SIRIUS

WP 1 – Country Reviews

Policy Implementation Analysis
by National Educational Agents and Other Stakeholders

Through Focus Groups

National Analysis Reports
WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORTS

October 2013
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**INTRODUCTION**

The SIRIUS network aims at promoting improvements on policy making and policy implementation regarding the education of children with a migrant background within the EU.

To do so, SIRIUS intends to raise the voices of the main agents and stakeholders involved in migrant education policy making and policy implementation in each country. Based on their inputs, views and expectations, SIRIUS aims at drawing a general picture of the current state-of-the-art, and at identifying main trends, challenges, top difficulties and principal achievements concerning policy implementation.

SIRIUS is interested in the education process as a whole, including pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational, and higher education, and the respective policy implementation, rather than policy making processes.

The SIRIUS Work Package 1 (WP1) had invited the National Partners in 2012 to contribute to the assessment of the perceptions on these topics by conducting Focus Groups (FGs) in their countries, analyzing the results and composing a national report.

The core interest of the Focus Groups were the agents’ and stakeholders’ perceptions on:
- the national approach on educating children with a migrant background,
- the national implementation of the “Council conclusions on the education of children with a migrant background”,
- the national implementation of the “EU 2020 Strategy” and the “ET 2020” Targets,
- the added value of the SIRIUS Network for their own work.

In each country one Focus Group (FG), or alternatively the model of group discussion, was to be held. In some countries it was more feasible, due to reasons of time and distance, to conduct interviews or use questionnaires, or a mix of several methods.

The FG (or the alternative method) was to comprise 7-8 people. These were to correspond to the following profiles:
- Policy makers at national or federal level; these would usually be people from the Ministry of Education responsible for integration matters,
- Policy makers at local/municipal level; these could be staff from the integration or education departments. If possible, invite staff at a more senior level who is actually involved in decision making processes.
- Researchers specialized in migration and education,
- NGO representatives working with migrant children,
- School / high school principals,
- Migrant / minoritized community leaders (Seniors/Juniors).

The main focus of the national reports was on the perceptions of the FG participants. However, the National Partners who composed the reports brought in their expertise on the topic of migrant education in order to explain the context further and add details.

The national focus group reports were delivered by Belgium (Flanders), Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Spain (Catalonia).

On the basis of these reports, a comparative report was composed in the manner of a reflection of perceptions supplemented by expert knowledge. The Comparative Report can be found at: http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/SIRIUS-Comparative-Report-def-editat_SIRIUS_130531.pdf.
In 2013, the national focus group reports were partly revised and updated. This document contains these later versions of the national reports.
WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS
October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF ESTONIA

Prepared by Mihkel Nestor,
Praxis Centre for Policy Studies
INTRODUCTION

Estonia as a relatively new European Union member state is not a major migration destination largely due to its low income level and poor economic conditions. Besides the modest income level, one of the main factors which have deterred people from migrating to Estonia is its strict immigration policy. Since Estonia regained its independence in 1991, the migration policy has been clearly restrictive to immigration. The Aliens Act establishes clear quantitative and qualitative restrictions, such as the annual immigration quota and the specific grounds for granting of a residence permit (e.g. work, learning, family connections). The absence of larger existing new immigrant communities and cold climate are the other factors which have hindered more extensive migration to Estonia. Especially if geographically surrounded by the Nordic countries which compared to Estonia are more attractive migration destinations with the desired social benefits and insurance as well as a relatively higher income level. Still the number of migrants shows increase, mainly as a consequence of free movement of labour within the European Union. In 2005, 1436 persons immigrated into Estonia while the figure was 4244 in 2012. Moreover, in 2011, the record number of asylum applications were submitted – 67.

The reason why Estonian migration policy has been rather restrictive lies in history. Although Estonia has very few new migrants, Estonians constituted only 69% of the total population in 2012, the others being mainly ethnic Russians. Estonia was conquered by the Soviet Union in the II World War and as a part of the russification policy, a large share of ethnic Estonians were deported to Siberia and instead ethnic Russians moved to Estonia in order to enforce cultural assimilation. As a result of these policies and the loss of lives during the war, the share of ethnic Estonians was greatly decreased. More specifically, from almost 90% to 60% between 1940 and 1989. In other words, the share of non-Estonians in the population had pushed from around 10% in 1940 to 38.5% in 1989. A separate education system with Russian as the language of instruction was created for newcomers during the Soviet period.

Today, Estonian general education system enables to study in various languages. Education at preschool and basic level is available in Estonian- and Russian- language, but also in English- and Finnish-language in a few educational institutions. Schools in which subjects are taught in the language of a national minority form a part of the Estonian education system. The state has emphasized that only the harmonized educational system can ensure quality of education which includes equal opportunities to all secondary graduates. The ability to speak the Estonian language is essential at university, where the studies commence in Estonian; it is a pre-requisite for acquiring Estonian citizenship, and will be of advantage to students on labour market.

At the secondary education level (grades 10 to 12, which are not mandatory) the language of instruction is defined by the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act of 1997. The act,
deigned to ensure that graduates have a level of Estonian language skills that enables them to continue their studies in Estonian, stipulates that as of the 2011/2013 academic year, the language of instruction is to be Estonian for at least 60% of studies in all public schools, including those that once taught only in Russian. The remaining 40% of the curriculum can be taught in another language chosen by the school. The schools can choose the Estonian curriculum or Estonian as a second language curriculum as the basis for teaching Estonian. The provision of general education at all levels of education is carried out on the basis of common national curricula irrespective of the language of instruction.

There are 45 upper secondary schools with Russian as the language of instruction in Estonia in 2012/2013 academic year, all of which will switch to Estonian language subject study. In basic schools, the owner of the school (generally the local government) is free to choose the language of instruction. Many Russians have chosen to study in Estonian-medium schools. The reason can be to enhance their competitiveness in labor market. This kind of situation is quite unique compared to the countries in Western Europe.

The main focus in this analysis lies on new migrants and their situation in the Estonian education system in order to provide a comparable basis for other participating countries in the SIRIUS network.

Personal interviews instead of a focus group meeting were held with the experts in the field of migrant education for two reasons: they are divided between two largest cities in Estonia – Tallinn and Tartu; and the time frame for interviews fell on the professionally busiest time – October and November. The detailed list of interviewees is provided in Table 1.

As Estonia has a relatively small number of new immigrants, the selection of possible interviewees with a profound expertise in the field was limited. In order to get recommendations about persons to be interviewed, the first meeting was held with an adviser of the Ministry of Education and Research, who is a leading expert in this field in Estonia. As Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, with its 400,000 inhabitants is the only city in Estonia, which has some generalizable experience in migrant education, a head of General Education Unit in Tallinn City Department of Education was involved in the study. The school perspective concerning migrant education was represented by Lilleküla Gymnasium in Tallinn, which has grown into the competence centre for migrant education. The interview with the head teacher as one of the recognised experts in this field was conducted. Although migrant education is not extensively studied research subject in Estonia, there are a few studies available on migrant education, often as a result of the international projects. For the interviews, two noted researchers in the field were chosen as well.

The most difficult part was to find representatives of NGOs working with migrant children and minority community. After some inquiries, it became clear that there are no NGOs dealing solely with migrant children. As an alternative, a representative from the Estonian Refugee Council, an NGO dedicated to support asylum seekers, was interviewed. As there are no well-known migrant community leaders, a decision was made to pursue an interview with an NGO Russian School in Estonia. This is an advocacy group which aims the preservation of upper secondary education in

---

9 New migrant is someone who has lived in Estonia less than three years and would like to study in Estonian school. Typically requires support for adaptation and language learning. Definition source: the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2004); Uusimmigrantide lapsed Eesti hariduses. Hariduspoliitilised põhimõtted ning hariduskorraldus. Tartu: HTM.
Russian as a language of instruction in Estonia. Despite numerous attempts and some temporary success, we could not get a positive answer from the NGO and their opinions are not included in the subsequent analysis.

Table 1: List of interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of the interview</th>
<th>Place of conduction</th>
<th>Professional position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16/10/2012</td>
<td>Tartu, Estonia</td>
<td>Adviser, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/10/2012</td>
<td>Tallinn, Estonia</td>
<td>Head teacher, Lilleküla Gymnasium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/10/2012</td>
<td>Tartu, Estonia; Brussels, Belgium (via Skype)</td>
<td>Independent researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/11/2012</td>
<td>Tartu, Estonia</td>
<td>Senior researcher, University of Tartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/11/2012</td>
<td>Tallinn, Estonia</td>
<td>Head of General Education Unit, Tallinn City Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11/2012</td>
<td>Tartu, Estonia</td>
<td>Chairman of the board, Estonian Refugee Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF ESTONIA

When talking about children with migrant background in Estonia, a clear distinction must be made between new migrants and Russian-speaking minority in Estonia. As Estonia has a relatively small number of the new 1st or 2nd generation migrants, topics related to migrant education are a rather recent addition to the agenda.

It is important to note that there is no accurate data and hence a very clear overview how many migrant children are there in Estonia who would need targeted measures. The Estonian Education Information System, a national database, enables schools to enter information on pupils who have arrived in Estonia within the last 3 years. This serves as the basis for the measure through which, schools receive additional funding targeted to support migrant education. The problem, however, is that schools that have no prior experience with migrant children may not be familiar with this option and therefore loose the opportunity to apply for additional funding. On the other hand, there may be pupils with migrant background, who have arrived in Estonia more than 3 years ago, but did not attend kindergarten with Estonian as the language of instruction and hence have not acquired sufficient level of the Estonian language.

Data collected by the Ministry of Education and Research shows that the official number of new migrants, pupils who have arrived in Estonia during the last 3 years and study in Estonian-medium schools, has been around 60, peaking in 2008 with 86 pupils. For the reasons provided above, this number is probably underestimated and contains limitations as the data are collected only in Estonian-medium schools. According to the data of the Estonian Population Registry, there were 608 pupils in the Estonian general education system who reported that their mother tongue is a

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10 NGO Russian School is an advocacy group, alleged to have ties with Russian secret services, who opposes the expansion of subjects taught in Estonian in Russian schools and supports continuance of two separate education systems.

11 As Russian schools do not receive extra funding from the authorities for a migrant student as the pupil is not studying in Estonian.
language other than Estonian or Russian in the academic year 2011/12, which is 0.4% of the total number of pupils.

Nonetheless Estonia has a large, mainly Russian speaking minority population. There were 33 473 pupils whose mother tongue was Russian or both Russian and Estonian (1318) in the academic year 2011/12, which forms 26% of the total number of pupils. The total number of pupils in Russian-medium schools was 27 344, which means that many ethnic Russians have chosen to study in Estonian-medium school. This conclusion can also be drawn based on the fact that the proportion of pupils in Estonian-medium schools was 63% in 1991 and had reached to 82% in 2011\textsuperscript{12}. Being able to speak Estonian is seen as one of the preconditions to be successful in the labour market, largely because the language of instruction in the Estonian higher education institutions is predominantly Estonian. Even though the graduates of Russian-medium basic schools should be able to speak Estonian at level B1 and the graduates of Russian-medium secondary school at level B2, only half of the graduates are able to fulfil this requirement\textsuperscript{13}.

In order to improve the situation, education policy has placed emphasis on increasing the volume of subjects courses taught in Estonian as described above. However, this is a slow process and rapid changes are not to be expected. At the proposal of a school and upon the agreement of the school owner, the language of instruction in a basic school may be a language other than Estonian. It is important to note that it is optional for pupils entering higher education to take the Estonian language courses as a pre study option. Some of the interviewees emphasized that the most effective way to improve the Estonian language proficiency would be losing separated kindergarten system. Although this is currently not on the political agenda; the preconditions for this seem to be there as the majority of Estonian and Russian speaking population of Estonia prefer common Estonian language based kindergartens for all pupils (with special assistant teachers for children with other mother tongue)\textsuperscript{14}.

2. **PERCEPTIONS ON THE ESTONIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND**

2.1 **CORE ELEMENTS OF THE ESTONIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND**

The core elements of the Estonian approach to the education of children with a migrant background are stipulated very broadly in the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act by declaring that a different mother tongue from Estonian can be considered as an educational special need. On the one hand, it has a symbolic meaning, stating that a migrant child should get special attention and support. At the same time, the fact that the insufficient language level is considered to be an educational special need means that schools are subject to receive extra funding for teaching migrant pupils. The national curriculum, which is judicially the next level, states an important principle – individual curriculum must be applied to the extent that is appropriate for the pupil’s

\textsuperscript{13} Foundation Innove (2012).
needs. This measure is widely used in the schools\textsuperscript{15}. In short, the national approach to address the education of children with a migrant background can be summarised as follows: to use individual approach and compile curriculum that take into account and are appropriate for the pupil’s individual needs.

From the schools’ perspective, public policy towards migrant pupils does not seem to be defined clearly. Considering the relatively small number of pupils with migrant background in Estonia, most schools have not had any contact with them. Schools have expressed that the national approach has remained rather vague or appears to be absent as there are no clear principles to address pupils with a migrant background. In their view, a migrant child seems to be only school’s responsibility. Schools with pupils from migrant background have more experience noted in the interview that the authorities have directed migrants to study in these schools, or have suggested other schools in need of advice and expertise, to contact professionals from more experienced schools. If the school has no previous experience with children from migrant background, the teaching process can be characterized as learning-by-doing method, where outcomes depend on staff’ competences and their ability to adapt to new situations in the classroom. It is expected by schools with a migrant pupil population to receive support by clearly stated guidelines from the authorities on approaching and supporting pupils with a migrant background. Positive developments have been noted regarding the approach on the education of children with a migrant background: the state has enabled schools flexible teaching process through the application of individual curriculum and the option for customized exams. However, it must be noted that this may affect pupils’ chances to continue their education in general upper secondary education because schools have a right to select their pupil population and special circumstances, e.g. modest language skills, may have an impact on pupils’ competitiveness.

Although not common, but a problem that may occasionally occur is inadequate level of Estonian proficiency of admitted pupils with Russian background. The schools may discover insufficient language skills somewhat unexpectedly, because it is often hard to determine pupils’ language skill beforehand. Despite several measures for Russian-medium schools to facilitate learning of the Estonian language, due to the internal migration, especially in smaller municipalities, children coming from Russian-medium kindergartens or schools may not speak Estonian at the sufficient level. Many of those pupils need additional measures to support learning the language. However, the current funding system does not necessarily enable it. As many municipalities are closing local Russian-medium school to an Estonian-medium school may be very sudden from both pupil and staff perspective.

2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE ESTONIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

As stated earlier, Estonia has a relatively small number of children with a migrant background. Therefore, the financial crisis has not had much influence on the Estonian approach on the education of children with a migrant background. In general, the attitude towards immigration has maybe even improved, because it has become clearer that in order to increase the economic growth, Estonia needs more qualified workforce from abroad.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN ESTONIA

3.1 GENERAL QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Firstly, it must be noted that Estonia has not experienced a heavy flow of migration resulting in a relatively small number of pupils with a migrant background. Therefore, it is challenging to draw far-reaching conclusions regarding a quality of the school system for children with a migrant background. When talking about children with mother tongue other than Estonian, i.e. Russian, a distinction has to be made. Final grades, national examination scores and PISA survey show that pupils in Russian-medium schools receive considerably lower grades/scores than their peers in Estonian-medium schools, whereas pupils with Russian background in Estonian-medium schools receive equal scores with their Estonian classmates. On the one hand, this may refer to a better teaching quality in Estonian-medium schools. On the other hand, it may highlight the selection problem: more capable pupils from families who attribute education a considerable value tend to choose Estonian-medium schools with the purpose of assuring equitable access to higher education and increase competitiveness in the labour market.

A theme which is closely related to the quality of the school system and children with a migrant background is a belief, that a high proportion of migrant pupils in a school decreases the quality of teaching. However, several interviewees considered it to be more of a myth than reality. From their perspective, having pupils with a migrant background in a classroom means that one needs support mechanisms and appropriate teaching methodology but migrant pupil population in the classroom certainly does not lower the quality of teaching itself. Nevertheless, schools that have experience with migrant pupils consider the optimal number of foreign pupils in a classroom to be around 2 or 3 to be able to provide individual support and they have tried to retain this number. The choices of assistant teachers or private lessons have been used, although the financial means to use these options offered by the state are rather modest. Schools with a relatively large migrant pupil population are eligible for additional state funding to be able to implement specific measures for migrant pupils.

3.2 DIVERSITY IN SCHOOL

Even though the capability to manage diversity in a classroom should be equally excellent everywhere, various patterns can be identified depending mostly on school’s experience with pupils from a migrant background. Many of the interviewees pointed out that there are a few model schools which have done an excellent job in teaching migrant pupils. However, the situation is somewhat unpredictable if a school has no previous experience with pupils from diverse migrant backgrounds. Thus, speaking at school level, what becomes relevant is staff competence in a particular school. As the representative from a school with migrant pupil population and high professional competence stated during the interview, the main problem is that schools without previous experience with migrant pupils feel insecure because their staff lacks confidence on teaching in diverse school settings.

16 Foundation Innove (2012).
In general, schools approach to the education of pupils with a migrant background from two perspectives. Either they welcome diversity, take on new challenges and look for staff in-service training courses for teaching in diverse setting. Alternatively, they make every effort to avoid migrant pupils at school. As the interviewed experts put it, one can understand the nervousness that schools without previous exposure to pupils with a migrant background experience. However, it is the positive attitude, self-confidence and openness to develop competence that is necessary at schools.

At classroom level, however, there appears to be more confidence with diverse settings. As reported by the school with the largest number of migrant pupils in Estonia, once more pupils with a migrant background started to arrive in Estonia at the beginning of 2000s, everybody was excited to have a migrant pupil in their class. Now, when a foreign-born pupil in classroom is not a unique phenomenon, children have got used to diverse setting and it is considered a norm rather than exception. Interviewees pointed out that they had not witnessed any disagreements on the basis of ethnicity or language and quarrels that occur between pupils are not connected with a pupil’s ethnicity.

Several interviewees pointed out that children get used to diverse setting much quicker than the parents. Even in the schools with a considerable migrant pupil population, there have been cases when parents have begun to worry, if teachers have enough time for all children in a multi-lingual and ethnically diverse classroom. In order to overcome these issues, the schools have thoroughly explained the teaching process to the parents, assuring that this does not have a negative impact and if pupils with a migrant background need special attention, assistant teachers or adaption classes will be used as a measure.

3.3 TARGETED MEASURES FOR MIGRANT PUPILS

Currently, pupil there is only one national measure which is specially intended for pupils with a migrant background as Estonia has a relatively small number of new migrant pupils. Schools are eligible to receive (extra) funding from the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research to teach migrant children the Estonian language for additional 4 lessons per week. This measure is applicable only for pupils who have arrived in Estonia during the last 3 years and have started their studies in an Estonian-medium school17. Although the measure is intended to cover 4 extra Estonian lessons per week, the Ministry of Education and Research has enabled schools flexibility and freedom of choice how to allocate this funding at a school level, as there have not been many applicants. For instance, contemporary language learning does not necessarily take place in a special language class, but can be integrated into teaching other subjects. The goal, which is expected to be achieved in schools, is that all pupils need to learn the Estonian language.

Currently, all the other targeted measures addressing pupils with a migrant background are determined by schools. This has been considered to be the most effective solution by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research to enable schools independence and choice on the most appropriate approach to education of children with a migrant background. The problem that is accompanied with this approach is the scale effect. In other words, the money allocated by the state to schools is per each pupil. That means the schools with a relatively large number of migrant pupils receive much greater support and are, therefore, able to apply a wider range of measures. The schools with a small number of migrant pupils, e.g. just a few, can barely cover the cost for

17 This measure is not applicable for Russian-medium schools.
those four additional Estonian language lessons which leaves the options for other support measures rather limited.

It has to be noted that in addition to the state budget with the single measure described above, schools have applied additional funding from other sources. One of the major ones being the European Social Fund (ESF) financed programs or programmes provided by special agencies. For instance the Integration and Foundation of Our People (MISA) that promotes integration processes in Estonia and coordinates activities related to immigration and migration.

Next, an example of the admission process for pupils with a migrant background is shortly described based on the representative of the school with a relatively large migrant pupil population. The process starts with a meeting between the pupil family and school representatives to find out the intended length of stay in Estonia and pupil’s general expectations. In case the family has an intention for permanent residence, the pupil is provided with an intensive Estonian language course, up to 10 lessons per week. Even though the state funding covers only 4 language lessons per week, the relatively large number of migrant pupil population at the school enables to provide extra means. The intensive language course at the beginning of studies serves the purpose of a migrant pupil being able to join his/her classmates in lessons (taught in the Estonian language), which do not require extensive language skills, e.g. Physical Education, Arts, if possible, Mathematics, as soon as possible.

All migrant pupils have an individual curriculum which is adapted to their needs. The individual curriculum is used until the pupil is ready to continue studying solely in the Estonian language. The individual curriculum states, for instance, for which lessons the pupil has to join his/her classmates and which lessons are individual. The overall approach is leaned towards enabling a migrant pupil to join with his/her classmates in all the lessons as soon as possible; in linguistically more demanding lessons the help of an assistant teacher is used. The assistant teacher, then, accompanies the pupil in the lessons to provide assistance with translation and learning.

Even though effective, this kind of a support mechanism is also very expensive and only a few schools are able to afford it without having the need to find an additional funding. Schools with a relatively large migrant pupil population have used adaption classes method with a primary goal to teach the Estonian language.

According to some interviewed experts, most schools in Estonia do not use all the previously described measures. Often the four additional language lessons per week funded by the state is all they can provide to educate pupils with a migrant background.

In case a pupil with a migrant background is in Estonia temporarily just for a few years and formally continues studies following the national curriculum in his/her native country, the approach is somewhat different. The pupil is expected to study Estonian, English, Mathematics etc., but is exempted from the country-specific subjects, e.g. History. The individual curriculum in this case is designed in a manner which enables the pupil enough time to follow his/hers native country curriculum. In this case, a pupil has an option to graduate from the basic school taking customised exams which means that they are not expected to have acquired the same level of the Estonian language skills as native Estonian pupils. The examination materials, e.g. Mathematics, can be translated into a migrant pupil’s native language. In previous years, the city government of Tallinn has provided financial support for schools to cover the costs of the process.
3.4 GOVERNANCE AND MAINSTREAMING

The current governance model advocated and also implemented in Estonia, which could also be called a Finnish approach as it roots come from there, is considered to be the best by the interviewed parties. The emphasis lays on the idea of diversity which is followed through that a migrant pupil attends a local school instead of a special school for migrant pupils. The Estonian language is a must and taught intensively not only in the specific Estonian language lessons but in an integrated manner. A migrant pupil is encouraged to join his/hers classmates in all lessons as soon as possible. The support mechanisms should be used according to a pupil’s needs.

In the field of mainstreaming there is a lot of work to be done and the situation depends on if and to what extent the number of pupils with a migrant background changes. School have to feel that support and guidance on education of pupils with a migrant background is available should they need it. The opposite situation causes schools to refuse to admit migrant pupils and makes both pupil and the parents feel unwelcome.

3.5 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

At the state level, there have been no changes to the targeted measures for migrant pupils as a result of the financial crisis. All pupils who arrive in Estonia during the last 3 years and study in Estonian-medium schools get additional funding from the state budget.

At the municipal level, e.g. in Tallinn, there has never been a permanent annual budget to support schools with migrant pupils. However, there have been several project-based initiatives when extra-funding has been granted to schools with the purpose to provide additional support mechanisms for migrant pupils. The economic crisis significantly reduced the incomes of municipalities and their revenues are pegged to income tax, hence the ability to support schools with migrant pupils has decreased considerably.

4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

4.1 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

As the share of children between ages 4 to 7 (the age of starting compulsory primary education in Estonia) participating in early childhood education is quite high (94.2% in 2011), there are no targeted measures to directly increase the participation. However, as a consequence of a rapid suburbanisation in recent years, many municipalities are building new childcare facilities to satisfy sharply increased demand.

4.2 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

According to PISA results (OECD, 2009), the share of low-achieving 15-year old pupils in reading, mathematics and science was 11.4% in Estonia. That is considerably below the benchmark of 15% that has been established under the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in
education and training (“ET 2020”). For this reason, Estonia has no national goal to decrease the share of low-achievers.

There is an objective to reduce the number of early school leavers among 18-24 years old to 9.5% by the year 2020 in Estonia\(^{18}\). To fulfil this goal, more emphasis has been placed on educational counselling and other support services provided by school psychologists, special needs specialists etc. The main problems with early school leaving lie within vocational education as the dropout rates are much higher there compared to general education indicators. Although the precise measures are still unclear, it is very probable that new initiatives will be introduced within the European Union 2014-2020 financial framework.

