybrid integration has been effective. The focus group interviews confirm the importance of dialogue and support of personal expressions as basic aspects of successful facilitation. In Italy, in particular, the focus group interviews show the difference between many successful and few less successful activities. In Belgium, the prevalence of participated teaching is confirmed by both recordings and focus groups, but children appreciated the improvement of teaching during the recorded activities. These considerations can probably explain the results in London, where children appreciated the way in which teachers enhanced and supported their participation, but they also recognised teachers' expressions of superior authority. In the Finnish context, where few children participated, the focus group interviews reveal that children already knew each other and used to work in the same way as in the recorded interactions, so that innovation and change are not seen as very relevant.

## **9. The issue of gender**

Gender differences have been rarely relevant in the collected data. Gender has marginally influenced the results of the survey and has been very rarely considered relevant in interviews with children. In few cases, children noticed gender as a factor influencing peer relations or class communication, but with minor significance. In particular, gender may be perceived as a bonding factor when children are attracted to each other by gender specific interests, like soccer, cycling or creative activities. Few children observed gendered agency (e.g., some girls in Germany declare that some school spaces are too loud and disturbing due to the behaviour of boys). Gender is also rarely relevant in the analysed interactions. Participants (adults and children) neither oriented explicitly to gender meanings, differences, identities, nor they produced (self) categorisations, stereotypes, or narratives on gender. This is particularly interesting in those extracts that concern topics potentially evoking gender models and expectations. Moreover, both boys and girls participated actively. There were few differences between boys and girls as for the contents of narratives, but they do not concern the ways of narrating. Above all, gender is almost irrelevant in the evaluation of facilitation; the only relevant data is that boys more frequently declared that they have mocked others and that were more frequently bored and annoyed during the activities.

On the contrary, gender has been considered relevant by professionals, as an important factor, especially in the context of girls' participation in education. According to the teachers, in some cases girls are not allowed taking part in classes of physical education due to religious motivations. Moreover, some lessons in biology and family education are contested by girls and their parents. Girls are expected to conclude their education earlier due to family obligations and early marriage plans. These patterns of gender socialization are transferred from the country of origin to the country of arrival, sometimes leading to "culture shock". Finally, conflicts can arise between girls and their parents about gender roles, since girls claim for more independence and equality.

While gender differences can be subtle in interactions and children can be unaware of them, taking children's agency seriously means that children's voices and points of view are an important point of reference to understand gender differences.

## **10. The pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic has determined important changes in both research and schools, especially affecting children from vulnerable groups. CMB had frequent difficulties during the period of remote teaching introduced in response to the outbreak of the pandemic. Their lack of participation in the remote teaching was caused by a digital divide and digital illiteracy, but also by insufficient support from teachers and peers. In the interviews, despite some positive effects of remote teaching, mentioned by children and professionals, the dominant opinion was negative. For most children, remote teaching resulted in fatigue, difficulties in maintaining well-being, health and social relations. It also negatively affected interpersonal connections, limiting the opportunities for children to spend time together as well as adversely affecting the language skills of CMB.

In some cases, the pandemic was narrated during the classroom activities. These narratives have shown the children's ambivalent ways of narrating the pandemic, stressing both its negative and its positive aspects, although negative aspects prevailed. These narratives also show that sometimes children appreciated an intense and unusual family life during the lockdown. These narratives have also offered an opportunity to observe relevant interlacements of narratives about personal experiences and opinions.

On the one hand, the pandemic limited the children's agency: their voices and opinions were not taken into account, and teachers consulted their parents on issues related to their education. On the other hand, several children saw this period as one which developed their sense of autonomy, agency, responsibility, and self-control.

As for the CHILD-UP research, the pandemic created several problems in approaching the schools, interviewing participants and recording the activities, both for school closures and for teachers' worries of losing time to recover children's learning. However, the pandemic also offered the opportunity to experiment remote activities and research, which were interesting in showing how children could also participate remotely in facilitated interactions, exercising their agency despite the unusual way of participation.

## **11. Conclusions**

The results of the CHILD-UP research have been developed in tools that have been briefly explained in Chapter 11: archive, guidelines and training programme. Further important considerations on these results are included in the final policy recommendations. These concluding remarks concern the results of field research. Some general considerations about the conditions of children's agency and hybrid integration are summarised below, as possible stimulations of further reflections.