4.3 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

Estonia has a well-educated population. In 2011, 40.2% of 30-34-year old Estonians had completed third level education. This proportion is considered to be optimal\(^{19}\) and therefore, there is no target set for 2020. As increasing participation in higher education is not a priority, the focus has turned on the quality of higher education system. There is an on-going higher education reform in Estonia which aims to monitor and increase the quality of higher education, while guaranteeing tuition free study places to all full-time students. Some of its instruments have been intended to raise the exam threshold to be admitted to higher education institution and quality assessment of higher education curricula. The requirements for completing higher education on the basis of state commissioning have become stricter compared to the earlier requirements. Policy measures for goals for lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning has been viewed as the top priority in Estonia. About one third of the workforce in Estonia does not have a higher or vocational education qualification which is believed to be a major shortcoming and a cause of a labour shortage. The participation rate has been growing in recent years and had reached 12% in 2011. The reasons partly lay on the ESF funded vocational training and popular adult education courses as well as the general increase of awareness about lifelong learning opportunities. As the Estonian target for average of adults participating in lifelong learning for 2020 is 20%, more measures are expected to be intended within the coming years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU 2020 Strategy / ET 2020 Targets</th>
<th>National goal</th>
<th>Present national figure</th>
<th>Optional notes on availability of national figures</th>
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<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary-education participating in early childhood education</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<td>94,2% (2011)</td>
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<th>10%</th>
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<td>School drop-out rate</td>
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<td>Share of 30-34-year-olds</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>40,2% (2011)</td>
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<td>completing third level education</td>
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<td>Average of adults participating</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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<td>in lifelong learning</td>
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5. **PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS**

Interviewed experts stated that the SIRIUS Network’s main contribution is expected to be increasing awareness and attracting attention with raising discussion on the topic in Estonia. The exchange of experiences and sharing of good practices was noted as an expectation by several interviewees. However, they did not emphasize any specific sub-themes or issue they would particularly be interested in.

6. **CONCLUSIONS**

The results of this rather short analysis suggest that there are notable differences between schools on their approach for teaching pupils with a migrant background. There are few schools with a relatively large migrant pupil population and therefore extensive experience that have been successful in application of various measures in order to address the needs of migrant pupils. At the same time, most schools lack resources and competence to provide appropriate education and assistance to migrant pupil population. If the number of migrants is to increase in coming years as expected, the Estonian schools must develop their competence of teaching in diverse classrooms. As the numbers of new migrants is relatively low, it is difficult to motivate schools to prepare for a possible change in the situation. However, if the changes occur, schools must be able to adapt quickly. The current funding arrangements should be reconsidered as they lack flexibility. Supplementary funding should not be heavily dependent on the migrant pupil number but has to consider the minimal needs of migrant pupil population as well as the individual needs of a pupil.
WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS

October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF BELGIUM

Prepared by Laura Harabagiu,
Payoke
INTRODUCTION

This research compiles the main policies, actions and projects regarding migration and integration in Belgium. Due to the complex and decentralized federal organization of the Belgian state, the integration and education policies are managed at the level of the three communities: Flemish, The Walloons and Brussels. Thus, it is necessary to discuss the Flemish integration and education policies and not on the national one, and to focus on the Flemish region and its policies with insight in certain local strategies, when appropriate.

The current paper summarizes the main trends, challenges and achievements in policy implementation from the stakeholder’s perspective. In order to do so, the views and expectations of actors involved in the implementation of the integration policy aimed at migrant children are identified through in-depth interviews. This method has been chosen, as it is more effective in the detailed identification of opinions, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of the experts.

The participants in the research have been carefully selected to offer a varied professional and geographic distribution. The interviews were carried out in Antwerp, Brussels, Gent and Mol and the participants are practitioners at various levels, from policy to research at university and teaching staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Profile of participants (professional position, level of hierarchy, gender, age)</th>
<th>Place of conduction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Integration Mediator and Teacher, Stedelijk Instituut voor Sierkunsten en Ambachten, Antwerp.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Policy Officer, Minderheden Forum</td>
<td>Minderheden Forum, Brussels</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Researcher, Centre for Diversity and Learning, University of Gent</td>
<td>Centre for Diversity and Learning, Gent</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>OCMW Mol</td>
<td>OCMW Mol</td>
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1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF FLANDERS

1.1 MAIN PRINCIPLES OF THE FLEMISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Flanders the education system gives a high degree of autonomy to schools, which can define their own educational policies, including the teaching methods, the curriculum, timetables and can appoint their own staff. Nonetheless, in order to receive government recognition and funding, the schools must meet a number of conditions set by the Flemish authorities which includes, among others, following a core curriculum which delineates the basic knowledge and skills a child must have in order to receive official qualification.

Besides the Municipal schools, subsidised by the Flemish Community and officially recognized, the children can also choose between Free schools or Private schools. The Free schools are ones organised by citizens and partially subsidised by the Flemish Community and can be either
This lack of standardisation in schools is seen as positive by policy practitioners, as it leads to a high amount of freedom in education and allows space for the development of alternative learning environments, such as the method schools. “I think it also results in the quality of education because not everyone works to the task”.\textsuperscript{21} But this also can create social inequality, as parents with migrant background are sometimes inclined to enroll their children in “concentration schools”, where the majority of children are of migrant background because they are not fully informed of the complexity and the freedom of the education system: “There are more and more method schools, and others, people really search for those schools. Some of the migrant children attend these schools but parents don’t really know what it is so they’re quite reluctant at this stage, if it’s not well explained. It’s the more Flemish, the highly skilled, and better informed. They understand the system”\textsuperscript{22}. Of course, other factors also play a role in the creation of the so-called “concentration schools”, such as the geographical segregation, school policy towards migrant children etc.

The variety of schools is beneficial, as it offers freedom of choice but it also creates segregation. The so-called “concentration schools” are usually considered to be less prestigious because the majority of the children are of migrant background or with a low socio-economic background. “So there’s a big difference between those schools with large amount of migrant children. [...] a big difference in approach and in the policy-making in the school, how is their education policy.”\textsuperscript{23} However, some of these schools are well adapted to the social mix of children and have developed own policies that manage diversity well and have positive results. “So I think some of the schools, what they call concentratiescholen [concentration schools] that they changed more and are thinking more about their teaching than the schools, the regular schools, the schools in some towns”\textsuperscript{24}.

To conclude, the Flemish education system is very complex and allows a high degree of freedom to the schools and the teachers. The situation of the migrant children depends, among other factors, on the school policy and the teachers, as they can influence the development of the child.

1.2 NATIONAL INDICATORS ON THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

The EU has developed a growth strategy in order to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. The objectives are directed towards five areas: employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate to be reached by 2020. Each Member State agreed on national targets based on the current rates. In education, five main indicators were considered, as seen in the table below.

Unfortunately, some of the national figures are not available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU2020 Strategy/ ET2020 Targets</th>
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<td>47%</td>
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<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE FLEMISH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

2.1 CORE ELEMENTS OF THE FLEMISH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The Flemish policy focuses primarily on the language acquisition by the non-Dutch speakers. To this end, there are language courses organised at all levels and for all ages. For the adults evening and weekend classes are available. For children, the Flemish education system provides special classes – OKAN - that allow children with little or no knowledge of Flemish to follow intensive language training for one year. Upon the completion of the training period, the children, accompanied by the CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre), visit various schools for 3 days to get acquainted with the Flemish system and to choose their educational pathway, between General, Technical or Vocational training.

In 2002 the “Equal Chances Education” (GOK) policy package was launched, in order to ensure that all students have the same opportunities in education. It is focused on children from disadvantaged families and fights exclusion, social isolation and discrimination. Its actions are directed towards three main topics. Firstly, it ensures integrated support for schools to care for all children and youngsters, especially the disadvantaged ones. Secondly, it guarantees the right of registration in a school of their choice for every child or youngster. Finally, it offers legal protection through the creation of local consultation platforms and a Committee on Pupil’s Rights that safeguards the rights of students.

The GOK policy requires schools to create policy on certain topics such as: Parent Involvement,  

26 Flemish current rates, Eurostat website (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/europe_2020_indicators/headline_indicators)
Wellbeing, Dutch Language Acquisition and Intercultural Learning. The schools that have disadvantaged pupils enrolled receive extra funding, extra school hours and trainings for the teachers from the Flemish government.

Started in September 2012 a new policy has been developed for the primary education, called SES (Socio-Economic Status). This policy bases its criteria on the socio-economic status of the family, as “research showed it and also in practice it’s not always migrant children that are a problem, it depends what is their context and what are their supports and what is the family structure”\(^\text{27}\).

### 2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE FLEMISH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The financial crisis that hit Europe in the past few years seems to have a less visible impact on the Flemish education in the present, but future budget cuts for renewal of schools or for projects are expected: “I think we’ll have to be careful in the coming years but so far, no”\(^\text{28}\). Some sectors have experienced the effects of the financial crisis, such as adult education, where there were some budget cuts\(^\text{29}\).

Despite the fact that education has not seen major changes in its budgeting, the projects developed are dependent on subsidies and major forthcomings are in some institutions already happening or are predictable in the near future: “We can only start up projects if we receive the subsidies. For now we still have finances. [...] But I do think there will be less money”\(^\text{30}\). Some schools experience already the financial constraints: “And every project we want to fill in, there’s no money for it. So there’s always volunteers who have to do it and that’s very hard”\(^\text{31}\).

The financial crisis has an effect both on the school and on the parents. Most parents have to make a financial plan and there are a lot of them with debts. For example, the StedelijkInstituutvoorSierkunsten en Ambachten, Antwerp has a special fund to sponsor some of the pupils and they are trying to search for private funding to support more families. Also, the crisis is noticeable all around Europe, in other schools. This school is a partner in the Comenius project and they have noticed a decrease in the number of pupils sent to them in this international exchange, as a number of countries lack the funds to send their pupils to Belgium.

Another effect of the crisis is the change in the society, as the importance of speaking the Dutch language by those with a migrant background grows: “maybe that’s why people are more hammering on the Dutch issue, because they think they need Dutch to have work and they want more people that work”\(^\text{32}\).
3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN FLANDERS

3.1 GENERAL QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

3.1.1 High quality education

The education offered in Flanders is of high quality compared with other countries, as the Pisa and OECD studies show based on the results registered by the students enrolled in Flemish schools. But it is difficult to quantify and compare the results of the students, as in Flanders there are no national tests held and the autonomy of the schools creates big differences between educational institutions. However, high quality education does not resume to students’ outcomes: “I find that quality education means taking into account the wellbeing of the pupils. It is more than just teaching”. “And it’s also working towards a personal development of children not only with the view on the labour market but also personal development and broader aspect of education. That’s quality.”

Furthermore, according to the practitioner interviewed, some schools focus on differentiation between children and the creation of a personalised approach for pupils. Another respondent believes that the emphasis of a high quality education should rest on developing the talents and competences of the children while maintaining a positive approach and preparing them to function in the society and “that’s more than good performance in Mathematics or in Languages”. This perspective is shared by another person who believes that a high quality education should provide children with more interaction and freedom: “students don’t have to sit and listen all day, they can construct their own knowledge, they can interact, they can learn about society, they can discuss. [...]... and also that children feel themselves good at school and that they have a high self-esteem, that they feel good about themselves.”

Nevertheless, from the policy level, the education provided is of high quality, as “a quite high number of students do well in schools and follow higher education. So it is a country where [there is] a high amount of educated people compared to other European countries, I think. But also to other countries in the world and also other members of OECD”.

3.1.2 Can children easily move between pathways?

Children receive guidance from the school and from CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre) and are allowed to choose between study pathways, with certain limitations such as the certificates given by the
teacher at the end of the year. Yearly, a meeting of teachers takes place which analyses if the pupils are following the right educational path\textsuperscript{38}.

However, the practitioners’ points of view are that children cannot move easily between education pathways due to the waterfall system. Children often start in the General pathway\textsuperscript{39}, which is considered a high study\textsuperscript{40} and then they gradually go to the Technical and then to Vocational pathways while becoming more and more demotivated to study. This trajectory only takes place downwards, as children find it very difficult to return to the General education once they have entered a ‘lower one’. The main reason for this waterfall system is the differentiation made between levels. While the General study is considered high, the other two are disregarded. As a result, the courses have varied levels of difficulty, the subjects taught are differentiated, the teachers are of a different level and so are the requirements. Even within the pathway there is a hierarchy because some subjects are considered to be of a greater value than others.

Another element of the waterfall system are the teachers which sometimes are less demanding in Vocational and Technical training pathways and thus the students cannot return to the General education, as it has a very high level of difficulty. Due to the differentiation of the levels, some teachers discourage the students by explaining the complexity of the system and the effort the students have to do in order to return to the General education\textsuperscript{41}.

An additional factor is represented by the parents who have unreasonable expectations or who do not accept the recommendation of the teacher and the CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre) and enrol their children in a study pathway that does not benefit the pupil because of various reasons (it does not fit the child’s set of skills and interests or it is of a higher difficulty etc.).

Lastly, some children are misguided due to their insufficient language knowledge. There are cases where children who are intelligent but cannot express themselves well enough in Dutch have been sent to special education where they receive a personalised training but aimed at pupils with difficulties of learning\textsuperscript{42}.

To conclude, the quality of the education mainly depends on the school, its policy towards diversity and learning and the teachers. Some Technical schools offer only Technical training and due to their specialisation can provide exceptional education, others less.

The improvements suggested focus mainly on changing the vision of some teachers and the society towards accepting multiculturalism and linguistic diversity and encouraging children to use their linguistic capital. Furthermore, the waterfall system needs to be addressed by changing the perception that Vocational and Technical pathways are of lower level and by concentrating on the competences of the students and not only on their certificates and diplomas.

\textsuperscript{38} Respondent 1.
\textsuperscript{39} For more information, see Annex 1.
\textsuperscript{40} Respondent 4.
\textsuperscript{41} Respondent 3.
\textsuperscript{42} Respondent 4.
3.2 DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOL

3.2.1 Equality
When it comes to equality in schools, the perspectives differ. One of the teachers interviewed considers that children are not discriminated against in school and that there are only acts of aggression between students but not because of the ethnical background. Also, there are a number of schools that have banners such as “School without racism” and organise a Multicultural Day for the 5th year students.

However, three out of the four persons interviewed state that discrimination exists and that students who encounter it the most are the ones with migrant background, the ones who have a low economic background or who have problems in learning. Bullying also takes place in schools as well as on the internet and the high rates of suicide among youngsters in Flanders is worrisome43. Additionally, the policy level created confusion among the teachers with the “Equal Chances Education” policy that stated that all pupils are equal. But that changed the focus from diversity to equality and thus the new standard became equality. And that shift of perspective was perceived as a limit on extra efforts that can be done for the children44.

3.2.2 High quality Curriculum
The curriculum used by the schools is partially stated by law through the minimum requirements set by the government and partially created by the schools according to their teaching methods, beliefs and perspective. The quality of the curriculum depends thus on the school and it is not always relevant for children with a lower socio-economic background. Despite the great diversity and the disadvantages that might bring, standardization of the curriculum is to be avoided. According to the policy officer interviewed, teachers should receive more support to collaborate and create quality materials but the creativity and diversity should be maintained. And so should the balance between general knowledge and specific courses preparing students for the job market.

Furthermore, the major problems lie not with the curriculum but with the manner in which it is translated into practical learning plans by the schools. The curriculum is created by the Department of Education which consults experts in different fields and thus it includes goals that the society proposed as well. It is the school policy and the way in which teachers deal with diversity, which kind of handbooks and pictures they use and which information is transmitted in an implicit way to the students. To this end, teachers should be encouraged to make connections with the children's background.

3.2.3 Foreign Trained Teachers
There are few foreign-trained teachers in the Flemish education. There are some teachers with migrant background but they all have graduated from the Belgian education system. The reasons vary from the difficult procedure of diploma recognition, the negative experiences during the

43 Respondent 4.
44 Respondent 2.
school years to the education system itself, which hinders the majority of children with another ethnical background than Flemish to finish higher teacher training.\textsuperscript{45}

The presence of teachers with a foreign background is beneficial for the society as a whole, for the parents, directors and colleagues. Not just to promote the success of the migrant children but for the whole society, to open the perspective.\textsuperscript{46} It confirms the intercultural feature of the Flemish society and helps parents with migrant background better understand the expectations of the Flemish education system, as they differ from culture to culture.\textsuperscript{47}

Likewise, the person can act as a role model for the community and ensure smooth and positive communication with the parents, as he/she can better explain the situation and quicker gain their trust. Similarly, he/she can provide support and comfort for the children that enter in the OKAN classes and who have to learn a new language and in the same time adapt to a new culture.

Looking from the school’s point of view there are numerous benefits but for the teacher of migrant background also a number of challenges appear. Most of the time, he/she has a middle class background or a higher background and despite the easy communication with the students and their families, there is a gap that is created due to differences in socio-economic status, ideas on life, education etc.\textsuperscript{48} Furthermore, the integration in the group of colleagues might also constitute a challenge: "a new, young teacher coming into a narrow-minded team of teachers is very hard."\textsuperscript{49}

### 3.2.4 Highly trained teachers

According to all the respondents, there are highly trained teachers in the Flemish schools which have intercultural skills, as this is one of the competences a teacher must have. Also, there are coaches for new teachers and there is also a budget for follow-up courses. In comparison with other countries, the teacher training in Belgium has a few shortcomings though. One is the short period of study, from one year to three years, while in other countries the same education requires five years.

Another is the vision of the teachers which should be more focused on accepting diversity and the multicultural society that Flanders now has. Furthermore, teachers should receive more training on diversity management during their training and open their perspective on multiculturalism, poverty and equal education.\textsuperscript{50} Also, emphasis should be put on the teacher-parent relationship: “Parents don’t come in the picture because there’s so much focus on teaching and coping with the children, but not for the parents.”\textsuperscript{51}

Also, teachers should have high standards, should know how to differentiate and reach their students. In order to give quality education they should use a variety of methods of working with the class: cooperative learning and group work but also individual tasks. They should work in teams and cooperate to develop quality materials and interesting methods. Finally, teachers should be critical over their own opinion on migrants and low socio-economic background.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{45} Respondent 2.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} Respondent 4.
\textsuperscript{48} Respondent 3.
\textsuperscript{49} Respondent 2.
\textsuperscript{50} Participant 4.
\textsuperscript{51} Respondent 2.
\textsuperscript{52} Respondent 3.
3.2.5 Ideas for the future – What can be done in Diversity Management?

Apart from investing more money for projects on diversity management, the government should develop policies appropriate for each level of education because the “Equal Chances Education” (GOK) failed at being implemented in the secondary education, as was meant for primary education.

3.3 TARGETED MEASURES FOR MIGRANT PUPILS

3.3.1 Targeted Measures

The perspectives on the targeted measures for pupils of migrant background are quite mixed. Some respondents cannot identify any measure directed at the children with migrant background: “in this school, all students are treated as equals, receiving the same respect from everyone”\(^{53}\). Other answers focus on the language development policy, which states that schools who have more than 5-6 pupils who do not speak Dutch can start a class for them with the support from the “Equal Chances Education” policy. As previously explained, the “Equal Chances Education” is undergoing major changes and thus the measures previously taken are replaced by new projects. One of them is the “Innovation and Excellence in Education” project which will take place in 13 ‘concentration schools’ around Flanders. This five-year project funded by the Ministry of Education aims to offer trainings for teachers and “support those 13 schools in implementing high quality measures to deal with education”\(^{54}\).

3.3.2 Personalised learning & individual support

The policy of “Equal Chances Education” (GOK) ensures that schools receive extra hours dedicated to helping underperforming pupils, irrespective of their ethnic background. The implementation of this policy varies from school to school. Some schools have an “Open Learning Centre” where children receive guidance from certain teachers assigned during the school hours\(^{55}\). Others use the extra hours to organize children into smaller classes or have special classes for pupils with learning problems. The Flemish Government monitors the quality of these actions through inspections but the results are not always satisfactory as each school handles its actions differently\(^{56}\).

3.3.3 Courses in the country’s language

The language policy in Flanders is focused on teaching Dutch and not on the native languages of migrant populations. That is why most of the schools do not offer any support for the native language or some even disregard its usage: “Actually, when they talk in their mother tongue it’s more being sanctioned”\(^{57}\). However, during their training, the future teachers are given courses that are meant to bring a positive perspective on multilingualism in schools and to disseminate the EU policy on multilingualism.

\(^{53}\) Respondent 1.
\(^{54}\) Respondent 3.
\(^{55}\) Respondent 1.
\(^{56}\) Respondent 2.
\(^{57}\) Respondent 2.
Some schools allow teachers of different ethnic background to give lessons in their native language. But those initiatives are not included in the curriculum, nor are subsidies by the Flemish government. In Gent there was a project aimed at teaching Turkish language in schools. “They started to read and write in Turkish but the project ended and the evaluation showed that there wasn’t a big difference between them and the others.” A similar project in Brussels offering Spanish, Italian and Arabic shared the same fate, as the budgets were cut due to the difficulties they encountered. Firstly, the teachers needed to be native speakers and to have quality materials and books, as well as modern methods of teaching. Secondly, it was hard to determine which languages were taught, as the cultural diversity required that the lessons covered all cultural identities and that is also very difficult.

3.3.4 Partnership with migrant communities & parents communication

Generally, the communication with parents is a delicate subject, either with Flemish parents or with the ones of migrant origin. But there are a number of projects aimed at improving the parent involvement and some schools have adapted their policy in order to improve the communication with the parents by organising parent meetings in the afternoon, mother groups, coffee meetings or pictograms.

One school in Gent hired a person with Turkish background to work in their administrative staff and ensure a good contact with the Turkish parents: “could really make contact with especially Turkish parents but also with other parents because he has this awareness of how to deal with parents from a different background”. Other school in Antwerp has multilingual members of the staff that can communicate with parents in their mother tongue. If that is not possible, then a CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre) is asked to ensure the translation or translate a number of important documents.

3.4 GOVERNANCE AND MAINSTREAMING

The Flemish schools have a very good experience with the Comenius project from European Commission, which creates a platform of communication and interaction for teachers and pupils to know each other within Europe. Multiple schools are beneficiaries of such exchanges of information and good practices.

4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

4.1 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

The most important policy is the SES (Socio-Economic Status) which allows schools to ensure a broad scope of care for all children, especially the disadvantaged children and youngsters. Just like

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58 Respondent 3.
59 Respondent 2.
the ‘Equal Chances Education’, the SES also focuses on giving all students the same opportunities and thus gives special attention to children from disadvantaged families.

Unlike GOK (Equal Chances Education), the SES uses four criteria to identify disadvantaged children: children with low-educated parents, children who do not speak Dutch at home, children from families with no income and thus supported by the Social Services (OCMW) and children who live in an environment with reduced chances (parents belong to the migratory population – boatmen, travellers, circus artists). This policy focuses not only on language acquisition but also on parent involvement. The latter especially is very successful, as parents are come to work to school or are involved in numerous projects run by the schools such as the art exhibition in Mol organised by the Turkish community and presented in one of the colleges in the city. The language acquisition projects are numerous, trying to stimulate the use of Dutch in a fun way. A successful example is the Babbelkousje project in Mol, where children from the kindergarten and the first grade volunteer and bring others in a positive way in contact with the Dutch language.

4.2 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

Besides the “Equal Chances Education” policy, the main policy measure taken against early school leavers and underachieving students is mentoring. Certain teachers work as mentors and follow-up the pupils that underachieve during the allocated school time. Unfortunately, there is no sense of urgency at the Ministry level for this issue and only local policies are in place.

The general policy for secondary education remains the “Equal Chances Education” which turns to be less successful than expected because it was applied mainly by schools which had Vocational and Technical studies, as the General education schools considered they did not identify any issues with diversity or equality.

Most of the efforts to prevent school leaving are unsuccessful because they should be focused on starting at an earlier stage in the primary school not when the pupils are already dropping-out. Also, the common measure in schools to make underachieving students repeat the year leads to school leaving because it is demotivating for the children and creates age differences.

A positive example of effective policy is the Leonardo high school in Antwerp where an individual career development is implemented which allows a positive and close follow-up of the pupils and acts as a motivational factor throughout the study pathway.

5. PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

The Sirius network seems very attractive for all the persons interviewed, especially for the possibility of exchanging information resulted in this analysis. Similarly, the comparison between countries and the good practices that will be compiled are very interesting, as various countries can use parts of policies and actions and integrate them in their own strategies.

From a school’s point of view, the Sirius network can benefit the school by making use of the platform of communication and interaction between teachers around Europe.

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6. CONCLUSIONS

The Flemish education system offers a wide range of autonomy and diversity in education, which offers a great deal of freedom of choice but, in the same time, creates negative effects such as the “concentration schools” where the majority of pupils are of migrant background or the waterfall system. Due to the major differences between the schools, their policies, the teachers and the study pathways children are directed on one study path from a young age without having the opportunity to return to the General training.

The Flemish government is doing efforts in improving the situation and has introduced a new policy which focuses on the socio-economic status of children instead of their ethnic background, but that is limited to primary education where problems are not so urgent. Furthermore, the emphasis on equality brought through the “Equal Chances Education” proved to be less helpful as intended. Schools and teachers focus more on ensuring equality among students, even if that means forbidding the usage of mother tongue or not taking any special measures to support children with a migrant background.

Finally, it is difficult to define the situation of migrant children in the Flemish school system as it is determined by the school policy, the type of school and the teaching methods used. Additionally, the teachers play a major role in the development of a child as well as the existence of family support.

The improvements suggested focus on the development of a personalised approach towards the students and towards their wellbeing, as well as increased training on diversity management for teachers and on more flexibility and diversity from the school system.
LIST OF REFERENCES


ANNEX 1- THE FLEMISH EDUCATION SYSTEM
WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS

October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF GERMANY

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INTRODUCTION
The conduction of a Focus Group Discussion was planned in Berlin, Germany. However, due to the short-notice cancellation of participation by several registered participants, the Focus Group could not be conducted in the planned format. Alternatively, an open questionnaire containing the issues of discussion was composed and sent to the potential Focus Group participants. The draft report was later on commented and finalized. Hence, the here outlined statements are not based on a discussion but on individual contributions. For easier reading and for the consistency with other Focus Group Reports by the SIRIUS Network, the respondents are here referred to as “Focus Group Participants”.

1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF GERMANY
In comparison to other countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), social background and family language have a relatively strong impact on educational achievements in Germany. Families of children with a migrant background are often rather socially disadvantaged; many of them speak another language than German at home. This places children with a migrant background at a disadvantage within the German education system. The early tracking system, which provides that the decision for one out of three secondary schooling tracks has to be taken after fourth grade, represents a further disadvantage for children with a migrant background: they have less time than in other countries to learn the language and “culture” of schooling. Moreover, due to the in most parts of Germany still prevailing half-day schools, the actual contact hours between pupils and teachers are much lower than in most other OECD countries. These disadvantages manifest themselves among others in higher-than-average proportions of children with a migrant background in lower qualifying secondary schools, special schools for low performers, and among early school leavers – as compared to children of native-born parents. At the same time, children with a migrant background are underrepresented in higher qualifying secondary schools and in higher education. As a consequence, people with a migrant background are overrepresented among unemployed youth and among the unemployed in general.
### Table 1: National indicators on the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU 2020 Strategy / ET 2020 Targets</th>
<th>National goal</th>
<th>Present national figure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary-education participating in early childhood education</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>96% (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2012, p. 57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School drop-out rate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9,9%</td>
<td>5,6% (Destatis 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>18% (r) (Klieme et al., p. 46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18,6% (m) (Klieme et al., p. 65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14,8% (s) (Klieme et al., p. 186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>30% (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2012, p. 44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>42% (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2012, p. 142)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE GERMAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 CORE ELEMENTS OF THE GERMAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The German approach to the education of children with a migrant background is led by the goals of providing equal chances in education for all children, and ensuring that no child is left behind.

In reaching these goals, a focus is set on measures of (1) supporting the improvement of German language skills under the provision that the knowledge of the language of the host country is a key element in the integration process. The approach assumes that German language competences of children with a migrant background should be supported as early as possible, and should last as long and consistently as possible during the educational career until, and even during the entering of the employment market. A second focus (2) is on measures of decreasing the number of young people leaving school without a degree.
2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE GERMAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Focus Group Participants expressed two differing positions:

(1) The position of the financial crisis having no impact on the approach to education of children with a migrant background, and (2) the financial crisis having led to a scaling back of resources, particularly personnel resources, as well as to a decrease of the support of the teaching of migrants’ native languages.

There are no scientific analyses investigating the issue.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN GERMANY

3.1 GENERAL QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Overall, the Focus Group Participants take a critical position regarding the quality and adequacy of the current state of the German education system for children with a migrant background.

It is mutually perceived that the school system is in need of improvements particularly in the following areas: (a) qualification of teachers and principals, (b) individual support for children with a migrant background, (c) cooperation and network relations among relevant institutions, (d) involvement of parents with a migrant background into the education process of their children and the school environment (e.g. communication with teachers), particularly those who are rather distanced to education and live under socially disadvantaged conditions.

The concentration of problems in some schools that are attended by high proportions of children with a migrant background and the failure of a demand-oriented allocation of resources represent an additional cause for the inadequate quality of the school system for children with a migrant background.

As one reason for the current inadequate state of the education system, the failure to compensate for deficits related to social background and family language is stated. This applies particularly to secondary schools, and to a smaller degree to primary schools. Thus, equal access to high-quality education, particularly in and after the stage of secondary education, is not ensured for all pupils, particularly not for children with a migrant background.

3.2 DIVERSITY IN SCHOOL

Diversity in German schools is managed very differently. Some Focus Group Participants assess the management of diversity in schools as deficient. In this context, the insufficient management regarding diversity in higher secondary schools, which is manifested in a lack of sensitivity and knowledge about intercultural education in general as well as on the different national, cultural and religious backgrounds of the pupils attending the school, is pointed out. Teachers frequently have not acquired intercultural education skills and are unacquainted with the family conditions and
environment of children with a migrant background. Moreover, they lack the didactical and methodological qualifications to suit their teaching to the presuppositions and experiences of these children. Hence, teachers are not equipped with the preconditions to meet the specific learning needs of children with a migrant background.

As opposed to national frameworks on intercultural education and diversity in other countries, the handling of these issues is left up to teachers in Germany. The curriculum provides no respective provisions and hence, is not suitable to meet the specific needs of pupils with a migrant background.

Curricula of several other countries reflect the cultural and religious composition of pupils stronger and are shaped on the basis of giving respect and consideration to the intercultural background of pupils. This enables cultural and religious diversity to be appropriately reflected in the education systems of these countries.

Focus Group Participants propose a multiplicity of approaches to solve the deficient management of diversity in schools and the insufficient intercultural education skills of teachers. The following strategies are proposed: pre- and in-service training for teachers in the fields of diversity and intercultural education, inclusion of diversity and intercultural education in school curricula and in teacher training curricula, and evaluation of the implementation.

School-based activities are identified as further opportunities to implement a diversity approach in the school environment. E.g. the Focus Group Participants suggest that schools should conduct projects where students get engaged into the cultural background of their classmates and present insights of their findings to the class. Moreover, diversity could be approached through a classroom management that enables frequent communication between pupils with different backgrounds. Thus, teachers create strategic linkages with regard to social interactions among classmates with diverse cultural backgrounds.

Concepts for the concrete realization of intercultural education, also with regard to specific subjects (e.g. language teaching) are widespread and easy to find (among others through INKA, a federal network of experts in intercultural education in teacher training), as are examples of good practice projects in single schools. However, none of the German federal states has so far implemented a strategy or mechanism for a pervasive application of the principles of intercultural education in all schools.

3.3 TARGETED MEASURES FOR MIGRANT PUPILS

The possibilities of children with a migrant background to receive the targeted measures which they need for a successful educational career are perceived as insufficient. The suggested tool by the Focus Group Participants for improving targeted measures is a continuous portfolio for every child, which optimally should begin in pre-primary school, but not later than in primary school.

Besides the individual support for every child, schools have to intensify the collaboration with the parents. Compared to other OECD countries, the German education system strongly relies on parental involvement. Due to deficits in involving parents with a migrant background in the education process and in the school environment, their children are subject to disadvantages in the German school system.

In Germany the responsibility for school matters is located at the federal states (Länder). Therefore, in the diverse Länder different projects exist, which aim at an improvement of the
educational skills and German language skills of children with a migrant background. For example, bilingual or native-language education, remedial teaching, additional care after the regular school as well as offerings beyond the curriculum to gain on lost school material and to improve German language skills.

At the same time, there is a general discrepancy between the sheer quantity of educational reforms in Germany in the past three or four decades and measurable positive effects on the basic challenges of the German school system. Many widely discussed necessary or wished-for changes in the way teaching is organized do not specifically target migrant pupils, but the latter would profit from them, even more than children from non-migrant families. To name just a few: individual learning, mixed-age learning groups, team teaching, and the gradual dissolution of special schools.

3.4 GOVERNANCE AND MAINSTREAMING

Critical views were expresses concerning the fact that the efficiency of the school system for migrant pupils is highly dependent on the individual engagement of particular teachers, school leaders and schools. The system itself should be shaped in a way that all pupils profit from it with equal chances, and should not so strongly depend on individual engagement. A proposal was made to design a project for school development for every commune or city, which would be developed, accompanied and evaluated by a round table.

Further measures which were found as important to implement include the extension of offerings for care in pre-primary education and the inclusion of parents with migrant background into the educational process to enhance the participation of their children. Moreover, it is found as necessary to design and implement projects that are facilitated by the government, provide for an increase of transparency in the German school system and for a stronger focus on particular transition stages in the education process. Presently, ongoing policies include the integration of at risk students into the school system, especially through the direct and early support for potential early school leavers, including those whose grades are very low and those who refuse to attend school.

4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

4.1 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

One of the main policy measures for pre-primary education consists in the extension of day-care facilities. Moreover, the training of pre-primary teachers and the quality assurance for pre-primary education (among others through the support of German as a second language) represent further goals. The Focus Group Participants share the perception that the development and improvement of the engagement with and involvement of parents have to be promoted. Hence, an early involvement and guidance of the parents constitute a further goal of policy measures for pre-primary education. A hoped-for effect of the introduction of a legal entitlement to a day-care place for every child at age 3+ from autumn 2013 on will contribute to improving the integration of
migrant children and to decreasing the present disadvantages of migrant parents in finding day-care places. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that the legal entitlement can be realized without serious limitations in the minimum quality standards of the institutions providing these places.

4.2 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

In order to decrease the rate of early school leavers and the proportion of pupils with a below average educational attainment particularly individual support measures right from the start, and a close collaboration with the parents are found as important. In addition, intercultural training for school personnel and a higher number of mentors, mediators as well as social caseworkers in schools would contribute to a decrease in the number of young people leaving school without a degree and to an improvement of the educational attainments of migrant pupils. Particularly teacher training and qualification and a stronger awareness of the training potentials and possibilities are crucial for the goals for secondary education.

Again, the introduction of more comprehensive types of secondary schools next to the academic-oriented gymnasium in almost all German federal states would hopefully diminish the tendency of “downscaling” of pupils perceived as “problematic” among many teachers. At the same time, comprehensive school types would mitigate the challenges of transitions within the school career which so far often represent obstacles for migrant pupils. Especially the early tracking as applied in the German education system is found as disadvantageous for migrant pupils.

4.3 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

Tertiary education is faced with some challenges relating to access limitations due to school recommendations and parental decisions. However, the above-average college dropout rate is perceived as the major problem. Policy measures should target a decrease of this rate. This could be achieved on the one hand, by strengthening the individual academic mentoring as well as by an extension of support measures, including German as a science language. On the other hand, more knowledge and good practice exchange between policy makers and practitioners as well as policy design regarding the transparency and opportunities for advancement of the tertiary education system should take place. Pupils should receive more information and counseling regarding occupational education, the role of occupational secondary schools, dual tertiary education, polytechnic etc.

4.4 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

It is considered as necessary to implement a qualified guidance system for educational measures which accompanies people through all educational stages. This would carry the potential of increasing the participation and opportunities of migrants in life-long learning processes.

Present policy measures for a life-long learning include the provision of information and guidance about advanced training opportunities. The main goal consists in a positive awareness and valuation of education in order to motivate and encourage different forms of life-long learning. This must also include lower thresholds and better chances for mobility across educational pathways, involving also mechanisms for second and third chances for re-entering the educational system and for “stapling” diplomas, i.e. not being automatically streamed out of the system as soon
as a first qualifying diploma has been obtained. This applies especially for the transition from compulsory lower secondary education to upper secondary or post-secondary educational pathways.

The policy measures proposed above are not considered as fully available so far. The main obstacles in improving chances within and across the educational stages in the life course consist in financial, structural and hierarchical restrictions. Besides the federalist system, education politics are considered as a further challenge by some Focus Group Participants. They perceive politics of education as too much determined by politicians and current political interests, and too little influenced by experts.

5. CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that the school system in Germany contains relevant obstacles that constrain the main goal of equal chances in education for all children: Migrant pupils do not always receive individual and comprehensive support. Teachers are perceived as lacking skills of intercultural education and approaches of diversity. Parents with migrant background have not been sufficiently involved in the educational process of their children.

However, successful policy measures have been identified as well, particularly those aiming at improving German language skills and decreasing the number of young people leaving school without a degree with the overall goal of achieving equal chances in education for all children. Even though individual support and parental involvement of migrants have not fully been achieved, successful measures have been implemented in this field, particularly in the early years of the education process. Furthermore, policies have been implemented for an improvement of teacher qualification and intercultural training as well as for providing migrant families with sufficient information on the German education system. In this context, guidance on opportunities for the different stages of the education process is considered as crucial.
LIST OF REFERENCES


INKA – Interkultureller Arbeitskreis der Bundesländer im DVLfB. Available at: http://www.lehrerfortbildung.de/projekt/inka/inka.html.

WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS
October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF LATVIA

Prepared by Maria Golubeva
**INTRODUCTION**

The choice of participants for the Focus Group was dictated partly by the FG instructions from WP1, and partly by the fact that in Latvia, there are no strong migrant organizations representing ‘new’ migrants. ‘Old’ (Soviet-time) migrants are represented by some cultural societies and political groups that do not conceptualise themselves as migrants. Therefore, an NGO assisting new migrants to access Latvian social services, including the education system, was selected as the civil society counterpart with a good knowledge of the situation of new migrants in education system.

**Chart on Focus Group in Latvia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and timing</th>
<th>Place of conducton</th>
<th>Numb er of participants</th>
<th>Profile of participants (professional position, level of hierarchy, gender, age)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 21.09. 10.00-12.00 | Ministry of Educatio n and Science of the Republic of Latvia | 5 | Participant 1: LiesmaOse, Deputy Director of Department of Policy Initiatives and Development Ministry of Education  
Participant 2: OlitaArkle, senior clerk, Department of Education, Ministry of Education and Science  
Participant 3: NatalijaPotasova, Principal of Riga School No 15  
Participant 4: AnitaUdre, NGO Drošāmāja (Safe house), assisting newly arrived migrants and refugees to access social services and to realize their rights in Latvia  
Participant 5 (add columns): Dace Dalbina, Deputy Director of Latvian Language Agency |

1. **PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF LATVIA**

National indicators on the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets (where available, data on third country nationals (non-citizens) is given next to national average)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU 2020 Strategy / ET 2020 Targets</th>
<th>National goal</th>
<th>Present national figure</th>
<th>Optional notes on availability of national figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary-education participating in early childhood</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>Present national figure from 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early leavers from education and training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: 17.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math: 22.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Science: 14.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>34-36%</td>
<td>Native 35.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nationals 21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE LATVIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

2.1 CORE ELEMENTS OF THE LATVIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Focus group participants agreed that the principal element that distinguishes the Latvian system is the provision of mother tongue instruction in a bilingual education setting in formal education both in primary and secondary (including upper secondary) schools. Currently according to the Ministry of Education, part-time instruction in the mother tongue in formal school setting is available in 8 languages (including notably Russian and Ukrainian, the mother tongues of most persons with migration background in Latvia). At the same time, it is important to note that this provision of mother tongue education is organized in separate school setting (i.e. in separate schools for minorities, not in mainstream schools together with majority students).

Ministry representatives highlighted that another core element of Latvia’s approach to the education of children with migration background is support for intercultural activities, especially in informal education setting – learning the elements of traditional cultures of minorities and migrants, state and municipal support for cultural activities in minority languages, especially folk song and dance activities.

Measuring the impact of reforms. Since the late 1990s, Latvia has been shifting its education system from the Soviet model where Russian-speaking children studied only in Russian to the bilingual system, in which programmes for minority and migrant students offer about 50% instruction in mother tongue in primary and lower secondary school and 40% in upper secondary school. The rest of instruction is in Latvian. After the completion of bilingual education reform in 2004, the Ministry of Education commissioned several studies to see the impact of reform on the academic performance and language proficiency of students in bilingual schools.
2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE LATVIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The financial crisis has had an indirect yet demonstrable impact on the situation in migrant education. Due to budget cuts, schools had to cut staff positions, and usually the ones closed were the support staff positions, such as school psychologists, which means that less individual support was available to students in disadvantaged situation. Another effect of reduced public funding was the slowing down of initiatives connected with intercultural education for which state funding or co-funding was necessary. However, owing to support from the EU (Framework programme on solidarity and management of migration flows), Latvian Language Agency (a government agency responsible for language policy and language training programmes in the public sector) was able to continue work on teaching materials for newly arrived migrants and to produce 7 teaching aids intended for newly arrived migrant children and their parents.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN LATVIA

Option B: Countries which are in a beginning stage of the development of targeted policies.

3.1 LATVIA’S STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF TARGETED POLICIES

3.1.1 General quality of the school system

According to the amendments of the Law on Education, passed in 2010, every school-age child (up to 18 years old), also third country national, refugee, asylum seeker, or person without definite status (illegal immigrant) is entitled to free schooling in state schools. The choice is between a programme in mainstream school (in Latvian only, with additional state-funded Latvian language support offered only to refugees and asylum seekers) and a minority school programme (with part of instruction in one of the 8 available languages, most often in Russian).

Higher education in Latvia is not free, and third country nationals usually have to pay higher fees for tuition in Latvia’s universities than citizens and non-citizens (a special legal status equal to citizenship in respect to residence, social and economic rights, but not in political rights61).

So far, the number of newly arrived migrant children is still low and it is difficult to establish whether their concentration in under-performing schools is above average for native students. However, if we consider also second- and third-generation immigrants from the Russian-speaking community, who mostly attend national minority schools with bilingual education programme, there is no basis for concern that these schools perform worse than Latvian-language mainstream

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There is no available statistical data to fully test the hypothesis that second- and third-generation migrant children who attend mainstream (Latvian-language) schools gravitate towards lower-performing schools. A study from 2006 showed that in upper secondary school, students from the Russian-speaking minority attending mainstream schools performed on the whole the same or slightly better than their Latvian-speaking peers.

3.1.2 Diversity in schools

Teachers in many schools are acquiring intercultural skills during special projects, also in EU-funded projects, but not as part of a general policy. Only in-service training for Social Studies teachers includes intercultural education as an obligatory element.

There is no government policy in the field of diversity management in schools.

3.1.3 Targeted measures for migrant pupils

There is no overall education policy document setting out the goals and targets regarding the education of children with migration background. Focus group participants have agreed that there is no consistent policy in Latvia on the education of migrants. Migration policy as such is still in the making, with current rates of immigration very low.

Regulations No 586 of the Cabinet of Ministers define how schools have to enrol asylum seekers and refugee children, because they are entitled to free access to primary and secondary education.

Teaching aids for newly arrived migrants, including materials for Latvian language teachers and information about Latvian education system for parents (7 materials all in all) have been developed by Latvian Language Agency.

However, if we consider also the policies targeting second- and third-generation migrants in the Russian-speaking community, targeted policies for this group have been developed since 1995, when the National Programme for Latvian Language Training was created with support from UNDP. The Programme (since 2003 run by a separate government agency) included massive teacher training activities for teachers of Russian-language schools, improving both Latvian language proficiency and bilingual education skills. From 1998, Russian-language schools had to choose between several models of bilingual education. These models are implemented with support from the Latvian Language Agency until today. Since around 2005, also teachers of mainstream (Latvian-language) schools have begun to take part in bilingual education and intercultural education teacher training courses, funded by ESF and government funds, however, their participation in these courses is relatively low.

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3.1.4. Governance and mainstreaming

Monitoring and analysis of education outcomes of second- and third-generation migrants as a separate group is only possible as far as they mostly study in schools implementing bilingual education programmes (data from these schools can be identified separately). There is no special monitoring and analysis of education outcomes of students of migrant background in mainstream (Latvian-language) schools.

3.2 CHALLENGES AND PROSPECT IN TARGETED POLICIES

Despite the fact that law entitles all school-age children to free state-funded education, schools are not yet prepared to address the language needs of students from regions where Russian and other former USSR languages are not spoken. For example, refugees and asylum seekers from countries like Afghanistan, Kenya, Iraq end up in the Riga school No 15, where they attend bilingual Russian/Latvian school and where no support in their mother tongue is available. There is no additional public funding for schools integrating newly arrived migrant children. The school gets the same amount of state funding for every student (on per capita basis), but it does not cover extra time invested by teachers (e.g. language support). During the Focus group interview, the principal of the Riga school No 15 (educating many children of refugees and asylum seekers) complained about the lack of funding for extra language classes and other target measures that would enable easier integration of students from first generation migrant families in Latvian schools.

4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

Option B: Countries which are in a beginning stage of the development of targeted policies and differentiated education statistics.

4.1 PRESENT STATE OF EDUCATION STATISTICS

In Latvia, education statistics is collected from schools via State Education Information System. The data collection method allows to analyze desegregated statistics on the performance of students in different schools, for example, to compare national test results of students in mainstream schools and in schools with bilingual education programmes (where most second- and third-generation immigrants study). However so far immigrant students are not monitored as a separate group, and no desegregated data on the education outcomes of all immigrant students (first-, second- and third-generation, also those, who study in mainstream schools) is available to policy makers. One of the representatives of the Ministry of Education said during the Focus Group that the Ministry would like to monitor newly arrived immigrant students in primary and secondary schools as a separate group, and second- and third-generation immigrants as another group, looking at national test results in reading, writing and math. The data collection methods would have to be changed accordingly. There is, however, no policy document currently indicating this intention.
4.2 STATE OF DISCUSSION ON MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND ET 2020 TARGETS

There is no high-profile discussion on ET 2020 targets going on in the public sphere. These goals are sometimes addressed by education professionals (e.g. teachers’ unions) in their discussions with policy makers. A monitoring report on government plans of education reform issued by the think-tank PROVIDUS in January 2012 links many measures proposed by the government in education to ET 2020 targets and concludes that on the whole the reform plans of the current government support the direction indicated by ET 2020.

4.3 STATE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE IMPACT OF POLICIES TO MEET THE GOALS

Since targeted policies exist only in the area of language teaching to second- and third-generation migrants (in fact, only the bilingual education introduction since late 1990s can be considered a fully developed targeted policy), research is available only in this area. Existing studies (in Latvian) are quoted in List of References below.

5. PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Focus group participants believe that SIRIUS could help to broaden the understanding of individual approach and students individual needs that have to be targeted independently of student’s status, in order to ensure truly inclusive education. Ministry representative also expressed a wish that SIRIUS researchers could help policy makers to find better ways to merge and analyze data.

6. CONCLUSIONS

As can be seen from the report, Latvia has rather advanced bilingual education policies for minorities and second- and third-generation migrants, but it is the only area, in which targeted policies for migrant education are truly developed. In most other areas, including education statistics, Latvia is not yet seriously prepared to accommodate a potentially diverse migrant population in its schools.

However, the experience of teacher educators from Latvian Language Agency, who have introduced many methodologies for second language learning and bilingual education, can be used by other EU countries wishing to develop second language teaching and bilingual education for students with migration background.

In terms of secondary education attainment, in recent years there is no major difference in national tests between students in mainstream (Latvian language) schools and students of minority (bilingual) schools, where most second- and third-generation migrants study. The socio-economic

levels of these populations are approximately the same, which may explain why there is no gap in school outcomes.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Other studies that illustrate the situation in minority (bilingual) schools in Latvia in a wider context:


WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS

October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF LITHUANIA

Prepared by PPMI
1. **PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF LITHUANIA**

Education is one of the important policy areas for development in Europe for the next decade. EU 2020 Strategy and ET 2020 establish 5 benchmarks in education area for Member States to achieve by 2020 (see Table 1 below). Lithuanian national educational goals generally correspond to European objectives. However, the current state of educational indicators in Lithuania is quite far from reaching the benchmark, with the exception being early school leaving which is currently at the level of 7.9%, while the EU target is not more than 10% of students dropping out from schools. However, dropout from vocational education is much higher and composes 16.5% of all students in VET. Lithuania also has quite a high level of 30-34 year-olds completing tertiary education (45%), while the EU goal is to have at least 40% of adults with tertiary educational attainment.

Lithuania is still falling behind in encouraging early childhood education with only 72% of children between 3-6 years old being enrolled in pre-primary schools. The number of adults participating in lifelong learning is also quite small (5.9%) comparing to the ET 2020 benchmark (at least 15%). The challenge for Lithuanian education policy is to improve students’ achievements in math, reading and science, as national figures are also below the desired EU level.