1. In the CHILD-UP complex research project, knowledge has been constructed progressively. Moving from preliminary research on legislation and policies to the survey and to the interviews and recordings of facilitated activities meant moving towards higher complexity of data and analyses.
2. Legislation and political climate about children's migration are important, but they cannot explain the complexity of children's lived experiences. In lived experiences, legislation and political climate are less relevant than daily interactions.
3. While agency is only partially expressed in schools, CMB are able to express their agency in the same way as native children.
4. Despite in the interviews teachers recognised the importance of children's agency, and especially CMB's agency, the survey showed that teachers do not seem at ease with important expressions of agency (and children tend to recognise this difficulty in interviews)
5. Several teachers are not trained in intercultural issues and most teachers declare difficulties in dealing with these issues; however, most teachers seem to recognise the importance of hybridisation, more frequently than parents and (also) mediators.

6. The problems with migrant parents' participation in their children's experience concern both their difficulties in communicating with teachers and their participation in a general parental narrative which underscores the complexity of hybridisation.
7. Both children and teachers largely recognise the importance of dialogue and non-hierarchical relations, but dialogue is interpreted by teachers in ambivalent ways and prevalently associated to learning rather than to agency.
8. The analysis of classroom activities shows that dialogue is possible through facilitation, but also that (a) facilitation is more easily enhanced by external facilitator, rather than by teachers working in the facilitated classroom, (b) facilitation is not always and not easily realised. This leads to reflect on the possibility to extend facilitation to teaching contexts.
9. The analysis of practices shows difficulties in language mediation with parents and above all with children, although the data are limited to one research context; probably this problematic result is related to the fact that the teachers involved in mediation did not self-select as participants in the CHILD-UP project.
10. There is consistency between the researchers' analysis of the facilitated interactions and the children's evaluations of these interactions, although some aspects of children's evaluations are not completely clear.
11. There is not complete consistency between the survey (quantitative data) and the interviews (qualitative data) that involve professionals: interviews are generally more positive for what concerns support of agency and hybrid integration. Partial inconsistency can be observed between post-test questionnaires (more ambivalent) and focus groups with children (more positive).

To sum up, the way of supporting of agency and hybrid integration in CHILD-UP field research can be seen from different points of view. From a quantitative point of view, it is clear that there are important weaknesses, regarding teachers' (and other professionals') training, support of agency and narratives of cultural differences and intercultural relations. From the interviews, it seems that teachers (and other professionals) are much more interested in agency and dialogue, although ambiguity is high for hybrid integration since it seems that several respondents share an essentialist view of cultural differences. From the recordings of activities, the possibility of facilitation of children's agency and hybrid integration is evidenced, although it is far from being generalised; in particular, facilitation is not frequent when teachers act as "facilitators" in their classes and in language mediation, especially when it involves children. **Hybrid integration is the outcome of facilitative actions that do not only concern CMB, but the whole classroom.**

The CHILD-UP complex analysis provides interesting materials that can be discussed in **training sessions**, by confronting different conditions, risks and difficulties of ways of facilitating agency and promoting hybrid integration. **Facilitation requires training on agency and hybrid integration**, rather than on cultural differences or vague "intercultural relations".

Facilitation requires the awareness of the complexity of classroom interactions, children's personal cultural trajectories and their interlacements, as well as parent-teacher communication. Teachers can become aware of the difficulty of managing rapport and critical moments with migrant children and parents. The use of the data can thus improve professionals' ability in enhancing and supporting

children's (and parents') agency, through specific facilitative actions. The training can focus on communication rather than on individual attitudes. Such a training can also mitigate teachers' perception of difficulties in dealing with cultural differences, since facilitation is based on a general competence that can be applied to narratives of different personal cultural trajectories, encouraging and supporting dialogic interlacements among these narratives, thus hybrid integration in the classroom.

The use of the research data can show to teachers (and other professionals) that in educational contexts, facilitation does not simply enable intercultural education, language proficiency or bilingual communication, but it enables the emergence of hybrid integration. These data also show that facilitation can be improved if teachers collaborate with external facilitators, mediators, children and parents, by providing less negative assessments and more supportive actions. These data can inform teachers about the effects of their own and others' contributions in interactions in communication with children (and parents).

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