**Table 3: National indicators on the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary-education participating in early childhood education</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>78.3% (2010)</td>
<td>71.9% Net enrollment rate by ISCED 0 (2011) 72% of children between 3-6 enrolled in preschool and pre-primary (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School drop-out rate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>&lt;9%</td>
<td>7.9% 6.5% (2012)</td>
<td>16.5% of dropout from vocational schools (2010-2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24.3% (reading) 26.3% (math) 17% (science)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td>298 persons with higher education per 1000 aged 25-64 (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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65 Lithuanian Statistics Department. Education 2011.
2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE LITHUANIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH IMMIGRANT AND MINORITY BACKGROUND

The peculiarity of Lithuanian situation in education is the diversity of students’ groups which might require additional support at schools. Overall, there are three major target groups in Lithuanian education policy that might need additional support:

1) immigrant students per se who are coming from both EU and third countries;
2) children belonging to national minorities;
3) returning immigrants – persons with Lithuanian citizenship or ethnic Lithuanians.

Therefore, in order to understand the full picture of Lithuanian approach to education of children with additional educational needs it is essential to take all the aforementioned students’ groups into account. Country’s experience in accommodating ethnic minorities’ or returnees’ needs can serve as a good practice example for introduction of policies supporting a growing number of immigrants in Lithuania. A brief insight into the education strategy for returnees, minorities and immigrants in Lithuania is provided in the subsections below.

2.1 LITHUANIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN OF LITHUANIAN ORIGIN COMING BACK TO LITHUANIA

Lithuania is a migrant sending country rather than migrant receiving one. Immigration to Lithuania has been low and decreasing since the 2008 financial crisis. The majority of immigrants arrive to Lithuania for the purposes of family reunification, work or study; work being one of the main reasons since Lithuania has been accessed to the European Union. Main countries of origin are Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. However, in fact, returning Lithuanians is the biggest group crossing the border to Lithuania (about 80% of immigrants are returning Lithuanian residents)\(^{67}\).

Since Lithuanians was the biggest group coming back to the country since the collapse of the USSR, Lithuanian government has a long tradition of providing them with different types of support (including educational). Moreover, the support was organized not only to assist Lithuanians who came back but also Lithuanian communities settled in neighboring countries. The first targeted support programmes to assist Lithuanian communities abroad were organized in 1998. Most of the funds were allocated for the establishment of Lithuanian schools and cultural centres in the neighbouring countries (e.g. Pelesa, Pinsk, Seine, Tilsit). In other countries, the support to Lithuanians was limited to the supply of textbooks and literature books to create better conditions for Lithuanian children abroad to learn their mother tongue. There was also available the support from Department of national minorities and Lithuanians abroad to organize different cultural events abroad.

For Lithuanians who are returning to Lithuania a special school was established (*Lietuvu Namai*; eng. Lithuanian House) as far back as 1990 with the intensive focus on Lithuanian language instruction and teaching Lithuanian culture and history. Originally the school served the needs of children of Lithuanian exiles and political prisoners during the Soviet times. Now the doors of Lithuanian house are open to all children of Lithuanian origin coming or returning to Lithuania (see Box 1).

In 2007 the government of Lithuania adopted an Economic Migration Regulation strategy (further EMR strategy), which defined a structured approach towards migration. The strategic objective of the strategy was to: 1) satisfy labour market needs (targeted at third country nationals) and 2) to encourage Lithuanian emigrants to return to Lithuania. However, the priority focus was granted to the support of Lithuanian migrants and to the attraction of the EU citizens to Lithuania. Four specific measures were introduced to support the integration of Lithuanians – three of them were targeting educational integration and the fourth was promoting the entrance of immigrants to the agricultural sector.

The measures foreseen under the EMR strategy included:

- opportunities for Lithuanian children living abroad to have distant studies of Lithuanian Language and culture (e.g. Ozo school of distant learning) facilitating their return in the future;
- self-study Lithuanian programmes;
- Lithuanian lessons on language, history, geography, ethnic culture and other subjects organized on Saturdays and Sundays;
- Bridging classes at Lithuanian House for students who have poor command of Lithuanian;
- Additional financial resources to schools receiving returned Lithuanians. The school gets 20% more funding for each returnee compared to the regular student basket.

In 2008 Brain recovery programme was introduced to encourage the return of Lithuanian scientists and arrival of foreign scientists and researchers. During the preparatory phase of the programme (2006-2008) 61 foreign scientists visited Lithuania. Under this programme students of Lithuanian descent who completed secondary education abroad were given an opportunity to study in Lithuania through a special quota scheme (there were 150 additional places in Lithuanian universities and institutes for students of Lithuanian descent).

However, this information shows that the focus groups of EMR strategy were quite narrow – it focused mostly on pupils, students and researchers. This explains the fact why the strategy was used by a relatively small number of returnees and was not popular. E.g. the survey of returned immigrants conducted in 2008 showed that only 20% of Lithuanians knew about the short-term research programme, only 1% of the respondents actually used the programme. Additional places provided for Lithuanians in higher educational institutions were also not used to the full extent (in 2006 only 80 places were filled by the students, and in 2008 – 100 places). The reason for that can be low popularity of Lithuanian educational institutions among emigrants, but on the other hand poor information distribution and programme advertisement can be the cause of low turnout.

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68 Lietuviu namai website. (http://www.lietuvinamai.vilnius.lm.lt/index_files/eng_info.htm)


70 Ibid.
Catch-up program for children also was not well-known among the returnees: only 16% of the returnees were aware of this opportunity (according to the Survey 2008).

Therefore, even though there are certain mechanisms available for returnees to receive educational support and facilitate their integration process, not all of them were aware of these mechanisms. Some studies reveal that often there are organizational problems that hamper the implementation of the programme: schools are often left for themselves to organize support; there is a lack of teachers who would be trained to work with children who do not have a command of Lithuanian language.

In the light of the changing economic situation and the assessment of the effectiveness of EMR strategy further steps to adjust the strategy and its objectives were taken. Spending cuts in public sector, as well as a decrease of the support from the EU structural funds complicated the situation. The new EMR implementation plan was not approved and in December 2009 during the meeting of the Economic Commission for Migration Affairs a new strategy “Global Lithuania” was adopted. However, the new strategy has its primary focus on supporting Lithuanian emigrants, returnees and communities settled abroad rather than international immigrants in Lithuania. On the one hand, nevertheless, this shift helped to avoid duplication between EMR and a new strategy for ties with emigrants; on the other hand the absence of a proper and clear action plan hampered the implementation of the programmes.

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71 Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, 2009
2.2 LITHUANIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING MINORITY CHILDREN

On 1 March 2011, the population of Lithuania totaled 3.043 mln people\(^{73}\) (according to 2013 estimate the population decreased to 2.9 mln people\(^{74}\)). Over the recent decade, the population decreased by 12.6% (440.6 thousand). The largest decrease was due to migration (338.7 thousand or 77%): 402.9 thousand persons left, 64.2 thousand – arrived to the country.

Compared to 2001 Census – population ethnicity groups changed insignificantly. The main ethnicity groups are: Lithuanians accounted for 84.2% of the country’s population, Poles – 6.6%, Russians – 5.8%, others – 3.4% (2001 Census shows –Lithuanians made up 83.5%, Poles 6.7%,


\(^{74}\) Statistics Lithuania, 2013.

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### Box 1. Good practice “School for children of returning Lithuanians “Lietuviu Namai (Lithuanian House)”

Lithuanian House is a unique school in Lithuania that offers education solely to the children of Lithuanian descent whose parents lived or continue living abroad. The school offers extensive and comprehensive support to all those who apply, however, due to the increased number of returning Lithuanians, there is not enough capacity at school to accommodate all the children who wish to be enrolled (in 2011 they accepted 30 children, and in 2012 – 40 children, while a few years ago the enrollment number was only 8 children per year). Given this the school capacity has been increased to accommodate at least 40 new students per year (regardless the financial crisis).

**Linguistic support**

Majority of children enrolled at school do not speak Lithuanian at a required level B2, therefore a bridging class (this year (2012/2013) there are 2 classes) is organized for them for the period of one year. According to the school staff one year is enough to receive an appropriate level of Lithuanian language proficiency. There were no cases of failing the exam after the introductory year. At later stages children from the bridging class receive extra two hours of Lithuanian language as a support. The teachers receive a special training to teach Lithuanian as a mother tongue but to those children who do not have a command of it.

**Academic support**

When a child is enrolled at school he is placed into the class not according to his age, but rather according to his academic level. Children constantly receive academic support with homework and subjects. Children show quite good attainment levels and there were almost no case of school leaving (there were a few cases but due to psychological reasons of being apart from their parents). In 2012 18 students out of 22 graduates entered higher education institutions.

**Outreach with parents**

Due to the fact that parents of the children enrolled in school are living abroad the communication between school and them happens mostly through electronic means. There is an electronic diary which is filled in every day and allows parents following the progress of their children regularly. The school has connections with other schools abroad (mostly those that are focused on the provision of education to Lithuanian children living abroad). Unfortunately, there are no any networks between schools in Lithuania, as the experience of Lithuanian house could be a good practice example of a number of measures to facilitate integration not only of repatriating Lithuanians, but also minorities and immigrants.

**Intercultural education**

The education aims at emphasizing Lithuanian culture and history, however, the diversity is also taken into account. The school organizes intercultural days and weeks.
Russians 6.3%, others – 3.5%). By the data of the Census 2011, people of 154 ethnicities lived in Lithuania (2001 Census – 115)75.

Migration processes conditioned an increase in the number of inhabitants of some ethnicities (Chinese, English, French, Turks, Italians, Dutch and others); however, compared to the total population, this increase was quite insignificant, for example in the major cities of Lithuania Vilnius and Kaunas major inhabitants groups were still Poles and Russians (see Table 2).

### Table 4: Ethnic population in Vilnius and Kaunas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Lithuanians</th>
<th>Poles</th>
<th>Russians</th>
<th>Belarusians</th>
<th>Ukrainians</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vilnius</td>
<td>535 631</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaunas</td>
<td>315 933</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lithuanian Statistics Department, 2011.

As for the languages the most spoken languages in Lithuania are Lithuanian, Russian and Polish. Compared to the 2001 Census data, the proportion of persons having command of English increased (from 16.9 to 30.4%). 63% of population had command of Russian, 8.5% – of Polish, 8.3% – of German76.

According to the ethnic composition Lithuania guarantees national minorities a series of rights, including the right to obtain aid from the state to develop their culture and education; the right to have schooling in their native languages77. At the beginning of 2011/2012 year in Lithuania there were running 1175 schools with Lithuanian as the main language of schooling, 55 schools – with Polish language of instruction, 36 – with Russian, 1 – with Belarusian (1 Jew and 1 German are running too, but the main language of schooling is Lithuanian) and 42 schools with different languages (mixed schools) are operating. The vast majority – 363 930 of students were accessing the education in Lithuanian (almost up to 93 per cent), 15552 of students – in Russian, 12895 – in Polish and 181 students were in Belarusian school.

The process of education in minority schools78 is organized according to the general curricula of primary, basic and secondary education programmes, which provides basis for instruction for all schools in Lithuania. However, in these schools the native/mother tongue (as a compulsory subject) is taught additionally. At those schools the subject of the Lithuanian language shall be part of the curriculum with at least the same amount of time allotted for its teaching as for teaching the native/mother tongue. General Belarusian, Polish, Russian and German programmes are developed and approved and serve as a basis for teachers to develop their individual programmes adapted to the needs of pupils.

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76 Statistics Lithuania. Lithuanian 2011 Population Census in Brief Process of schooling
77 Article 29 of the Law on Education provides that in areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, at the request of the community, the municipality shall guarantee learning in the language of a national minority or learning the language of a national minority.
78 Minority schools are the same mainstream schools that follow general curricular and government standards, with only exception that the main language of instruction is Russian, Polish or Belarusian. For the purposes of the current overview schools with Lithuanian as the main language of instruction are called Lithuanian schools, and schools with Polish, Russian or Belarusian as the main language of instruction are called minority schools.
Ethnic minority schools may offer tuition of all subjects or of selected subjects in the minority language. In these schools, Lithuanian as the state language (not as mother tongue) is taught as a separate subject and is also integrated with other subjects and topics, such as “the world around me”, where many issues concern Lithuania, e.g. geography, history, culture. Other subjects and topics may be taught in the minority language (Article 30 of the Law of Education, 1st July 2011). According to the amended law of Education a general universal system of examination should take place in the end of schooling period prior entering the higher education institution. In other words, regardless of which school (minority or national) a student is graduating from he is supposed to take a general exam universal for all the students (see Box 2). This amendment caused a hot debate in the public, especially among minorities, as the hours of Lithuanian language tuition differed between national schools and minority schools before 2011 (when the new law of education entered into force). Therefore, Lithuanian governments made some concessions with regards to the general exam introducing the transition period of 8 years and customized evaluation system for those students who have graduated from minority schools within this period.

Box 2. Amended Law on Education (from 1st of July 2011) on general exam

Article 38 of Law on Education adopted in 2011 stipulates that evaluation of learning achievements according to general education programmes (Matura examinations, other examinations, credits and other ways of testing learning achievements) will be carried out in compliance with programmes for evaluation of learning achievements approved by the Minister of Education and Science and descriptions of the procedure for organising and implementing the testing of learning achievements as well as studies of learners’ achievements. Such evaluation of learning achievements shall be organised equally for learners of all schools regardless of the language of instruction and without violating the principle of equal opportunities defined in Article 5 of this Law. All schools of general education shall ensure the command of the Lithuanian language according to the general programme approved by the Minister of Education and Science (basic educational achievements testing and Matura examinations).

The Ministry of Education and Science took action to introduce the Matura examination in the Lithuanian language according to a single programme. This single Matura exam will be held in 2013. The transition period in terms of the uniform evaluation of the Lithuanian language and literature Matura examination tasks are signed. On 9 May 2012 was signed a decree providing for an eight-year transition period applicable to the Matura examination in the Lithuanian language and literature. Although the same Matura examination tasks will be used for all students taking the Matura examination in the Lithuanian language and literature different evaluation norms in the fields of literacy and linguistic expression will apply throughout the eight-year transition period.

One of the requirements under the new Law of Education was a quality requirement for teachers of regular subjects (other than language) at both Lithuanian and minority schools. Teachers that obtained their education in Russian or Polish language during the Soviet times are required to have 2nd proficiency level of Lithuanian language if they instruct their subject in Russian or Polish; however, teachers who teacher their subject (or part of it) in Lithuanian language are required to possess the 3d proficiency level of Lithuanian language, which was not the case for many minority teachers from minority schools, especially in rural areas. Therefore, it was decided to postpone the implementation of this clause and provide intensive language training for teachers who were not proficient enough in the language for one year. The requirement for teachers entered into force on the 1 of September 2012. Teachers whose native language is an ethnic minority language working at ethnic minority schools are also offered free tuition in Lithuanian as the state language. Languages in primary education are currently considered a priority in Lithuania, therefore, a
number of courses are being offered to primary and foreign language teachers with the financial support of the European Social Fund.

Cooperation between all teachers is encouraged, including primary generalist teachers and specific subject (e.g. music, English) teachers. All decisions regarding the implementation of the curriculum are taken jointly by the pedagogical staff. Teachers are also encouraged to share good practices in their (subject) associations.  

Pupils with ethnic minority language background studying in Lithuanian schools may form a temporary/mobile group for the target language study or may join groups learning the minority language as a foreign language (this is practiced mostly for Russian language). Also, a multilingual class may be divided into two smaller groups for learning a foreign language, if the school can afford this practice. However, usually this does not happen in practice and almost all minority children are going to minority schools.

2.3 LITHUANIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Lithuania has a rather small population of foreign residents. Around 30,000 aliens lived in Lithuania (either temporarily or permanently) at the beginning of 2011, which constituted 1.1% of the Lithuanian population. This is the smallest number in the EU after Bulgaria, Poland and Romania, where foreigners make up less than 1% of the total populations.

As the majority of immigrants in recent years have come to Lithuania from the former Soviet Union countries, it would be logical that the majority of foreign children attending Lithuanian schools have also arrived from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. Immigrant children are more likely to attend Russian, Lithuanian-Russian or Polish-Russian schools (that is, national (ethnic) minority or bilingual schools). According to the Ministry of Education and Science, nearly 70% of immigrant children attend ethnic minority or bilingual schools in which pre-school, primary and secondary education curriculum is being implemented in Russian, Belarusian, and Polish language or in schools with several languages of instruction (e.g., Lithuanian-Russian, Lithuanian-Russian-Polish). Interestingly, even Chinese or Vietnamese parents tend to enroll their children in Russian minority schools rather than regular Lithuanian schools. For the measures available for integration of immigrants in minority schools please see Box 3.

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79 An example of teacher cooperation through participation in the Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (LAKMA lakma.vpu.lt) is a joint project on portfolio methodology which was carried out within the framework of the ECML (Graz) project ELP_WSU (European Language Portfolio – Whole School Use). For LITHUANIA’s case study see http://elp-wsu.ecml.at/Casestudies/tabid/2606/language/en-GB/Default.aspx

80 European Migration Network: Migration profile for Lithuania. (http://www.iom.lt/documents/Migration_profile_EN.pdf)

According to statistics at the beginning of 2012 in Lithuania there were registered 1014 foreign students. They were allocated in different Lithuanian schools (including minority schools and schools for returning Lithuanians). Illegal immigrants do not have right to mainstream education (as schools closely cooperate with migration departments and students have to present legal papers when entering a school).

All schools are funded from national budgets – school pool. However, national minority schools receive extra 20% of funding for supporting minority and 30% for supporting immigrant students.

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**Box 3. Integration of immigrants in minority schools (experience of Naujamiestis secondary school).**

This is a Russian minority school and the main language of instruction in this school is Russian. The school accommodates 6% of immigrant students (those who do not have Lithuanian citizenship) – 24 students out of 400 are immigrants coming from China, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Turkey, Latvia, Estonia. The immigrant students from this secondary school are coming from secured, non-need families and usually are children of diplomats or businessmen. Therefore, the school does not have to deal with the challenges and problems that might appear in socially disadvantaged families or in the families of illegal immigrants. A pre-requisite to be enrolled in school is the possession of a residence permit (the school usually does not assist in obtaining documents; however, such an option is foreseen in the law).

The school (as every other school in Lithuania) receives funding from the states – the so called pupils basket. National minority schools receive 20% bigger funds for pupils’ basket. And for every immigrant student the school receives extra 30% of funds.

In order to be enrolled and placed into the class (in case the child is older than the start of compulsory education) the commission is formed (teacher, psychologist, social worker) in order to assess the maturity of a child. After the Commission’s assessments the standardized testing is taking place. Therefore, the child is not necessarily placed into his age group, but rather according to his academic background.

The linguistic support is organized within the mainstream class with the help of assisting teachers who are translating and supporting an immigrant child right in the classroom. There are after-classes support lessons as well. If the academic background of a child differs significantly the school offers an individual learning plan where the subjects are adjusted to student’s background. There are special learning materials created for newly arrived immigrants that give induction of Lithuanian language and citizenship education.

The focus of education now is on diversity and mutual learning rather than assimilation. Intercultural education is being incorporated in every subject. The idea is to preserve individuality and culture of coming students and to learn from them. Therefore, teachers receive special training and constant knowledge exchange is going on (organized mostly by school). However, the school is actively participates in national level seminars and teachers’ consultations.

The school recognizes the importance of parental involvement and communication. They communicate with parents with the help of translators or older students. There is a direct contact between teacher and parent. Parent can also visit and participate in the classroom. There is a school initiative of parents’ day, when parents are giving classes instead of teachers. This gives them better insight into education process. Also parents organize extra-class activities for students (e.g. work visits).

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82 This figure includes all the foreign children who hold both permanent and temporary residence permits, as well as it includes Lithuanian students who lived abroad and do not have Lithuanian citizenship.

83 Education registering centre. Preliminary data as of 1st of September 2012.
Schools have autonomy in choosing learning materials, but have to follow general curriculum requirements.

A list of Lithuanian policies designed for integration of immigrant children:

- **Integration class** (theoretically such a class can be organised in every school if there are more than 5 migrants, but in practice there are only few cases where it exists, e.g. “Lithuanian House” school). If there are less than 5 pupils an integration group can be organized.

- **Centre for meeting migrants** (there are a few centres in Lithuania for meeting immigrants and asylum seekers that can provide also education information and advice on schools to attend).

- **Bilingual education** (in national minority schools both state language and mother tongue instruction is provided; the availability of learning materials and translations is huge). **Continuous instruction of Lithuanian as a second language** (the state language instruction is provided up to 10th grade included).

- **Mother tongue instruction** (however, at the moment it is available only in minority schools for Russian, Belarusian and Polish languages, but theoretically can be done in any school).

It should be noted that all the measures provided for immigrant children in Lithuania are aimed at the fastest acquisition of Lithuanian language and integration into Lithuanian society and often such a policy is criticized for being one way measure, aiming at intensive integration of minorities/migrants into the society, without paying a proper attention to intercultural education of native students. However, during the last years more intercultural focus is being introduced into general subjects.

Measures designed for migrant students in particular are rather scarce and incidental at the moment. The lack of measures tackling migrants is explained: 1) by relatively small numbers of migrants in the country; 2) by ethnic composition of migrants – they are mostly coming from Russian speaking countries and join ethnic minority’s schools, which in turn does not create an acute problem of placing and integrating them. Box 4 provides an insight on how immigrants can be integrated in a regular Lithuanian school.

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84 From the interview with the MoE official.
To sum up, immigrants in Lithuania can be supported in three main ways:

1) through arrangements aimed at integrating of repatriating Lithuanians (if adjusted for immigrants’ situation);
2) Through comprehensive support provided in minority schools;
3) Through incidental and upon-need measures provided in Lithuanian schools.\(^{85}\)

Lithuanian education system has quite good background arrangements for immigrant integration on the basis of long term minority and repatriating Lithuanians’ education; the main challenge being recognizing the need for educational integration of immigrants and transferring the knowledge.

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\(^{85}\) Please note, that private international schools and schools supported by embassies were not considered in this report, as they are not under the regulation of Lithuanian education system.
2.4 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE NATIONAL APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH AN IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND

Financial crisis mostly affected the availability of national programmes for all groups of students discussed above:

1) Change of the Economic Migration regulation strategy for Global Lithuania (where the main focus is on return migration, rather than on third country immigrants), where a number of arrangements addressing third country nationals were cut.

2) Several programmes like bridging classes were stopped in some schools due to the low demand and cuts off in supporting funding. However, mainstream funding – school pools – were not cut.

3) There are certain schools that already elaborated the technique of meeting immigrant children’s needs and those children are sent to these schools to reduce the burden from other schools and the necessity of funding.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN LITHUANIA

Perceptions on the state of implementation of 2009 Council conclusions on the education of children with immigrant background are presented in the table 3 below.

Table 3: Implementation of 2009 Council recommendations in Lithuania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council recommendation</th>
<th>Implementation in Lithuanian context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General quality of school system</td>
<td>Early childhood is not included into compulsory education in Lithuania (which starts at the age of 7)(^6). However, everyone has access to state kindergartens, some of which can be oversubscribed though (due to location). There are kindergartens in Russian and Polish languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have access to high-quality childhood education and care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>face few barriers to progress through the school system</td>
<td>Immigrant children face little barriers to progress through the school system, as they are immediately integrated into mainstream classes and mostly study in schools which have experience of dealing with children with additional linguistic and academic needs (mostly minority schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can easily move between education pathways (e.g. between academic and vocational tracks)</td>
<td>Once a student selected vocational track it is not likely that he will want to return to academic track. However, in theory and in practice almost all vocational schools issue a secondary school certificate (along with vocational school), which gives a student the right to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

enter higher education with academic programme.

Immigrant children are either enrolled in minority or regular Lithuanian schools where the quality of education is appropriate.

No, migrants are not concentrated in underperforming schools. There is a tendency that immigrants are enrolled in schools which have already experience with dealing with children with the language other than Lithuanian, but those schools are good quality schools. Overall, the incidence of immigrants at a school can be found throughout Lithuania.

There are no migrant and foreign-trained teachers in Lithuanian schools. However, in minority schools children are mainly taught by teachers representing the same minority groups. There are also Russian and Polish teachers in Lithuanian schools, which is a benefit for minority children studying in these schools. Some teachers receive incidental training; however, there is no structured approach to teacher training in LT, except one-off teachers seminars or European funded projects.

Recently intercultural education was granted a wider focus in schools dealing with immigrant students. Both children and teachers are lectured on the issues of diversity and tolerance; however, those are again school initiatives, rather than national level approach. There were no incidences at schools (those interviewed) on the discrimination against ethnic background.

There is a centrally established curriculum and all schools must follow it. However, education plan foresees some flexibility for unexpected needs the schools must have (e.g. additional subjects or funding). Then, minority schools and other schools receiving immigrants use this flexibility for accommodating immigrant needs (they introduce additional language hours or teacher training, etc.)

On the other hand, funds of schools are rather limited to implement new ideas and projects (on how to integrate immigrants’ needs locally) appropriately.

There is no structured universal approach to teacher training. However, there were several projects held (e.g. My pupil is a foreigner) where teachers were consulted on how to deal with the situations of education an immigrant. The participation in such seminars is voluntary; however the participation rate is rather high as the experience shows.

Under European Structural Funds now the project of
developing teaching materials and guidelines “Lituanistic model” is going on (started in 2012).

### 3. Targeted measures for migrant pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>received personalised learning and individual support, esp. for underperforming migrant pupils</th>
<th>Schools organize such a support on case-by-case basis and solely by their own initiative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>are taught the country’s language well</td>
<td>Every immigrant is entitled to receive the instruction of Lithuanian as the state language. Usually they receive language support in a mainstream class (only for returning Lithuanians bridging classes are organized).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are supported in school to maintain and develop their mother tongue if they choose</td>
<td>Students are taught their mother tongue in minority schools (only minority languages). There is no option for learning each immigrant language. However, those students coming from minority background but studying in Lithuanian schools usually choose not to study their mother tongue (even though they are entitled for it).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go to schools that partner with migrant communities and can communicate with migrant parents</td>
<td>There are no developed partnerships between immigrant communities and schools (actually, there are not even well established immigrant communities, with the exception of business associations). However, schools realize the importance of parental involvement and are actively trying to outreach parents by their own initiative (e.g. organizing cultural days, inviting parents to hold a lesson for students, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get the right targeted support if they have special needs</td>
<td>Such a support depends on the availability of funding. However at the ministerial level there are recommendations for schools to be sensitive to individual’s pupils needs, encourage students’ mentoring and create positive school climate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Governance and mainstreaming

| are addressed in many areas of life and not just in school (e.g. an ‘integrated approach’ | There is a number of projects on integration organized by Social Ministry, Ministry of education, different volunteering organizations; however they are not networking. As a result, there is no integrated approach – some activities may be duplicated and some do not address real immigrant needs. |
| are monitored and analysed as a specific grouping in terms of their school experience and performance | The area of monitoring and analysis of immigrant situation is very underdeveloped in Lithuania (especially in the area of education). |
| are the subject of exchanges of good practice in our country | School networks are not developed and practiced. There are only few incidental activities on good practice exchange and knowledge sharing (organized by Ministry of Education or Social Affairs or by external organizations). |

Source: PPMI based on literature review and interviews.
4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

4.1 PRESENT STATE OF EDUCATION STATISTICS

There is a very detailed education statistics collected in terms of the number of schools, programmes, enrollment, etc. However, the statistics is not usually broke down the immigrant background. There is data on the amount of foreign students at schools, but it is hard to find data on the educational career of these students (their performance and participation and education path). Neither Department of Statistics, nor schools track this data.

The definition of a foreign student is also questionable in the provided statistics. This group includes all the foreign pupils arrived in Lithuania for studies, but also returning Lithuanians who do not have citizenship and all the holders of permanent and temporary residence permits (e.g. if a person lives in Lithuania for 15 years, but still did not acquire citizenship in the statistics, he is counted as a foreign student).

Returning Lithuanians (those who have citizenship) are not tracked at all in education statistics. Before 2009 schools were obliged to collect the data on the profile of their students and report to the Ministry of education, but after this period they were freed from additional ‘paperwork’ and no statistics is collected at the moment.

The absence of proper monitoring and analysis statistical data is an obstacle for objective assessment of immigrant situation in the country and thus, for planning of appropriate activities for their support.

4.2 STATE OF DISCUSSION ON MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND ET 2020 TARGETS

Two of European benchmarks have already been achieved in Lithuania:

- Early school leaving rate
- Share of 30-34 years old with tertiary education attainment.

Lithuanian government creates national plans on education taking into consideration local situation which tries to be in line with EU goals and targets.

5. PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Lithuanian stakeholders (both Ministry and schools) got interested in the Sirius network. The idea and desire is to have a continuous support network which would contribute to the policy development in each participating European country in terms of:

Information portal and knowledge on practices from other countries (e.g. methodology for defining laws, reception mechanism, teacher training course, learning materials, etc.).
Teachers’ knowledge exchange (e.g. a real teacher seminar can be organized by gathering teachers from different European countries sharing knowledge or even practicing their knowledge in a different country context).

6. CONCLUSIONS

So far, Lithuania has not yet developed a coherent integration programme for foreigners (except those under international protection). Available integration measures are project-based and temporary. The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) which ranks 31 countries according to their integration policies positioned Lithuania in the 27th place in terms of integration progress.

A list of Lithuanian policies designed for integration of immigrant children is quite short:

- **Integration class** (theoretically such a class can be organized in every school if there are more than 5 migrants, but in practice there are only few cases where it exists, e.g. “Lithuanian House” school). If there are less than 5 pupils an integration group can be organized. However, this measure is available only for returning Lithuanians.
- **Centre for meeting migrants** (there are a few centres in Lithuania for meeting immigrants and asylum seekers that can provide also education information and advice on schools to attend).
- **Bilingual education** (in national minority schools both state language and mother tongue instruction is provided; the availability of learning materials and translations is huge). This measure is available only for representatives of minority groups.
- **Continuous instruction of Lithuanian as a second language** (the state language instruction is provided up to 10th grade included).
- **Mother tongue instruction** (however, it is available only in minority schools but theoretically can be done in any school)\(^\text{87}\).

It should be noted that all the measures provided for immigrant children in Lithuania are aimed at the fastest acquisition of Lithuanian language and integration into Lithuanian society and often such a policy is criticized for being one way measure, aiming at intensive integration of minorities/migrants into the society, without paying a proper attention to intercultural education of native students. However, recently the schools (a few) started focusing on intercultural education and diversity shifting from the one-way strategy in the country.

Measures designed for migrant students in particular are rather scarce and incidental at the moment. The lack of measures tackling migrants is explained: 1) by relatively small numbers of migrants in the country; 2) by ethnic composition of migrants – they are mostly coming from Russian speaking countries and join ethnic minority’s schools, which in turn does not create an acute problem of placing and integrating them.

Overall, there is a good basis for creating integration measures for immigrants, as the arrangements for ethnic Lithuanians and minority students functioning in Lithuania for a longer period of time have the same logic. The question is just how to transfer them wisely into the area of immigrant education and establish effective school network on knowledge and assistance sharing, as well as

\(^{87}\) From the interview with the MoE official.
updating monitoring and data collection systems for the purposes of detailed analysis and policy planning.
### Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Institution/ Organization</th>
<th>Mode of interview</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ėpulėniénė Ona</td>
<td>Senior Specialist, Primary and Secondary education department, Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania</td>
<td>A series of interviews (Telephone, face-to-face)</td>
<td>September-October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Danutė Mišrienė</td>
<td>Head teacher, Vilnius Naujamescio Secondary school</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>06/11/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Irena Rašciuviene</td>
<td>Head of non-formal education and assistance at Vilnius Gymnasium of Vytaut the Great</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>22/10/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Gintautas Rudzinskas</td>
<td>Director of Vilnius Lithuanian House (school for returning Lithuanians)</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>19/10/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Irma Budginaite</td>
<td>Senior Researcher at Public Policy and Management Institute</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>16/01/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Simona Jaglinska</td>
<td>Senior Specialist at Multicultural Volunteering Centre</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>29/11/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Chijioke Nkemka</td>
<td>Worker at Multicultural Volunteering Centre and Centre Plus, Head of African Association in Lithuania</td>
<td>Telephone/email</td>
<td>29/11/2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS
October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF THE NETHERLANDS

Prepared by Guido Walraven
**INTRODUCTION**

The SIRIUS network aims at promoting improvements on policy making and policy implementation regarding migration and education within the EU.

To do so, we intend to raise the voice of the main agents and stakeholders involved in these topics in each country. Based on their inputs, views and expectations, we aim to draw a general picture of the current state-of-the-art and identify main trends, challenges, top difficulties and principal achievements concerning policy implementation.

The SIRIUS WP1 invites the National Partners to contribute to the assessment of the perceptions on these topics by conducting Focus Groups or interviews in their countries, analyzing the results and composing a national report.

This is the national report on The Netherlands.

The core interest of the enquiry is the agents’ and stakeholders’ perceptions on

- the national approach on educating children with a migrant background (part I),
- the national implementation of the “Council conclusions on the education of children with a migrant background” (part II),
- the national implementation of the “EU 2020 Strategy” and the “ET 2020” Targets (part III),
- the added value of the SIRIUS Network for their own work (part IV).

We are interested in the education process as a whole, including pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational and higher education, and the respective implementation of the above policies, rather than the policy making.

The enquiry should comprise 7-8 people. These should correspond to the following profiles:

- Policy makers at national or federal level; these would usually be people from the Ministry of Education responsible for integration matters,
- Policy makers at local/municipal level; these could be staff from the integration or education departments. If possible, invite staff at a more senior level who is actually involved in decision making processes.
- Researchers specialized in migration and education,
- NGO representatives working with migrant children,
- School / high school principals,
- Migrant / minoritized community leaders (Seniors/Juniors).

**Chart on interviews in The Netherlands**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place of conduction</th>
<th>Participants (and profile: professional position, level of hierarchy, gender)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| November 8      | Rotterdam           | Mrs Sabine Severiens  
Professor of Education and scientific director of Risbo, a research institute of the Erasmus University Rotterdam                      |
| November 14     | Amsterdam           | Mrs Reineke Schoufour  
Principal of the Brede School de Kinkerbuurt, a primary school in                                                                         |
Experts who gave feedback and additional input on a draft of this report:

- Mr Ype Akkerman, senior educational officer, city of Rotterdam.
- Mr Murat Alici, founder and chairman of N-Point, a Dutch Platform for Education, Innovation and Talent development with a focus on students with a migrant background. Currently the Platform has six member organisations with 21 schools and other centres for education.
- Mr Cees Buis has asked a colleague from the Ministry for additional information about secondary education.

Remarks on methodology and (re)presentation

Organizing a focus group or a limited series of interviews is necessarily an explorative type of research. No representative sample of respondents was selected, so there are no representative results. What was aimed at was gathering the perceptions of experienced people in the field, voicing different angles and viewpoints.

In the limited time that was available for this research, we managed to interview five Dutch people with a different profile. Two other people (who were not able to give an interview because of their agendas) were willing to give feedback on a draft version of the report and to supply additional information. One person from the Ministry gave additional information about secondary education. Together these eight people form a broad range of viewpoints and angles.

How to present those views and angles? One way of doing that in social research of this type, is to present findings and views anonymously. With so diverse a group as these eight respondents, however, that is a problem. In fact it has added value in this case to know the background of certain remarks about implementation. What is a way out of this dilemma? I have chosen to mention whether a remark comes from people in research, policy or practice (in cases where that is helpful).

All respondents had the opportunity to give feedback in a draft version of this report in Dutch. A draft of the English version was also sent to them for comments. (It goes without saying that any incorrectness in the text is only my responsibility.)
1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Fill the below table and provide any additional information that you find relevant for profiling the position of migrant children in the education system of your country.

Table 1: National indicators on the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU 2020 Strategy / ET 2020 Targets</th>
<th>National goal</th>
<th>Present national figure</th>
<th>Optional notes on availability of national figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary-education participating in early childhood education</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>99.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School drop-out rate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows three out of the five present (2012) national figures of the Netherlands are higher than the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets. Only the school drop-out rate is lower (and the share of low-achieving 15-year olds is not available).
2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE DUTCH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

2.1 CORE ELEMENTS OF THE DUTCH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Respondents from research, policy and practice frequently mentioned three core elements:

- One core element is the weighing system to allocate government spending to students in primary education. Current criteria focus on educational level of parents; parents with migrant backgrounds are over-represented in the group with lower educational levels, however. See box text 1 for more details.

**Box text 1: Educational priority policy**

The current situation is that at the policy level the Netherlands makes no distinction between students based on ethnicity (additional funding in schools is based on the educational level of the parents). The national educational priority policy included criteria of ethnicity for decades. From August 2006 onwards, however, only the socio-economic status (SES) of the parents (in terms of their level of education) was taken into account. Therefore the priority policy is now ‘color blind’.

An important element in the educational priority policy is the system whereby the resources allocated to a school are determined on the basis of the SES composition of the school population. That weighing system has attracted quite some international attention.

Currently around 730 billion euros a year are spent on the educational priority policy. About 35% is distributed based on the educational level of the parents, 20% is distributed based on a characterization of the neighborhood of a school as a problem area, and about 45% goes to the local government for early childhood education (in the pre-school and early school years). To give an example: suppose school A has 100% pupils with parents of the lowest category of education and school B 100% pupils with parents of the highest category, then school A could get almost twice as much funding as school B.

Apart from schools, playgroups (for ages 2.5-4 year) are actively involved in the implementation of early childhood programs.

The weighing system described here is in place for primary education; in secondary education there is a system to allocate resources that works along similar policy lines (called ‘leerplus arrangementen’). To facilitate the transition from primary to secondary education, preparatory classes are organized (‘schakelklassen’) to enhance language and other skills necessary for a successful career in secondary education.

- A second core element is the focus on basic skills, especially language and arithmetic. Recently there is more emphasis on testing and output in order to be informed about the improvements children make. As far as children at risk in general are concerned and children with a migrant background in particular, they will benefit from a focus on
language. See box text 2 for an example.

Box text 2: back to basics can help (under certain conditions)

Primary school “the Mosaic” in Arnhem decided some years ago to focus attention especially on language and effective learning time, also on whole-class instruction and on parent involvement. Soon the school became the one that delivered the most added value of all the Arnhem schools. And as a school with mostly children form a migrant background, the school scored mid-range results – which are an impressive performance. Now also well-educated parents are interested in sending their children to “the Mosaic”.

- A third core element is early childhood education (in the pre-school and early school years). The idea behind that is to start as soon as possible with the problem of language delay. Especially via school- and centre-based programs, with attention to parent involvement. (Home-based programs in general are less effective, as research has shown.)

Some respondents also mentioned other core elements:
- Attention for desegregation in education, which is of great importance to attainment goals in the social domain like learning to live together. The Balkenende IV government (2007-2010) allowed for field experiments in twelve cities; unfortunately later governments dropped the issue from the political agenda. [Respondent(s) from research and practice]
- The current government (2012 - …) agreed upon investing in the professionalization of teachers and that might be an opportunity to enhance their diversity skills. It remains to be seen, however, whether that opportunity is grasped. [Respondent(s) from research]

2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE DUTCH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The answers of the respondents showed a difference in time perspective and some influence of the organizational background.

The respondent from the Ministry, for instance, pointed out that the austerity policies of the current government did not touch the field of primary education (but were focused on higher education).

Other respondents [from research and practice] mentioned that over the last years the class sizes in primary schools increased. In international comparison the class size in the Netherlands is relatively big. In part the increase of class size has to do with the changes in the weighing system in 2006 (when educational level of parents became the sole criterion). According to some of these respondents the change of the weighing system was also a way to cut down expenses. The respondent from the Ministry, however, stated that cutting down expenses was not the intention of the change in the weighing system.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN THE NETHERLANDS
3.1 GENERAL QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

- In general the school system can deliver sufficient quality (as international comparative research shows). [Respondent(s) from research, policy]
- Parents have a great amount of freedom in school choice (although in practice not all parents can realize their first choice, of course). There is some discussion about mixed schools and social cohesion. In terms of the OECD (2011) the issue at stake is a balance between freedom of school choice and equity. Equity in terms of all parents having the same chances of realizing their choices, in other words equity as a level playing field. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
- Decisive choices in the school career of students are made relatively early in the Netherlands. The choice for secondary education, for example, is made at the age of 12 (in the vast majority of cases on the basis of national test scores). As e.g. the OECD has pointed out repeatedly, such early tracking tends to enhance inequality. That is a disadvantage for students with a migrant background, low language skills and/or low SES. The possibilities for correction later in the school career are limited and have recently not improved. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]

3.2 DIVERSITY IN SCHOOL

- In general, with a few exceptions, there is no diversity policy at the local level or at the school level, while the national government identified diversity as an issue to be dealt with at the local level. As a consequence little structural attention is paid to diversity, there is no exchange of experiences and hence individual persons and schools are not prevented from reinventing the wheel. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
- A similar situation exists on the issue of involvement of diverse groups of parents. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
- Schools with a substantial amount of students with a migrant background might have some advantages as well, like teachers with experience and knowledge about teaching those students, or in some case extra hours for language lessons. [Respondent(s) from policy, practice]

On the one hand, Dutch policymakers do not want educational policies based on ethnicity; they prefer generic policies based on the educational level of the parents. For instance: extra (language) lessons for children at risk (regardless whether they have a migrant background or not). However, we know that children with a migrant background are over-represented among children at risk (because of the educational level of migrants in the Netherlands).

On the other hand, there is a general trend in education to be sensitive to individual educational needs of (all) children.

That is not to say, however, that policymakers accept the necessity of diversity sensitive teaching in the sense of sensitive to especially migrant backgrounds

- Language attainment is relatively high on the agenda (e.g. reading comprehension or vocabulary). However, it will help students with a migrant background when more attention is paid to contend based language in instruction on all subjects and also to taking appropriate action using language test scores. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
What did the respondents mean by that? Two things:

- More language instruction within all subjects, whereby ‘content based’ means also ‘in relation to the content of the subject lessons’;
- General tests are held, but the results could be used far better for action specifically targeted at the weak point of each student regarding language.

- All (primary and secondary) schools are obliged since 2006 to spend time on civic education (specified in terms of active citizenship and social cohesion). Learning to cope with diversity is part of civic education, but many schools struggle with putting the theme into meaningful practice, both in teaching as in everyday interactions in school. [Respondent(s) from research, policy, practice]
- ‘Intercultural education’ tends to emphasize the differences between children and their backgrounds, as an unintended consequence that might have the opposite effect. More implicit forms of intercultural education – for instance cooperative learning or self-disclosure techniques – turn out to be more effective for attitude formation (or change). Therefore these forms need to be preferred. (See also A.3.3, last point). [Respondent(s) from research]
- More attention for the general pedagogical climate in school and class is necessary. To know each other and to be known is important. So is to understand life styles and holidays. To feel and experience differences and similarities. To do activities that really connect, for instance forms of school football or writing poetry and translate some words in each other’s languages. Teachers need better training and empowerment for all of that. [Respondent(s) from practice]
- We need teachers with a genuine interest in backgrounds of all students. That will help teachers to better understand their students. Initial training and further training need to pay more attention to all that. An attitude of cultural responsiveness and cultural understanding. Teachers who are able to organize a class in ways that all children feel at home and have a sense of belonging. That helps them to prepare for the multiform and multicultural society. [Respondent(s) from practice]
- A policy of desegregation and of stimulating the formation of mixed schools is important in that respect. Mixed schools are a necessary condition to prepare students for a multiform and multicultural society. The sufficient condition is next to organize pedagogical-didactical learning opportunities meaningfully related to coping with diversity (see above). [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
- More diversity in teacher teams. More teachers with diversity in backgrounds offer role models for students and are good for the teams themselves. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
- A broad view on parent involvement and the many ways in which parents are willing and able to commit themselves to education related activities both at school and at home. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]

### 3.3 TARGETED MEASURES FOR MIGRANT PUPILS

Since policies are ‘colour blind’ in the Netherlands, there are hardly any targeted measures for migrant pupils. However, some general measures are really helpful for migrant pupils, for instance measures concerning language or the weighing system to distribute funding.
In a recent Letter to the Parliament (June 1, 2012), the Minister of Education discussed the state of affairs regarding the national educational priority policy. There currently is some debate on whether or not it is wise to take the cultural factor into account (again). The minister asked a research institution to explore the knowledge base on that point and to come up with options for measures. She wanted a type of budgeting that assures the money is going where it is needed.

- More attention for pedagogical-didactical aspects of teaching for diversity. In general: play together, cooperative learning, exchange between pupils. Also: have high expectations of all pupils. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]
- Pre-teaching for pupils who need extra attention on a subject, especially language. (For instance talk about words relevant for a lesson or theme, in order to develop a frame of reference for the pupils.) In some schools and/or with some teachers this is in practice, but the recommendation is to use that more widely. [Respondent(s) from practice]
- At some point the Netherlands had intercultural education and education in the mother tongue of migrant children and on their own cultural background. All aimed at enhancing self-confidence and integration. What is there to learn from all these experiences? [Respondent(s) from research]

Does that mean one should learn and replicate the experience from that time? The sad point is, that not all the experiences were evaluated. The (incomplete) evidence is, however, that the results were mixed. E.g. intercultural education can potentially /under certain conditions enhance self-confidence, tolerance and integration.

If and when a restart was to be considered, proper attention to the conditions should be given.

3.4 GOVERNANCE AND MAINSTREAMING

- Early tracking is a problem that needs to be addressed. For instance through a longer transition period and/or a later moment of selection for tracks. One way of looking at early choice and selection, is that it tends to enhance segregation. In countries with less segregation in secondary education, there is a longer transition period and a later selection. Compare for instance the educational system in the Netherlands and Germany. [Respondent(s) from research] See box text 2 for some results from an international comparative study.

Box text 3 Example: The Integration of the European Second generation (TIES)

TIES is an international comparative study into educational results of second generation migrant students in eight European countries. The general conclusion is that the national educational system makes a difference. In countries like Sweden, Belgium and France children start school at an early age (at 2 or 3) and pupils choose a track at the age of 18. Therefore students with a migrant background have a lot of time to work on their language skills, for instance. The Netherlands is rather unique in Europe because adolescent students choose vocational education at a young age and vocational schools have large amounts of students. These two factors are not helping students at risk and the full development of their talents. The coordinator of the TIES project, Maurice Cruel (also leader of WP3 of SIRIUS), identified some recommendations for the Netherlands, such as: a longer transition period in which pupils of different levels are learning together, more transfer opportunities between tracks, and attention to academic competencies in
those vocational training tracks leading to higher education.
See for more information about TIES www.tiesproject.eu
--- --- ---

- The transition from primary to secondary education is generally acknowledged as a risk moment in school careers. Special attention is needed for the transition and the role of the individual advice of primary schools. Since secondary schools use that advice to submit pupils to (certain tracks within) their schools, a lot depends on an adequate assessment of the (future) capabilities of a pupil by primary schools. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]

- In some cities attention is given to development of a broad range of talents. Inside school and in after school activities. More cities could and should do that. This is a plus for all children. At the same time some researchers and others think, that this might be especially helpful for migrant children (since there talents are not always recognized and recognitions in one domain might help performance in another domain). [Respondent(s) from practice]

- Stimulate mixed schools (in terms of socio-economic status, ethnicity, culture or lifestyle, migrant background), schools with populations that reflect the population of the neighborhood or city. These schools allow for encounter, exchange and dialogue between different groups. [Respondent(s) from research, practice]

- More focus on the needs of each child (that is, on individual needs instead of the general migrant or other backgrounds). And on how to address these needs tailor made, utilising the state of the art knowledge base. Monitoring and evaluating what is done with what results. As far as budgets are concerned, money should follow the child. [Respondent(s) from practice]

- The efficiency of a school system is difficult to assess. However, the educational results of children with a migrant background in the Netherlands are slowly rising. For (Dutch) language they improve slowly, for arithmetic the results are almost at the average level. The attendance of students with a migrant background is rising, especially with girls. Early school leaving is a problem: youngsters with a migrant background are over-represented here, especially for boys. [Respondent(s) from research, policy]

3.5 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS
See 2.2

4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

4.1 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION
- Local governments give the funding for pre-elementary education, an education for specific
target groups. Parents from these groups are stimulated to use the places for children in pre-elementary education, for instance via early childhood health care centres. Parents are not obliged to let their children participate. \[Respondent(s) from policy\]

### 4.2 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Early school leaving is a priority for quite some time and a coherent set of measures is in place. Developments are closely monitored (both by collecting and analyzing data as by field officers). The result is a decline in the number of early school leavers. It remains a problem how to reach and successfully help the ‘hard core’ group. \[Respondent(s) from policy\]

### 4.3 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

- ---

### 4.4 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

- ---

*Added paragraph:*

### 4.5 GENERAL REMARKS OF RESPONDENTS REGARDING PART III

- It is sometimes hard to find work experience placement for students in the lower tracks of education and for students with a migrant background. The political climate and group stigmatising are possible causes for that situation. A revaluation of the multiform and multicultural society might be helpful. \[Respondent(s) from research and practice\]

- All teachers and other professionals involved should be empowered to develop attitudes and behaviors that enable them to build sustainable relationships with students and to communicate high and clear expectations. Students should have persons to rely on, teachers and sometimes a (peer) mentor. All that requires professional capacity building. \[Respondent(s) from practice\]

- Since prevention of early school leaving is left to the schools, schools should rethink about school climate, small teacher teams, resource persons, etcetera. \[Respondent(s) from research and practice\]

- In the Netherlands the traditional dominant model was the deficiency model, also as far as assessing students with migrant backgrounds is concerned. Gradually attention gets focused now on what students actually can do, where their talents are and what the best individual school career might be. A positive model is surfacing. \[Respondent(s) from research and practice\]
To counter the consequences of early tracking, more flexible routes through the educational system should be developed and allowed. [Respondent(s) from research and practice]

5. PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

- Exchange of good practices & of ‘what works’, in order to learn from one another.
  - Maybe focused on special themes, like early childhood education or early school leaving.
  - Maybe focused on specific groups of professionals, from research, policy or practice, or from primary, secondary or tertiary education
  - but sometimes also focused on linking different groups,
- Identify roles to make SIRIUS complementary to other networks and organizations
- As a policy network SIRIUS could facilitate a dialogue between policy, research and/or practice, using innovative and interactive formats; not only internationally, but also nationally and locally
- Build a sustainable network, a network trustworthy and reliable as far as experts and expertise is concerned.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion should summarize the most important information provided in the focus group report, highlighting any positive initiatives and/or possible gaps.

A lot of suggestions for improvement have been mentioned. Instead of highlighting some of these recommendations here, I will offer some general points for further reflection and discussion, building on remarks of the respondents.

- Educational sociology learns that an educational system by and large reproduces the social inequal system of society. Children with parents with a lower SES and lower educational qualifications (or social and cultural capital) have smaller educational chances (e.g. Bourdieu). And children with a migrant background are over-represented in these groups.
- Schools can compensate for society only for a bit. The widely accepted figure is that schools make under 20% of the contribution to educational achievement. It is our professional duty to make that 20% as effective as possible. And to reach out to other professionals, parents and volunteers to work at the other 80% -- schools cannot do it alone.
- We should (therefore) position the school in the wider context, using an ecological model (developed from Bronfenbrenner, 1971, to Parsons, 2012).
- The literature on effective schools and effective school improvement shows an impressive knowledge base. Unfortunately, most of the research results are not well known and hardly

88 Especially the general input of Ype Akkerman for this report. For the line of reasoning presented here compare my presentation at the SIRIUS conference on Professional Capacity Building with policymakers in Rotterdam, December 11, 2012.
used in the worlds of policy and practice. There is a gap between research on the one hand, and on the other policy and practice. Is this a matter of ‘lost in translation’ (Harris et al, 2012)?

No, we need a new model for knowledge creation and utilization (see box text 4). A new model allowing us to analyze this problem adequately and be able to act upon it effectively. A model giving priority to a dialogue between research, policy and practice.

**Box text 4: old and new model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“old” model</th>
<th>“new” model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Motto: <em>speaking truth to power</em></td>
<td>• Motto: <em>knowledge as co-creation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research vs application</td>
<td>• Research involves policy and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on ‘truth’</td>
<td>• Focus on utilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technical rationality</td>
<td>• Reflective practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hierarchical organization</td>
<td>• Learning organization of equal partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The general goal is appropriate education for all. As an inspiration we can use the educational tradition aiming at emancipation and social climbing (from the 18th century Enlightenment and the 19th century social movements).
- Teachers are key persons, so professional capacity building should be a first priority in working towards effective school improvement in context. The new concept of ‘professional capital’ (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012) is both important and inspirational. It is about ‘the systematic development of three kinds of capital into the profession – human, social and decisional’.
- In particular for teachers the development of an attitude of cultural sensitivity and a genuine interest in the background of children and youngsters is of crucial importance.
- We should also consider capacity building for other professionals and empowerment of parents and volunteers.
- This WP1 exercise is about policy implementation analysis, in itself a special field of expertise (with research groups, journals, etcetera). We should take into account what there is to learn from the state of the art in this field. (A field of expertise that has developed rapidly since the classic study of Wildavsky & Pressman [1973], with its beautiful title, *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington are Dashed in Oakland; or, Why it’s Amazing that Federal Programs Work at All.)*
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WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS

October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF CATALONIA/SPAIN

Prepared by Miquel Àngel Essomba and Anna Tarrés,
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
INTRODUCTION

In Spain, the educational skills are decentralized in some regions. This is the case of Catalonia. This report mostly refers to Catalonia. In Catalonia, the language of instruction is Catalan.

Participants in the five interviews conducted from November to December 2012 have been chosen based on the representativeness and relevance to the topic. All of them live in Catalonia and are part of: the Public Administration, or Teachers Association; or are from Parents Associations.

Chart on Focus Group in Catalonia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 1</th>
<th>Date and timing</th>
<th>Place of conduction</th>
<th>Profile of participants (professional position, level of hierarchy, gender)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Participant 3</td>
<td>11/2012</td>
<td>FAPAC</td>
<td>President Federation of Associations of Parents of Students of Catalonia (FAPAC). Man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant 4</td>
<td>13/12/2012</td>
<td>FMRPC</td>
<td>President of the Federation of Pedagogical Renovation of Catalonia (FMRPC). Teacher at a High school. Man.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16h</td>
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<td>Participant 5</td>
<td>3/12/2012</td>
<td>Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)</td>
<td>Professor of Systematic and Social Pedagogy, Autonomous University of Barcelona, UAB. Man</td>
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<tr>
<td>11h</td>
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1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF SPAIN

National indicators on the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets

<table>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Present national figure at 2011.</td>
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<td>Share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science</td>
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<td>Reading 19.6% Mathematics 23.7% Science 18.2%</td>
<td>From PISA 2009, Commission staff working document: Progress towards The common european objectives In education and training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education</td>
<td>40% 44% 40.6%</td>
<td>Present national figure at 2011.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15% 10.8%</td>
<td>Present national figure at 2011.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. **PERCEPTIONS ON THE CATALAN/SPANISH APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND**

There is consensus among the participants in assessing the negative impacts of the crisis in the education system, especially in education with immigrant children. There is a more differentiated exposure respect of what are the key elements of education for immigrants.

2.1 **CORE ELEMENTS OF THE APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND**

The guidelines of educational policy in Catalonia are defined by Generalitat of Catalonia through the Department of Education. The core elements of education policy for children with a migrant background has focused on:

- The immersion in Catalan.
- The Reception classrooms (*Aules d’acollida*) to begin the process of approaching the educational system and the Catalan language. One goal of these classes is to accelerate the learning of Catalan in small groups so that children can achieve after the others learnings. The reception classrooms are in schools and children can not stay more than half of the school day outside regular classroom. In these classrooms, children can’t stay more than 2 years and then the school has to track these students throughout all the school life. In the rest of Spain, in some communities there are reception classrooms and others not.
- There is no segregation by levels. All students of a same course has to be in the same level of education, it means without segregation inside the school.
- The Welcome classrooms (*Espais de Benvinguda Educativa* - EBE). These kind of classes are not mentioned into the debate by the participants, but they have been promoted in some areas where immigrants remained segregated and often out of ordinary schools for a limited period of time.
Other aspects are:

- The Environment educational plans (PEE) that have enabled many disadvantaged children perform extracurricular activities focused on their interests through an agreement between municipalities and social organizations. The PEE have had the function of an space for exchanges between diverse population.
- Some major towns such as Barcelona, through its council, have developed specific materials to support the treatment of interculturalism.

Participants highlight proposals for improving this policy:

- Breaking the dynamics of concentration of immigrant students in some schools.
- Improving the integration of children and their families. Participants pointed out experiences like the Classmate -tutor.
- Improving the tutorial action. Understanding mentoring as part of the curriculum, working on social skills or emotional education. Without to forget the tutorial action also in small groups and individually.
- Work on methods that promote to put the students in the center of the learning process such as the cooperative groups.
- A better guidance into the employment world.

Formally there is no school segregation in the different educational levels, but the practice in some centers indicates that it occurs often. Part of the participants stated that most of the devices to respond to children with a migrant background has been founded in segregation (ESO Classrooms (Aulas ESO) in Castilla, Shuttle classrooms (Aulas Enlace), Reception classes (Aules d’Acollida), ...) and consider that education policy has been based on catalog and classify people.

The representative of the government of Catalonia said that in front of the reality of the school concentration of immigration, they have tried different strategies such as the displacement of students, but without a positive assessment.

The parents representative argued that, theoretically, the system is committed to equality of opportunity, but in practice the education system is unable to compensate the inequalities of origin and in some centers ratios reached more than 90% students with a migrant background.

2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE SPANISH/CATALAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

According to the participants, the impact of the crisis is strong and negative. And it shows in the following aspects that affect more people with more critical socioeconomic disadvantages, as much of the immigrant population:

- General budget reduction impact on the entire system such as increasing rates of teacher / student or the increased cost of 0-3 year old school that is leading to the no schooling of the socially disadvantaged students in these classrooms.
- Practical disappearance of the Reception classes. This aspect has a hidden nuance which is that one of the effects of the crisis is the stop of the arrival of immigrants. The few children who now come to Catalonia and Spain do so due to processes such as family reunification. And due to the lack of reception classes in many places, each school must find solutions on their own, without a specific policy support. In many schools is missing the figure of the support teacher.
• Removal of programs such as accompaniment and schooling support for people with social disadvantages.
• Locally, withdrawal of support to projects which could compensate social inequalities such as PEE because of the lack of budget.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN SPAIN

In general, the measures taken in educational policy for children with a migrant background are valued as too soft and not enough adequate. The contributions emphasize the educational system for the immigrant population can improve in many aspects, but the current implementation of austerity policies that cut public funds in education are not making possible this improvement.

3.1 SPAINSH/CATALAN’S STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF TARGETED POLICIES

The six levels of the European Council conclusions about quality education show some difficulties. The greatest difficulty lies in the point that refers to the concentration of immigrants.

Concerning pre-school, it’s indicated a loss of quality system and a loss of access to the educational level due to the higher prices in the offer in last years (especially in stage 0-3, as it is a stage is not mandatory).

In the educational period from 6 to 11 years, Elementary school (Primària), the participants noted as the main problem the concentration of immigrant students in some schools. In this sense, PISA data are very illustrative. They indicate that an immigrant student in a segregated context can have a difference of 50 points on an immigrant student enrolled in a school without concentration.

In high school and tertiary levels of education, noted the need for more flexibility and less rigidity. The studies on immigrant population demonstrate that immigrants have to overcome many obstacles that most locals and suffering different types of discrimination. For these reasons and because of the high concentration school was very difficult to make successful educational careers.

Concerning the diversity in the classroom, noted that schools have had enough autonomy. There are thus good practice experiences.

However, in all educational levels there is a need of a higher education of the teachers in intercultural competences. There is still an image that immigrant children in the classroom are not a contribution of cultural wealth, but a problem.

The lack of a shared approach is not always well appreciated “Cada uno nada como puede” (Participant 3, means that everyone is alone doing what they can). However, given that in Catalonia teachers have faced with a high incorporation of immigrants in a very short period of time, is well appreciated by participants that teachers in general have reacted: “I s’han salvat els mobles” (Participant 3 means that, despite the lack of support, something could have been preserved amidst the unfavourable situation).
Before the crisis, it was possible to implement measures specifically aimed at immigrant population. E.g. in Catalonia, were implemented quite successfully reception classrooms to facilitate learning Catalan. But the specific measures were more by the personalized support than by the positive visibility of immigration in the classroom or the curriculum.

The impact of the crisis is very high in the reduction of financial allocations dedicated to the support and personalized support.

However, some participants indicated that no action highlights that really make possible the maintenance of the mother tongue or the presence of other cultures in education and the family participation. Also need to improve communication and dialogue with immigrant families.

3.2 CHALLENGES AND PROSPECT IN SPAIN/CATALAN’S TARGETED POLICIES

Viewed the extreme severity of the economic and social situation, the main challenge identified is the improvement in the budget for the maintenance and improvement of educational policy actions regarding immigrant population. Specifically, the improvement of the reinforcement and support services at all levels of education and scholarship policy.

Some respondents also indicate that the schools with a higher incidence of immigrant population should have more resources: lower ratios in the number of students for each teacher or classroom, specific support projects and projects to promote contact with the environment, such as culture mediation processes.

From a concrete point of view, and in relation to all stages of education, respondents ask for:

- Teachers have to take into a special consideration measures to raise academic expectations for immigrant students and go further in their citizen dimension.
- In relation to the conditions of realization of schooling task, it has to be possible the coordination of the teaching staff providing teachers of the time and resources needed for their practice.
- Respondents noted that the application of specific policies that facilitate work with families to involve them in the educational process is a work that is still to be done.

High school

For all educational levels, but especially for high school, participants indicated the need to improve the methods that put students as agents of their own learning (acting cooperatively in the classroom, giving the word, etc.). "We want students to know speaking, but do not ever let the word" (Participant 2).

In this sense, teacher training is set as the key. The diagnosis which is made is that the teaching of secondary school teachers is too focused on the curriculum and is not enough focused on the role of being teachers. The interviewed argue that teachers should stop teaching everything in classrooms, to leave time to promote skills related with learning to learn, skills related to the development of the individual, skills related to the search for information, and with the communication of knowledge. Developing these skills will help people to have a greater predisposition for lifelong learning.

The participants also indicate that in the transition from elementary school (with a tutor who devotes a large amount of hours / week to be with his students and where a limited number of
teachers enter in the classroom) to High school (1st ESO) there is a breakdown in the organization of the teaching action that discourages students, because it means a loss of hours / week with the tutor and an excess of teachers in the classroom. In the High school, the ratio of hours / week of presence in the classroom of the tutor may be only 3. That amount is considered completely inadequate for the knowledge of students and the tutorial task. According to Participant 2 "If in the 1st or the 2nd courses there is not this support, it leads to subsequent failures".

Finally, some of those interviewed claimed to increase practice time in training secondary school teachers.

_Life-long learning_

In another vein, respondents indicate that adult education is a copy of a curriculum system that has not worked for many people and it's reproduced without innovation. In this sense, it is considered to be improved: the offer, to make it more appropriate to the reality of the moment, the access roads, and the methodologies.


4.1 **PRESENT STATE OF EDUCATION STATISTICS** (see point 1 of this Inform)

4.2 **STATE OF DISCUSSION ON MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND ET 2020 TARGETS**

Participants emphasize that the current climate of cuts in public investment in education do not favor any of the objectives and it put the educational policy situation "... in a backward " (Participant 4).

Figures collected so far show that the measures taken have never been effective, with the exception of the first objective which put the participation of children between 4 and 6 years in 95%, as this percentage is exceeded and, so far, it is consolidated both nationally and regionally. The risk of decline in the percentage of school population stands at the ages of 0 to 3, due to the increased cost of education for this age.

Regarding the goal of moving away the population from the dropout, it is considered that the crisis is helping to keep the population within the school system, since there is no possibility of finding employment in the labour market. The demotivation and the paralysis of some teachers do not help to achieve this goal.

The general debate indicates that making more flexible the possible itineraries, methods and curriculum could lead to improved academic performance figures in the level of High school.

The current dynamics of increased university fees works against the goal of ensuring that 40% of the population between 30 and 34 reach tertiary education levels. To achieve this it is considered important to have a good system of scholarships for post-compulsory studies.
Both with regard to the above objective as the goal of a minimum participation of 15% of adults in education, participants noted that there is a historical deficit in vocational training, which is saturated and presents a very rigid offer.

In Spain, there are no incentives for life-long learning and there isn't a sufficient nor flexible offer. In fact, in Catalonia for years that the sector calls a law to restructure the system of adult education and it is not ready yet.

4.3 STATE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE IMPACT OF POLICIES TO MEET THE GOALS

It is unanimously considered that the possibility of achieving the objectives set out is negative. Currently, the starting point is a difficult situation and the current crisis, and the austerity policies have led, in addition, to a reduction in financial allocations that could have been directed towards the improvement of these educational objectives.

According to part of the interviewees, today in Spain we are not working on none of the directions outlined in the European strategy: "Everything has been cut" (Participant 4)

5. PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

All those interviewed expressed a wide acceptance of the proposal and consider the proposed network very useful. The expectations are mentioned:

- To make a space for exchanging experiences, successes and mistakes, and directions in education policy.
- It has to offer the possibility to generate debate and dialogue.
- It has to generate and make visible investigations. For example, SIRIUS can guardianship the change of the learning methodologies in schools with high numbers of immigrants and show the results to the educational community.
- SIRIUS can help to maintain and generate centers of experimentation related to the universities.
- To make possible the comparison of educational policies.
- SIRIUS has to make visible indicators, databases and collections of good and bad practices that make possible the establishment of 'route sheets'.
- They also have to get to schools.

In addition, SIRIUS maybe can help to:

- Improve the transfer of knowledge from universities to schools and involve them to a greater extent.
- Provide data to make good policy, ensuring that policies are based on a serious focus on reality.
- Helping to predispose teachers to the need to evaluate their own actions and develop strategies for achieving educational goals work.
6. CONCLUSIONS

The current panorama respect the improvement or maintenance of educational policies and measures in favour of immigrant children is negative.

Mainly, due to the strong impact of the economic crisis, and also because of a set of elements that even before the recession need to improved such as the excessive concentration of children with a migrant background, improving the reception of children and their families, the improvement of the tutorial, the incorporation of educational methodologies of learning based in the learning in small groups and in a cooperative way, the more flexible itineraries into the educational system and the need to improve teacher training.

During the interviews, there is a great interest, especially by teachers interviewed and by the representative of the Department of Education, to improve working methods as a means of improving the overall system and its performance.

There are topics that are less debated as college education or the governance systems.
LIST OF REFERENCES

PEE: Pla Educatiu d’Entorn, means ‘Environment Education Plan’

EBE: Espai de Benvinguda Educativa, means ‘Welcome Educational Space’

ESO: Ensenyament Secundari Obligatori, means ‘Compulsory Secondary Education’
WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS
October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF CROATIA

Prepared by Eli Pijaca Plavsic
INTRODUCTION

The problem of education of children with migrant background can be divided into three issues: Education of students, teacher training programmes, and pre-service education of students of teacher preparation colleges. Each issue is different in terms of different problems and their presentation.

All three stated issues are connected. If there is no quality in pre service teacher training programme we cannot expect to have educated teachers. If there are not enough service teacher training programmes then we cannot expect to have educated teachers that understand the concept of intercultural education and who could provide safe and encouraging environment for migrant children but also for their school peers. And if you do not have quality teacher training programmes then you have unsatisfied children with huge drop out rates.

The school system has many delicate problems to face, such as the acceptance of newcomers, multicultural education, updating teachers, and the relationship with the families of pupils, communication between foreign and native pupils, education results, dropout rates etc.

Croatian society is very homogenous, due to the results of the 2011 census 90.42% are Croats and 86% of them are Roman Catholics. Due to different statistical data Croatia was not an immigrant country at all which could change with Croatia entering to the EU in July 2013. According to this, Croatia’s educational system is at the beginning of the construction of stable system regarding education of children with migrant background and has lots of opportunities to learn and implement best possible models.

"My favorite example when we speak about how Croatian society is homogenous and how deeply we need more intercultural understanding, learning and diversity in our society was a story of a friend of mine. He lived in a small town in the eastern part of Croatia and one day the Circus came to town. There were lots of exotic animals that children never seen before live (such as giraffe, elephants etc.), but also lots of acrobats performances. He said that he was so surprised when he saw one child who was, among all the exotic animals and acrobats, noticed a black guy and started to shout "Mum, look, there is a black guy!".

This report is produced based on the recent national policy documents, different laws and papers/studies done recently in Croatia and interviews with some of the key stakeholders. Participants of the interviews and focus groups came from research institute, civil society organization and Teacher and Training Agency. Unfortunately, we were not able to organize interviews with the Ministry of Education and migrant students or their parents. Therefore this report is not completed in terms of having representation of all key stakeholders. This is very important to point out as we believe that we would have much better state of art regarding the education of children with a migrant background if we managed to include all relevant stakeholders.

The participants that were involved in focus groups and interviews stated some of the good things, some of the issues that can be easily solved but also some of the recommendations and best practice examples that should be implemented in the next few years.

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1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF CROATIA

National indicators on the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU strategy 2020 / ET strategy 2020</th>
<th>National goal</th>
<th>Present national figure</th>
<th>Optional notes on availability of national figures</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary-education participating in early childhood education</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>According to Eurostat national goal is unknown.</td>
<td>See sub – table 1. below, source Eurostat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School drop-out rate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>According to Eurostat national goal is unknown.</td>
<td>See sub – table 2. below, source Eurostat</td>
<td>u-data are unreliable, found on Eurostat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of low achieving 15 – year olds in reading, mathematics and science</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>According to Eurostat national goal is unknown.</td>
<td>See sub – table 3. below, source Eurostat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of 30-34 – year olds completing third level education</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>According to Eurostat national goal is unknown</td>
<td>See sub – table 4. below, source Eurostat</td>
<td>u-data are unreliable, found on Eurostat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average of adults participating in lifelong learning</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>According to Eurostat national goal is unknown</td>
<td>See sub – table 5. below, source Eurostat</td>
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</table>
2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE CROATIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

2.1 CORE ELEMENTS OF THE APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Croatia has been adopted some general measures for minorities, migrants and asylum seekers regarding integration in the educational system which is showing recently that there is a political will and some of the laws and documents are showing that there is some kind of strategy as well. We should observe all the recently developed documents and laws as newly developed and wait to see what will be with the implementation. As far as the practice is concerned there is no systematic approach in educating children of migrant background or asylum seekers. There are some projects and initiatives coming from different stakeholders that are put in this report as well. The biggest challenge in terms of intercultural education and respecting diversity will come with the full implementation of the National Framework Curricula and with the introduction to the Citizenship Education Curricula. Effective and successful educational process needs to be inclusive, interactive and based on the intercultural values. When designing an appropriate system, the focus needs to be on the 3 equally important areas: interaction of children of the refugees, asylum seekers end
migrants and interculturalism in schools, language courses for adults and availability of tertiary education for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants which inevitably involves some knowledge of previous qualifications of the person.

The most important documents are:

- In 2008 the Law on the Education in the primary and secondary schools (last amended in 2012),
- In 2002 the Constitutional Law on National Minorities (last amended in 2010),
- In 2011 the National curriculum framework
- In 2012 Law on Asylum

**Constitutional Law on National Minorities** provides realization of specific rights and freedom for minority members such as: using their own language and script in private and public life, knowledge and use of symbols, cultural autonomy, right to profess their faith, participation of minority members in public life, and management of local affairs through Council and representatives of national minorities, education on the their language and script, and all other rights which are listed in the *Law on Education in Language and Script of National Minorities*.

**The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools** regulates following: Pupils sense of national belonging and preservation of historical and cultural heritage and national identity. Minority pupils can be burned with a higher daily, weekly or annual hours. During appointment of school board members in schools, where education on minority language and script is present, there will be provided proportional representation of ethnic minorities and its proportionate share of pupils from national minorities in the total number of pupils in schools. School facilities where Croatian language and script is spoken/written will enable learning the language and script of minorities for their pupils, according to educational program established by the competent central government bodies with insurance of funding from the state budget. It is also regulated that higher education facilities organize schooling programs for teachers and professors for performing education in language and script of national minorities. Articles 43 – 46 of the Law are providing help and support for those students who do not understand the Croatian language. With the purpose of integration schools which have migrant children or asylum seeker children, they are obliged to provide additional classes for learning Croatian as a foreign language but also to help them in the learning process of any other school subjects. In order to organize and provide this kind of support to migrants and asylum seeker children it was necessary to develop curricula.

In 2009 Education and Teacher Training Agency started the project “Strategies for teaching and learning Croatian as a second language” in partnership with KulturKontakt Austria. This project aimed to provide a teacher training programme for Croatian language teachers, classroom teachers, school expert staff and principles who are teaching students Croatian as a second language. Project participants consisted of 25 teachers who do have experience with foreign students in their schools and classrooms. For example in the city of Zagreb there are 19 elementary schools and 12 secondary schools that enrolled foreign students from 25 different countries. One of the project activities was to develop a handbook that will help teachers not only to teach Croatian as a foreign language but also to help them in the learning process of any other school subjects. In order to organize and provide this kind of support to migrants and asylum seeker children it was necessary to develop curricula.

"We worked a lot on including a part of intercultural learning in the teacher training programme but also in the handbook. Before we started with the programme we sent out to selected teachers a questionnaire with different questions and the answers we got was that providing intercultural environment in their classroom was the biggest challenge for the teachers. Teachers and students
just couldn't put themselves in shoes of migrant children that changed their cultural environment, country, their friends, school etc. They needed concrete tools on how to integrate migrant children in the classroom. So we prepared tools and learning materials and sent it out to those teachers. When they started to use these learning materials they immediately noticed the change. For example one teacher stated that in her classroom there was one Albanian student. For the whole year he was very silent and didn't participate a lot in the interactions with his school peers. Right after she proposed to have activity where he will teach his colleagues some Albanian words that resulted with great achievement – other students realized how he felt and how difficult it was for him to understand the language that was not his mother tongue. After the very successful workshop Albanian student started to actively participate in both social and educational activities in school.

This project ended in September 2012 and Teacher and Training Agency would like to continue with the activities but there is always a problem with available funding.

In the National curriculum framework, national minorities and migrants are mentioned only in two segments: in the principles of the National curriculum framework –equality of education opportunity for all – every child and every pupil has the right on their own maximum educational development; equality of educational opportunities is based on social equality; education and schooling cannot be a privilege of minority nor can it be reduced to differences – ethnic, gender or other socially determined. In the chapter VIII titled Educational areas of general education, and compulsory secondary education it is written that languages of the national minorities like native language will be developed using the same methodology.

Regarding the intercultural education in school it is hard to get any general conclusions as there was no systematic “Citizenship Education” in elementary and secondary schools. Croatia just started in September 2012 experimental implementation of the “Citizenship Education” curriculum in schools. According to interviewers diversity is usually not seen as an opportunity but as an issue.

“Two years ago we had an example in one elementary school where there were 3 Muslim students. In school there was an opportunity for them to enroll to the Muslim religious classes but there was an issue with menu in school. The pork was on menu 1-2 times per week. Parents intervened and ask teachers and school administration to adjust menu for their children. The answer from school administration was, quoting: “This is not a hotel that they can choose the menu!” and proposed to the parents that they should bring something from home for the days when pork is on menu or eat only vegetables and bread. Then we (Centre for Peace Studies) tried to find out who is responsible for creating school menu and we found out that it was responsibility of Local authorities (Department for Education) in cooperation with schools. But their answer was that schools should have adjusted menu for all students that have any kind of needs. After our intervention they resolved the problem and now days they really do have adjusted school menu.”

According to the Law on Asylum, asylum seekers are entitled to residence in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers, provision of basic living and accommodation facilities, health care, elementary and secondary education, financial support, free legal aid, humanitarian aid, the right to work, and freedom of religion and religious upbringing of their children. Nevertheless, issues have arisen in relation to access to education. Although the Law on Asylum (Article 32) prescribes that asylum seekers are entitled to elementary and secondary education under the same conditions
as Croatian nationals, and that this right should be made available within three months from the
day of submission of the asylum application (or within one year in cases where the asylum seeker
is not familiar with the Croatian language), there have been some problems in practice. Due to the
lack of programmes for learning the Croatian language, different approaches and standards are
applied to a minor asylum seeker of school age: those who are from neighboring countries and
speak a language similar to Croatian are sent to school, yet this is not the case when the asylum
seeker speaks an entirely different language. The problem has arisen because the ministry which is
responsible for education, has failed to adopt a programme for learning the Croatian language,
history and culture for asylum seekers and refugees within 120 days from the day that the Law on
Asylum entered into force. In practice, the Ministry of Interior is dealing with this problem on a
case-by-case basis, but other competent ministries, such as the Ministry of Science, Education and
Sports, are not fulfilling their obligations prescribed by law 37. The Law on Upbringing and
Education in Primary and Secondary School under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Science,
Education and Sports, is the most important legal basis. But there are no special provisions and
measures regulating integration into the educational system of RASC.

In comparison with other countries of the Western Balkans, Croatia has the most developed asylum
legislation and organization, although in practice the situation is far from ideal, as non-government
organizations dealing with the issue are constantly pointing out.

Since the start of the negotiation process with the European Union (EU) in October 2005, Croatia
has made considerable progress in migration reform on its path to EU accession. Migration
legislation is in place and, to a great extent, harmonized with the EU *acquis*. However, there is
still a need to improve cross-border and regional cooperation in the area of labour migration, as
well as in the fight against irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings. Upon
accession to the EU, Croatian borders will become external borders of the EU; it is expected that
Croatia will change from a transit country to a destination country for asylum seekers and that the
number of asylum seekers, as well as the persons granted protection, will increase. In an effort to
further develop asylum policies and strengthen Croatia’s capacities for assisting refugees and the
relevant institutions.92

Migration policy – Action plan for integration of foreigners into Croatian society (new policy
developed in 2013).

Since the accession of Croatia to the EU, on the July 1st 2013, Croatia offers equal opportunities to
foreign citizens regarding many of their rights. The number of migrations has increased in the past
couple of years, and on the meeting held on February 1st 2013, Croatian Government has
established a Migration policy of the Republic of Croatia for the 2013 – 2015 period, whilst the
Croatian Parliament has adopted the policy on the February 22nd 2013. The aim of the Migration
policy is to ensure the economic, cultural and social development of the society and the state. A
very important part is the integration of immigrants into Croatian society. Also, integration of
immigrants implies dynamic, two way adaptation to the repercussions of post-migration processes,
which are valid both for the immigrants and Croatian citizens. The purpose of the integration
policy is to ensure by the State the right to work, housing, education and security, while the
immigrant is obliged in constructive participation in the economic, social and cultural development
of their new environment. Concerning the relevance of the integration for the functioning of the

Member States. Centre for the study of Democracy, Croatia Report.
society, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, on April 4th 2013, has brought a solution on the appointment of the president and members of Permanent Committee on the implementation of immigrants in Croatian society. An operating group of the Permanent Committee was appointed on the April 15th 2013 by the Principal of the Government's office for human rights and national minorities’ rights. This operating group has developed the Action Plan for the removal of obstacles in achieving rights of immigrant integration for the 2013-2015 period. This Action Plan determines the measures that need to be implemented continuously in collaboration with departments responsible for education, health, social politics, work, culture, housing, internal affairs, external affairs, State Office for Croats living outside the Republic of Croatia, local and regional self-government, scientific institutions, Croatian Red Cross and civil society organizations.

One of determinants of successful integration of asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection into society is the acquaintance with the Croatian language and culture.

Education of under aged asylum seekers, immigrants under subsidiary protection and immigrants under temporary protection, who want to enter the Croatian education system, is carried out according to Book of regulations of programme implementation and knowledge assessment of asylum seekers, immigrants under subsidiary protection and immigrants under temporary protection, as well as Croatian language, history and culture programme for asylum seekers, immigrants under subsidiary protection and immigrants under temporary protection. In case the asylum seeker and immigrants under subsidiary protection is older than 15, and wants to enter high school education system as well as the adult education system, education of Croatian language is conducted according to the Curricula of Croatian language for asylum seekers and immigrants under subsidiary protection older than 15 years.

Three measures within education area are stated in the Action Plan for the removal of obstacles in achieving rights of immigrant integration for the 2013-2015 period, that should facilitate the integration of immigrants into Croatian society:

- first one is to ensure the production of materials about basic information on education and upbringing system in the Republic of Croatia;
- second one is to coordinate the inclusion of asylum seekers, immigrants under subsidiary protection, returnees and foreigners into educational – upbringing system, in order to facilitate the learning of Croatian language;
- and the last one is to ensure the continuous acquiring of civic and social competences in the regular elementary and secondary education system.

National minorities – For members of national minorities it is guaranteed to have the right of education in their language and scriptas, which is defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Constitutional law on the rights of national minorities and the Law on education in the language and script of national minorities. Members of national minorities have the right for education in their mother tongue at all levels of education, from pre-school to post-secondary education. Languages used in classes can be categorized into two groups: the so-called territorial or minority languages, and non-territorial ones, in line with the European charter on regional or minority languages. Members of national minorities can effectuate their constitutional right to education in their mother tongue and script via three basic models and a specialized educational framework:

(1) Model A: All teaching is conducted in the language and script of the national minority. There are also compulsory Croatian lessons amounting to the same number of lessons as those provided for the mother tongue. In addition, pupils can learn extra content identified as important for the
minority community. This educational model is carried out in a special school, but can also be carried out in separate classes in institutions which have the majority programme.

(2) Model B: The teaching is bi-lingual. The natural sciences are taught in Croatian and the social sciences and humanities in the minority language. This educational model is carried out in special classes in institutions which have the majority programme.

(3) Model C: The teaching is dominantly in Croatian. There are 2-5 school lessons which are devoted to learning (fostering) the language and culture of the minority in question. This includes lessons on minority literature, geography, history, music and art.

There are also so-called “special” modes of teaching (seminars, summer and winter schools, distance learning) which are organized for those pupils for whom it is not possible to organize either of the listed educational models.

Although provision of such special minority education exists in Croatia, only a small proportion of minority pupils attend one of these programmes. In fact, the majority of minority pupils attend classes according to the regular “majority” programme. This finding corresponds to the fact that minorities in Croatia are mainly “native” minorities who have undergone cultural and social assimilation.

In the year 2009 research study “Parent and pupil involvement in school activities: the perspective of national minorities in Croatia” was done in Croatia as a part of the regional project advancing the participation and representation of ethnic minority groups in education, funded by the European Union. The research aim was to explore how minority parents and pupils were involved in school activities (e.g. forms of involvement, frequency of involvement, barriers to involvement), with special attention given to examples of good practice.

Conclusion from the report was following:

Apart from the opportunity to attend non-catholic religious education and to be away from school during religious holidays, schools in this study which implement the majority programme have a dominantly neutral approach towards minority groups: the organisation of intercultural events was not registered in any of the schools, minority parents and pupils are not specially informed about their minority rights in education by the schools, either in person or in writing, and there is no practice of communicating with minority groups about whether, and if so how, they would like their culture fostered in school. The issue of special communication efforts between schools and members of minority groups is extremely important since it provides minorities with information about their educational rights, the opportunity to voice their wishes and worries with regard to the exercise of these rights, and such communication sends the message to minority groups that schools respect their ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural specificities. The openness of schools towards minority groups (when these were identified) dominated in the interviews with principals, as well as the focus groups with teachers. The next step would be to implement this openness organizationally, and an inclusive local community culture has been identified as key in reinforcing this openness.


94 Complete research study can be found here: http://www.apreme.net/PDF_s/APREME_Croatia_report_eng.pdf

A representative of civil society organization describes how a lack of understanding about diversity and influence of media can create different prejudice regarding minorities:

„During my direct work with students and youth I realized that they are pretty islamofobic. When I asked for example secondary school students how come that they have prejudice against Muslims I realized that they are mostly following US media and copying some of the patterns (such as connection between Muslims and terrorism). What was really surprising for me was that they connect Muslims with Saudi Arabia, not for example with Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina which is Croatian neighbouring country.“ (Center for Peace Studies)

Recommendations:
- To organize assistance in learning and integration into school.
- To develop database of schools that have migrant children. This should be organized and developed by the Ministry of Education.
- On the local level it is very important to ensure very good collaboration between local community, local authorities, schools, asylum seekers and migrants.
- To organize mobile teams on the local level who are trained to offer support to schools (teachers and school administration) but also to migrant children in the process of their adaptation.
- To develop centres in order to support migrants on the local level according to the already proven Portugal model that is solving the issue of integrating migrants into society.
- To continue with funding and the implementation of the teacher training programmes such as project „Strategies for teaching and learning Croatian as a second language“ developed by the Teacher and Training Agency which is, according to the teachers that participated in it, of high quality and very concrete tool that helped them not only in learning Croatian as a second language but also in organizing workshops on importance of interculturalism and diversity.

2.2 IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON THE CROATIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The financial crisis as a reason was not stated directly in any interview or official document regarding the implementation of policies. According to the perception of one interviewer the financial crises could be a reason of not-implementing the project in having teachers (assistance in learning) who are helping students of migrant background/asylum seekers in their school life and who are a link between school administration and teachers. According to the interviewed person the reaction of one Centre for Social Security was to engage volunteers (students of Social Studies) to act and help migrant children and their families in their school life. This is an example on how local initiative was implemented in order to sustain the process.

Recommendation:
To include students from the Teacher Training Faculty or Faculty of Philosophy (future teachers) and give them an opportunity to practise their skills in intercultural education. In this way students would have the opportunity to work as volunteers with migrants and asylum seekers and also be their assistance in their learning process. It should be done in a similar way like Roma assistance works in schools with Roma students.
3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN CROATIA

Due to the differences in the state of development of policies aimed at the education of migrant children among the SIRIUS partner countries, we define two options for the analysis of this section.

Option B: Countries which are in a beginning stage of the development of targeted policies.

3.1 CROATIA’S STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF TARGETED POLICIES

Since the start of the negotiation process with the European Union (EU) in October 2005, Croatia has made considerable progress in migration reform on its path to EU accession. Migration legislation is in place and, to a great extent, harmonized with the EU *acquis*. However, there is still a need to improve cross-border and regional cooperation in the area of labour migration, as well as in the fight against irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings. Upon accession to the EU, Croatian borders will become external borders of the EU and it is expected that Croatia will change from a transit country to a destination country for asylum seekers and migrants and that the number of them, as well as the persons granted protection, will increase. In an effort to further develop policies and strengthen Croatia’s capacities for assisting refugees and the relevant institutions.

Integration of national minorities in the Croatian education system is legally regulated meaning that there is a solid foundation for developing strategies, policies and projects.

According to the *Institute for Migration and Nationalities*, Ministry of Science, Education and Sport they had a plan to introduce school assistants who would provide help to minority and asylum students on their way to full integration in Croatian society. It was a very similar model to the model of educating Roma students and involvement of assistants who are providing help to Roma students and act as a link between school and Roma community. Unfortunately even if the project started not much was done. Apparently it was connected to the limited resources and financial crises. Within isolated projects that were conducted by Centre for Social Care in Zagreb, volunteers were helping minority and asylum students. Shortcoming of this approach is impossibility of continuous work with children, because of volunteer approach. Individual cases such as the one started by the Centre for Social Care in Zagreb, provides strong evidence about inactivity of Croatian's Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

According to the law, asylum seekers have the right to attend all levels of educational system, from preschool education to high school education. Educational approach does not take into consideration asylum student's background.

“*For instance, Afghanistan asylum seekers that were in contact with Centre for Peace Studies were poorly informed about their own language and scribd. They were completely unacquainted about Latin scribd and alphabet. When school invites asylum parents to parent meeting, they are...*"

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confused because of unawareness of the parents meeting purpose. Asylum seeker's children learn the language faster than their parents, so children are taken to the administrative offices and other institutions by their parents as interpreters.”

The only existing policy that deals with the integration of the migrants and asylum seekers was created in 2011 by the Institute for International Relations. It was published in the framework of the TRAIN program titled: Welcome? Challenges of integrating asylum migrants in Croatia. This is also project based policy not a structural or systematic approach to the issue.

There are cases of successful inclusion in schools.

„An Iranian asylum, who was eager used one year of adaptation period to learn Croatian language. He had been supported by the Centre for Social Care, together with different volunteers. Knowledge of Croatian language came as a result of continuous work. Eventually, he enrolled high school and finished it with excellent marks“ (Institute for Migration and Nationalities)

Additional factor that helps in adapting to the school is the method of initial grading system. At the beginning students are graded verbally, and are included in numerical grading system later on.

As described above, there are many setbacks that aggravate inclusion of asylum students in schools. Due to these problems, participants from Institute for Migration and Nationalities, as well as participants from Centre for Peace Studies, claim that it would be good to use asylum seekers education paradigm when designing minorities’ education approach. Never the less, participants from these two institutions say that differences between minorities and asylum seekers necessarily have to be taken into consideration.

3.2 CHALLENGES AND PROSPECT IN CROATIA’S TARGETED POLICIES

In March 2012 the Conference Integration policies and practices – inclusion of asylum seekers and aliens under subsidiary protection in the Croatian society was held in the Croatian Parliament. The aim of this conference was to encourage the development of integration policies of the Ministries and other government bodies. The conference was divided into two parts: integration – current and future challenges, where the importance of the introduction of Croatian society with diversities creating positive atmosphere reducing xenophobic and other types of attacks on foreigners was outlined. The Croatian society must be receptive to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and must enable their full integration into society. There is much work to be done in the Croatian country, and it is expected to have a better coordination and a clear roll of the ministries in the integration of the migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the Croatian society. There were imposed recommendations for the design of the integration policies in 4 areas: education, employment, health and housing solutions. These policies are not developed on any plan, and as a result of that there is low quality and unsafe life for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the Croatian society. There are lots of problems that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are faced with. But solutions are apparent in coordinated, clearly shaped and process-oriented integration.

Second part of the conference Education of the asylum seekers and aliens under subsidiary protection, was focused on the importance of the education as a key of the integration. Effective and successful educational process needs to be inclusive, interactive and based on the intercultural values.

97 Centre for Peace Studies
Challenges in designing an appropriate system are:

- the focus needs to be on the 3 equally important areas: interaction of children of the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and interculturalism in schools, language courses for adults and availability of tertiary education for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants which inevitably involves some knowledge of previous qualifications of the person.

- Ministry of Science, Education and Sports needs to take a stronger role in the education of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, and learning Croatian language as a first step in the integration. The priority of the Ministry needs to be recognition of diplomas and schooling of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, enabling pupil’s rights, accommodations in student homes, and enabling support in learning and integration.

Recommendations:

- To organize Croatian language courses:
  - for Asylum-Seekers course at the Reception Centre;
  - for Migrants – there is a Croatian learning course at the faculty of Philosophy (“Croaticum”) and it provides 220 hours for learning. The recommendation was to increase the number of hours from 220 to 330. This should be sufficient for the basic level of language knowledge.

- New migrants that will come to Croatia in the future (not those that are coming from the neighbouring countries) will show the need for creating integration and migration policy on all levels. The recommendation is that the foundation for this new policy should be the current Law on asylum seekers which should be adjusted to the specific needs that migration population will have or already have. That means that the current Law on asylum and its structure is a very good basis for a creation of policies. In terms of adjustments of education of asylum seekers to the education of migrant children the first thing that is different is that asylum seekers didn't come because they wanted to come, it was not their voluntary decision, like migrants who are mostly coming because of the employment, better living conditions etc. The special focus for education of asylum seekers should be that if they don't have parents who could support them in their education the state should obtain all the necessities to provide them a quality education.


*Due to the differences in the state of development of targeted policies and education statistics differentiating by migration background among the SIRIUS partner countries, we define two options for the analysis of this section*

**Option B:** Countries which are in a beginning stage of the development of targeted policies and differentiated education statistics.
4.1 PRESENT STATE OF EDUCATION STATISTICS

In Croatia citizens that have regulated residence are coming from 118 different countries. Collected data (from 2008) says that in Croatia there are all together 32,160 foreigners on temporary or permanent residence (59% are men, 41% women).

Citizens from the EU countries represent 26% of all foreigners. Others are mostly coming from the former Yugoslavia countries and the largest group are Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens that are represented in 43% of all foreigners with regulated residence.

*Top ten countries from where migrants are coming to Croatia*98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Temporary residence</th>
<th>Work permit</th>
<th>Permanent residence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>6062</td>
<td>2236</td>
<td>5491</td>
<td>13,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Serbia</td>
<td>1423</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>1043</td>
<td>2,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Germany</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1229</td>
<td>2,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Slovenia</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1241</td>
<td>2,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Montenegro</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>1,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 FYR Macedonia</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>1,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Italy</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 China</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Austria</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Russia</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,282</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,193</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,802</strong></td>
<td><strong>27,277</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of them (41%) are between age of 31 and 50, and only 7% of them are school age children and children under 18 years.

Regarding their level of education almost 50% of foreigners have finished secondary school and 27-28% are with no qualification of with finished elementary school. Only 10% of foreigners hold a university degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>No. of foreigners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No qualification/ Only elementary school</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>15,396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree (B.A)</td>
<td>4498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

98 Data from 2008 presented in the following publication: Zbornik radova „Useljenička politika u funkciji razvoja hrvatskog gospodarstva“(2008.), Zagreb,Hrvatska gospodarska komora.
According to the statistical data from 2011 in Croatia there are all together 35 000 foreigners, among them 676 are in Zagreb because of enrolment to the secondary school programs. Statistics above are presented in publication from 2008 called Zbornik radova „Useljenička politika u funkciji razvoja hrvatskog gospodarstva“(2008.), Zagreb,Hrvatska gospodarska komora and are only data stating the educational background of foreigners in Croatia.

5. PERCEPTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SIRIUS NETWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS

All participants that were involved in interviews and focus groups were very interested about the SIRIUS project. They would like to learn more about the project but also about the comparative report of this study as they think we could learn a lot from other countries experiences. They also stated that they would like to be involved in project activities especially on the national level.

Participants stated that they would like to hear more about international practice especially about second language policy. They are interested in study visits, best practice examples etc.

6. CONCLUSIONS

According to the interviews we had with the disclaimer that we didn’t have interviews with all relevant stakeholders we planned (e.g. Ministry of Education, migrant children and parents etc.) recommendations from the participants of the focus groups and interviews can be grouped in following policy areas:

- Building teachers and future teachers competencies and skills in the area of learning Croatian as a second language (special focus on teacher training programmes)
- More available funds for different projects that help immigrants and asylum seekers to be fully integrated into society
- Development of intercultural education curriculum that is fully implemented in all schools in Croatia
- Development of strategic and systematic approach and policies in the field of education of children with migrant background in order to be fully prepared for the newcomers once Croatia will become EU country.

General conclusion of the held interviews can be summarized in the following words from the civil society organization (Center for Peace Studies) participant:

„I think in general terms that there is a solid base for education of children with migrant background and asylum seekers in Croatia. Children are included in the education, some kind of structure and basics exist, the different kind of laws that are supporting their education are recently developed but what we really do miss is teacher training programmes that will help teachers to teach about interculturalism and importance of diversity and to learn how to work with them and how to include them in the everyday school life emphasizing diversity as an opportunity not as an issue.“99

99 Centre for Peace Studies
LIST OF REFERENCES

Constitutional Law on National Minorities (last amended in 2010).


Law on Asylum (2012)

Law on the Education in the primary and secondary schools (last amended in 2012),


National curriculum framework (2011)

Zbornik radova „Useljenička politika u funkciji razvoja hrvatskog gospodarstva“(2008.), Zagreb, Hrvatska gospodarska komora.

WP 1 – COUNTRY REVIEWS

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS
BY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AGENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

National ANALYSIS REPORTS
October 2013

NATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT
OF ITALY

Prepared by Giulia Pastori
INTRODUCTION

The report is based on the testimony of five active protagonists in Italian policy, research and training regarding students with a migrant background (see table below).

The points of view expressed by the interviewees showed characteristics of continuity and integration between the national and local levels, and the portrait is reliable from the point of view of the competence and long-term commitment of all stakeholders regarding intercultural education and the integration of foreign students at school. The subjects were very willing to recognize the light and dark areas of the Italian context, indicating the strengths, weaknesses and the commitment to the future for Italian policies, research and training for teachers and school administrators.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Background and Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vinicio Ongini</td>
<td>has worked at the Ministry of Education since 1996 and at the Immigration, Guidance and Combating Early School Leaving Office of the Directorate General for Students, since its inception in 2005. He has contributed to the development of some of the major policy documents concerning the cultural-pedagogical orientation of the multicultural school, and he is the author of numerous publications related to the theme of the education of pupils with migrant backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graziella Favaro</td>
<td>is a national expert on intercultural education and the integration of pupils with migrant backgrounds. Author of numerous publications and coordinator of several projects, she has directed the COME center in Milan that promotes the social, cultural and individual well-being of children and young immigrants in Italy and their educational and scholastic inclusion since 1994.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrizia Capoferri</td>
<td>is a linguist, and has been the referent for Interculture at the UfficioScolasticoRegionaledellaLombardia (School Office of the region Lombardia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Bampi</td>
<td>is the coordinator of the multicultural center ‘Millevoci’ of the Autonomous Province of Trento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elio Gilberto Bettinelli</td>
<td>is a teacher and elementary school administrator, and has been supervisor for student internships and teacher training at elementary schools, she is an expert of intercultural education and citizenship and the author of many publications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. PROFILE OF THE POSITION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE ITALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

National indicators with reference to the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>EU 2020 Strategy / ET 2020 Targets</th>
<th>National goal</th>
<th>Present national figure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share of children between 4 years and the age of starting compulsory primary</td>
<td>Raise to 95% the percentage of children attending preschools from age 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>In Italy, 97.1% (Eurostat 2010) of children aged 3-6 attend preschools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>education participating in early childhood education</strong></td>
<td>During the 2010/11 school year, out of 200,000 non-Italian children aged 3-6 years, only 145,000 were enrolled at preschool (ISTAT 2011).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School drop-out rate</strong></td>
<td>In Italy the percentage is 18.8% (the European average is 14.5%), for a total of 818,000 young people. For young people of different nationalities the percentage rises to 44% (Eurostat, 2010, 2011)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Reduce drop-out rate to 10% (young people between the ages of 18-24 drop out of school after middle school (not even attending a two-year vocational school afterwards...). | Results in the 2009 OCSE PISA on reading, math and science:  
- with respect to reading, the national average is in line with the European one, but 1 out of 5 students is below basic knowledge in Italian (level 1b) and only 0.4% (European average 0.8%) reaches the highest level (6);  
- in math the national average score (483) is lower than the European average (498) (vocational schools have even lower the national average at 422)  
- the average in science is 12 below the European average (489 as opposed to 501) (vocational schools are below the national average at the average score of 422 points)  
First generation students are an average of 81 points below Italian students and more than half of them do not reach basic levels of literacy (50.5% of them are below Level 2 Italian). All in all, the average difference in the results for reading competence for Italian and immigrant students is of 72 points, and immigrant students are two times as likely as Italian students to be in the lowest fourth in the results. |
| **Share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science** | Results in the 2009 OCSE PISA on reading, math and science:  
- with respect to reading, the national average is in line with the European one, but 1 out of 5 students is below basic knowledge in Italian (level 1b) and only 0.4% (European average 0.8%) reaches the highest level (6);  
- in math the national average score (483) is lower than the European average (498) (vocational schools have even lower the national average at 422)  
- the average in science is 12 below the European average (489 as opposed to 501) (vocational schools are below the national average at the average score of 422 points)  
First generation students are an average of 81 points below Italian students and more than half of them do not reach basic levels of literacy (50.5% of them are below Level 2 Italian). All in all, the average difference in the results for reading competence for Italian and immigrant students is of 72 points, and immigrant students are two times as likely as Italian students to be in the lowest fourth in the results. |
| Reduce to less than 15% the number of low-achievers among 15-year olds, in reading, math and science (results OCSE-PISA) | |
| **Share of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education** | In Italy only 19.8% (Eurostat, 2010) of 30-34 year olds have completed university degrees. This drops to 12% for people of other nationalities. |
| Raise to 40% the percentage of adults between 30-34 year olds who complete university or post-degree studies. | |
| Average of adults participating in lifelong learning | Raise to a 15% average the number of adults involved in lifelong learning. Raise to 75% the number of employed men and women between 20-64 years old | In Italy only 6.2% of adults attend training courses to fine-tune their competences (the European average is 9.1% but there is a huge variation regarding top-ranked countries like Denmark (32.8%), Sweden (24.5%) and Finland (23%). Employment for people aged 26 to 64 is 61.1%, males being 72.8%, and females at 49.5%. Among foreigners, the employment rate is 67%, higher than the National average and with respect to employment in countries with long immigration histories. Yet this percentage has dropped dramatically during the last two years… |

2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE ITALIAN APPROACH TO EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUNDS

The characteristics of the Italian approach regarding educating students with migrant backgrounds presents the following characteristics (based on interviews and existing literature):

2.1 A CLEARLY INTERCULTURAL APPROACH AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE

Italy began addressing this theme later with respect to other countries and has learned from the studies and analyses already carried out elsewhere, especially in other European countries, keeping in mind the critical points that were raised 20 years ago regarding multiculturalism and assimilation. Since the first Ministerial Directive from 1989 (“Glialunnistranieri e l’educazioneinterculturale”), Italy has adopted the ‘intercultural model', at least in terms of principle, legislation, and this first element has remained constant over time and is found in all directives and subsequent documents.

There are two essential educational-policy documents regarding foreign students at school. They were outlined and published only after 2005, after a ministerial office dedicated to the integration of foreign students at school was established, and after a fifteen years (from about 1990) of ministerial directives and laws dedicated to partial aspects of:

- Lineeguida per l’integrazione e l’accoglienzaegliallmunistranieri (Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign students), 2006: operational indications regarding the integration and welcoming of foreign students;
- La via italiana per l’educazioneinterculturale e l’integrazionedegliallmunistranieri (The Italian ‘way’ to Intercultural education and the integration of foreign students in Italy), 2007: a pedagogical-cultural document which contains proposals from two different viewpoints: the integration of foreign students who require specific interventions and the intercultural perspective for all students.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰The guidelines identified are 10 divided into three main areas:
1. integration actions, specifically aimed at non-Italian students and their families, concerning reception and integration at school, the learning of L2, the value of multilingualism, relationships with foreign families and orientation;
2.2 THE CHOICE OF INCLUSION

Children and young people, also newcomers, are placed in mixed classes with Italian students and not in separate classes, and like many European countries, Italy has signed the Universal Declaration of Children’s Rights. Inclusion had already been chosen before Italy became a multicultural country, for pedagogical reasons regarding the inclusion of disabilities. Exclusion has never been tested, except in isolated situations, differing from other countries.

Italy is an illuminating example of contradictory policies and oscillation between inclusion and exclusion: the legal framework regarding school and the insertion of foreign students follows an inclusive model, the recognition of the right of all children to education and the recognition of the policy intercultural education in schools; policies regarding citizenship and access follow an ethnocentric approach in striking contradiction with the policy of inclusive education. Beside an unsuccessful regulation of entry and a lack of stabilization and integration for the immigrant resident population, the citizenship legislation (Law 91 of 1992) is extremely conservative and ethnicizing, indefinitely guaranteeing the right to citizenship by descent to those of Italian origin (jus sanguinis), and a high number of years (ten or more) of continual residence in Italy. Children born in Italy to immigrant parents do not have the right to citizenship until they are 18 years old, and certain conditions must be met. The parents and children’s residence in Italy has to be continuous. Both parents and the children cannot have breaks in their residence (meaning no time can be spent abroad, either for study or family reasons.)

2.3 THE CENTRALITY OF LANGUAGE.

On the subject of Italian L2 Italy has made great strides in a relatively short period. While other countries, such as France and the United Kingdom, have long-standing institutes, study groups, experts who have made reflections on this regard, Italy was really almost a blank slate in this area (with the exception of two universities for foreigners). In twenty years, Italian L2 in Italy has had a wealth of teaching proposals.

Initiatives and materials for adults and for children were produced, differentiating the methods and approaches (Italian for studying, Italian for communicating). This theme is definitely a strong element that characterizes integration, although it is still very variable locally and the opportunity to receive funding for training teachers to teach Italian L2 is fragmented.

The training of teachers in educational services for children, currently almost without training regarding bilingualism and possible actions for reinforcement learning Italian L2, is fundamental.

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2. actions for intercultural interaction, addressed to all actors working in the educational scene, including actions relating to relationships at school and during extra-curricular time, discrimination and prejudice, intercultural perspectives in knowledge and skills

3. actions targeted to the involvement of actors and resources, which cover all aspects of organizational and training for actors in schools (school management, teaching and non-teaching staff) and outside the school (society and territory).
2.4 BENEVOLENT, BUT OFTEN NAIVE WELCOMING RECEPTION.

There is widespread hospitality and kindness on the part of teachers and schools, a non-critical and non-rejecting attitude towards other cultural references as has happened in other countries with high levels of immigration, and this causes more welcoming reception. This widespread interculturalism concerns primarily the 0-11 age range, meaning infant-toddler centers, preschools and primary schools. The limit, however, of these settings is their naive, folklore-based way of giving value to cultural differences (in Italy it was referred to ironically as 'couscous pedagogy'): it might happen that teachers would try to give value to cultural differences such as foods, religion feasts, but they would ignore or they wouldn’t know how to manage important questions such as bilingualism, hybridity, family challenges due to the migration process, etc.

In high schools there has been a large number of immigrant students only in the past 4-5 years, at a moment when school itself is changing. At this level, there is not the same intercultural benevolence, but rather the overall difficulty and discomfort of teachers to deal with the new complexity, less willingness to change teaching practices and, when there is interest to change, an attitude of emergency ("what should we do?")\textsuperscript{101}.

2.5 A LACK OF NATIONAL REGULATION, WHICH GENERATES GREAT LOCAL VARIETY IN THE INVESTMENT IN PROJECTS TO CHANGE SCHOOLS.

Current legislation is not sufficient, often unknown and not put into practice. Italian legislation on these issues regards two types of documents. On the one hand, general documents that address principles, references, invitations to interculturalism, reception, enhancing cultural origin, recognition of linguistic diversity and the pronouncement of the right to education for all children from abroad. On the other hand, there are also ministerial directives addressing targeted issues (e.g. Directive 465 Jan 27, 2012 - the exam state after middle school is no longer necessary for attending high school; or Directive 2, Jan 18, 2010 regarding the maximum percentage of presences of immigrant students per school set at 30%). A clear, current-day intermediate regulatory body is lacking, able to address the critical aspects, some of which have been known for some time (see next paragraph).

Local governments may intervene with regional or provincial resolutions to complement national legislative shortcomings and respond to the specific needs of the territory, but these initiatives are entrusted to the sensitivity of local legislatures.

In addition, the economic and financial crisis of recent years has drastically reduced state and local funding for school projects, including those relating to pupils with migrant backgrounds.

3. PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUNDS IN ITALY

3.1 GENERAL QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Pupils with migrant backgrounds enter the school system as do native pupils, without differentiation, in principle and law, and therefore use the same schools, with their merits and defects.

In general, Italy offers excellent educational services for children and has good quality primary schools. High schools, divided into Level I (11-13) and Level II (14-18), suffers from a lack policy regarding investments and reforms, and this also effects the quality of interventions for pupils with migrant backgrounds. There is evident differences in student achievement highly correlated to the socio-economic status of the families.

With regard to services for children, in Italy, 97% of 3-6 year old children attend preschool. The most recent data on the national level (ISTAT 2011) evinces that the number of non-Italian children attending preschool last year was 145,000, compared with 200,000 residents in the same age range. Thus, while almost 100% of Italian children attend preschool, for children of immigrants, the percentage drops to 75%. From observations made on the local level, in medium-large cities children of immigrants quite commonly attend preschool as do Italian children. In small towns, where perhaps there is only one private school for children, those children are effectively excluded, either due to economic reasons, or due to the religious orientation of the school, or access difficulties. Immigrant parents do not always grasp the importance of school as a place for cognitive development, or non-working mothers and those recently reunited with their families may desire the company of their child and not place them in childcare. It may be added that in childcare services there is no program regarding language and bilingualism, which results in parents being concerned about the loss of the mother tongue and family cultural identity.

With respect to Middle and High school, a clear, current-day regulatory code, mandatory for all teachers and all schools which addresses the educational suffering of foreign students who easily encounter obstacles due to the inefficiency of the schools, is lacking. These points relate to:

- The class where students are inserted and the consequent delay in schooling (frequently immigrant pupils are inserted in classes not correspondent to their age, but in younger classes because of their low mastery of Italian);
- The procedures for recognizing prior qualifications and different school experiences;
- Specific assessments for the first two years in order to prevent the foreign student being failed which is always quite dramatic;
- Improvement of language teaching in the early years of schooling after the arrival of the child or young person;
- Adaptation or individualized program of study;
- Facilitation of the transition from one school to another;
- More effective orientation at the end of the 1st schooling cycle I (14 years).

The autonomy enjoyed by schools since 1998 in organization and teaching proposals prevented or lessened the need for governance on this issue. Over the past 20 years, the Italian school system has undergone one of the most significant changes in its history, going from a few to 760,000
foreign students (and in some cities, such as Milan, average percentages exceed 20%). Schools need compulsory national indications throughout the country in reference to intercultural education and targeted Measures. Instead autonomy has meant that this was attenuated or limited.

The problems of delay, abandonment and insufficient learning of the Italian language are unfortunately still very frequent and widespread. In Middle and High Schools unfortunately there are even instances of non-immediate placement of the students who arrive come after the start of the school (October / November). Due to the large number of students they are moved to other schools and their search to find a school willing to welcome them can be long. In some localities (e.g. the Autonomous Province of Trento) the establishment of guidance services and online L2 teaching networks – managed by local administrations - between different institutions has partially alleviated the problem.

An example of local initiative – Region Lombardy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School pre-enrollment at the go-ahead for family reunification.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Lombardy since 2006 some areas have introduced a linkage between the prefecture and the school system to facilitate the inclusion of newly arrived children for family reunification at school. When the prefecture clears the family for reunification, they also pre-enroll the children at school, since they have access to the school administration platform. The data of the child is entered into the system and a school is assigned. In this way, the foreign parent already knows what school the child will attend before the child has reached in Italy. An information sheet written in very simple language according to the mother tongue spoken by the foreigner, instructs the parent to go confirm the enrollment at the assigned school. In addition, it also gives information about the calendar of the Italian school year, when it begins and ends and how many days must be attended. The system then generates an email advising the school regarding the enrollment of the child. The school is also provided with the details of the parent, to contact them if they do not confirm the enrollment. Schools can consider the child as a potential student so make provisions the workforce and be prepared.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immigrant students especially enroll in vocational and technical schools, the opposite trend to Italian students, because these schools historically have less social prestige, revealing a tendency towards downward integration.

Statistic Service of Minestery of Education – Foreign Students in the Italian School, Oct 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>ITALIAN CITIZENS</th>
<th>NON-ITALIAN CITIZENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School (Licei)</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Institutes</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Institutes</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Training</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of failures (rising both for Italian children and children with migrant backgrounds in both primary and secondary schools) is very high among non-Italian children, double the rate as for Italian children:

102 Since 1996, the Minestryof Education, Research and Universityhas published the Annual Report “Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana” (“Non-Italian Students Report”).
Only 62.5% of foreign students pass from Middle to High school.

In primary schools, the percentage of non-Italian students who are late is 17.4% (the percentage of Italian student is 0.8%), in Middle schools it’s 46% (the percentage of Italian student is 4.8%); at High School this rises to 68.9% for non-Italian students, while it remains 24.6% for Italians.

Regarding teacher training, in general, not only referring to diversity there is a dramatic absence of pre-service training at the national level for secondary school teachers (from 2000 to 2007 Italy had a post-graduate school that licensed middle-high school teachers, but it’s been suspended since 2007, until this school year 2012/2013), this year mandatory training will begin for those who want to start teaching at the middle and secondary level) although it exists for pre and primary school teachers (Education Sciences). The university curriculum but does not necessarily address matters such as Italian L2 teaching.

In in-service training, issues related to intercultural education and different actions for the integration of pupils with migrant backgrounds haven’t been part of a national mandatory training program, able to answer teachers’ questions and therefore teachers are not adequately trained. Training initiatives linked to local resources like Associations, Intercultural Centers and Municipalities have been implemented. Training, therefore, has been realized thanks to these entities.

### 3.2 DIVERSITY AT SCHOOL

The first guidance documents on the diversity at the school date back to the 90s and historically Italy opened school to diversity in terms of disability, according to an inclusive model that sets it apart from other countries. In the last National Guidelines document regarding the curriculum of the first cycle of education (3-14 years, 2012), as in those of 2007, school includes a lot of diversity, disability, pupils of foreign origin, foreign pupils who experienced immigration. This generalized inclusive approach is also found in many school and educational documents and it is not a positive aspect of cultural difference: it is necessary to distinguish between disability-diversity and cultural-linguistic-religious differences now found in the classrooms. Inclusion is the common idea, but we must keep in mind that the situations, methods and approaches are not the same. The greatest risk is to consider cultural difference in terms of deficiency and lack of inclusion and then to propose that follows the path of compensatory education. In the case of disability, it is clear we must create conditions for those with difficulties can learn and express themselves better; in the case of the multiplicity of differences, it is necessary to go from a situation of heterogeneity to one where everyone can take advantage of the common exchange that comes from a situation where there are children who have mastered a different language that is given value.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N° of pupils who repeat at least one school year</th>
<th>Middle school</th>
<th>Secondary school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italian pupils</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Italian pupils</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The enhancement of cultural, linguistic and religious minorities, as well as anti-discrimination education programs, are not required at any level of education, despite the National Guidelines pushing in this direction, although there are national documents that address intercultural education in school all levels. High school curricula with an intercultural twist do not exist, and depending on local investments made over the years regarding training and curriculum planning, schools traditionally have a more or less mono-cultural identity and are more or less sensitive in the prevention of discrimination.

The Teaching of the Catholic religion is an element that strongly connotes the Italian school context, making it markedly mono-religious. The Catholic Religion Classes introduced by the Concordat of ‘29, partly revised in ‘85, making it non-compulsory, and choice-based. But although Catholic religion is an optional subject, it is still curricular and is graded, while those who choose the alternative class to religion usually do not study an interesting discipline in its content, because this would create discrimination against students attending the Catholic Religion classes. There has yet to establish a cultural sociological and anthropological perspective in the study of religion.

3.3 TARGETED MEASURES FOR MIGRANT PUPILS

As there is no mandatory national widespread training, schools are very diverse and very heterogeneous in terms of response. There are schools that implement national guidelines and the DPR (Decree of the President of the Republic) 394/99, which allows and guarantees the insertion of foreign children at any time of the year, according to their age, or they are placed a year ahead or behind according to the criteria defined by the faculty (teachers’ council), and which defines some aspects of the initial phases of insertion for newly-arrived students (8-10 hours per week of language laboratory, individualized curricula and adaptation of the school program, assessment shared by all teachers that takes into account the starting level and progress made). Many other schools, however, do not follow these indications. Sometimes even in the same school it may happen that one teacher adopts these modes of support for educational success, while other colleagues are less attentive.

In addition to specific measures, a more radical change within school organization and teaching (open classes, cooperative learning and active methodologies ...) would be desirable for all students.

The recognition of the mother tongue as a second language in some areas (Province of Trento) is provided for, but in general there are no specific programs to support the maintenance of the mother tongue due to a lack of resources and the huge variety of language groups in Italy. Many teachers at all grade levels are not aware of the important cognitive and affective implications concerning the maintenance of the mother tongue and it still happens that parents are asked not to speak their native language at home.

In Italy there aren’t migrant communities organized and recognized at the institutional level (apart from the Muslim community and the Jewish people) and hence except in sporadic cases, in areas where there is a high concentration of a cultural group (e.g. Chinatown in Milan), schools do not interact with migrant communities. In the relationship with the families, where possible schools make use of linguistic-cultural mediators only once in a while and frequently the children themselves become the linguistic mediators between school and home.
3.4 GOVERNANCE AND MAINSTREAMING

The Italian school system supporting the educational success of students with migrant backgrounds has many inefficiencies, but over the years much has been done to introduce intercultural and targeted measures into the school, and many positive experiences should be valued and shared.

The major inefficiencies relate to the absence of a training plan and the absence of national legislation that governs schools across the country, limiting the autonomy of schools.

Some local authorities can play a role in effective governance, particularly when enhanced and working in close collaboration with intercultural centers and / or associations / cooperatives in the area.

A strong point is the National Survey on pupils with non-Italian citizenship, carried out annually since 1996 and each year gives a detailed picture of the presence of foreign students in schools. It is a very useful investigation for those who must make decisions, because it clearly shows the specificity of the Italian situation. Over time other aspects have been added: over the past 5 years, those born in Italy were distinguished from recent immigrants (it emerged that there was an increase in those born in Italy, and drops in the flow of arrivals). In recent years the survey has made focused on pupils with non-Italian citizenship who are also disabled and Roma pupils, adding a chapter on other European countries (on the scenarios in other countries, how foreign students are defined, the numbers…).

4. PERCEPTIONS ON POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT MEETING THE GOALS OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY AND THE ET 2020 TARGETS

4.1 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

In Italy, 97% of children aged 3-6 attend preschool but the rate among children without Italian citizenship falls to 75%.

There are no policies that encourage foreign families to put children in preschool or initiatives that encourage foreign families to realize the importance of preschool.

4.2 POLICY MEASURES FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION GOALS

Policies are not implemented except locally and in certain networks of schools, where there is sensitivity on the part of local administrators, teachers / leaders.

The increase of students with migrant backgrounds in High School is recent, and there are no political or national guidelines. The present focus is more on diagnosis and getting a picture, in order to understand how to really affect the main critical points (regarding specific training, drop-out, delay).

In some local projects are active bridge between different grades of schools and between schools and companies and / or cooperatives in the area.
According to Law 53/2003, educational success is supported by facilitating the transition between different schools and the recognition of credits:

- the possibility to move from one type of school to another, thanks to dedicated teaching initiatives (called “bridges”) aimed at the acquisition of appropriate preparation for success in the new school chosen;
- recognition of successful attendance of any segment of the secondary school cycle through the acquisition of certified credits. They count for passage between different courses of study and also upon resuming study after a period of interruption;
- recognition- thanks to specific certification of competence given by school institutions- of practical exercises, training experiences and internships in Italy or in other countries including periods spent in other cultural, social, productive, professional and service realities.

Peer education, where older students act as tutors for younger ones, within schools, in projects and in initiatives supported by external agencies (Intercultural centers; Youth centers; Associations and cooperatives, Church social centers), are becoming more common.

### 4.3 POLICY MEASURES FOR GOALS FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

In Italy there are no specific policies for those between 20 and 30 years of foreign origin, regarding vocational or university training. After compulsory education (i.e. the age of 16) students who so choose can go to High School\(^{103}\). For those who are over 18-20 years old and are out of high school, the outlook is the same as for native Italians.

Regarding the learning of the Italian language, in Italy there are three major areas that offer Italian L2 for immigrants, even this age range:

1. **CentriTeritorialiPermanenti per l’EducazionedegliAdulti** (Permanent Territorial Centers for Adult Education), where it is also possible to attend evening courses to obtain Middle School or High School diplomas;
2. Associations or other socially-oriented private organizations (volunteering);
3. Private entities, who offer Italian language courses and vocational training.

The CTP were created to allow the Italians who were unable to follow normal schooling to finish primary school (no longer offered) or to obtain a secondary school diploma. This need is not currently so pressing for Italians, but it is very important for foreign citizens who seek courses in Italian language or who want to obtain a Middle School or High School diploma.

The recent immigration policy (Ministerial Decree dated 4 June 2010 and the integration agreement which entered into force in March 2012), following in Germany and France, states that the knowledge of the Italian language (at least level A2, according to the common European Framework of Languages) is essential so that foreign citizens can remain in Italian territory. The Territorial Centers have been identified by the Ministry of Interior with a specific inter-ministerial framework agreement (between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Education) as entities that can certify the language proficiency of foreigners. In Italy, until 2010 this role was granted to only four certification bodies. This is a big commitment (in Lombardy alone, every month 1500/2000 certifications are passed), and this procedure has a double meaning: pedagogical-didactic and educational, which is the area of school interventions, and 'to check', characteristic of

\(^{103}\) Law 296/2006 raised obligatory schooling to 16 years (from 14) and Law 53/2003 the right and duty for education and training up to 18 years for obtaining at least vocational qualification.
other sectors (and ministries), creating a complexity for schools that requires attention and great care in the managing this responsibility.

4.4 POLICY MEASURES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING GOALS

There are no specific policies regarding adults from migrant backgrounds.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The interviewees suggested some major changes for the future:

- Political leadership aware of the importance of this issue and therefore an integration of the legal framework at the national level and an update of the existing one;
- The development of integrated policies (immigration policies, school, work, home, ....) both nationally and locally,
- The granting of citizenship to children born in Italy,
- Ongoing investment due to the declaration of principles translated into concrete actions and practices in schools. Because in Italy it is declared to have an Intercultural school and have targeted measures to immigrant pupils in order to guarantee a true ‘right to study’, but there are not concrete financial investments and so teachers are not trained, there are no linguistic mediators, and so on;
- A national plan for training teachers and leaders from ECECs to High School for each levels, with continuities and differences between the levels, and that address teaching and educational questions arised by the presence of pupils with migrant backgrounds;
- Support for successful local experiences in order to give them continuity and diffusion;
- A specific investment in high-density migration areas (funds, research-action operations...);
- A specific investment dedicated to High Schools, which in recent years have seen a substantial increase in students with migrant backgrounds (both newcomers and second generation), as this order of school is particularly unprepared;
- Investigation and enhancement of peer-education.
- Making specific investments in educational services in school and also out-of school services for children, which are a strategic place for integration and for the entire school-going process;
- Implementation of a campaign to inform parents about the importance of preschool, aimed particularly at mothers, telling what happens in the linguistic development of children between 3 and 6 years and the importance of preschool for their children's present and future.
- Removal of all obstacles to access to preschool, making private or municipal schools accessible which currently are not for various reasons. Although there shouldn’t be any obstacles, but for example in small centers it can happen that there are just two preschools
and one is a private catholic one, and immigrant families, for religion reasons, don’t choose to attend that school, even if the public one is full and they have to renounce to preschool.

- Provision of school-related resources (buses, cafeteria).
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