



SIRIUS - Policy Network on Migrant Education

MULTI-COUNTRY PARTNERSHIP TO ENHANCE THE EDUCATION OF REFUGEE AND ASYLUM-SEEKING YOUTH IN EUROPE - PERAE

Comparative Report

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Koehler, C.; Kakos, M.; Sharma-Brymer, V.; Schneider, J.; Tudjman, T.;
Van den Heerik, A.; Ravn, S.; Lippens, M.; Nouwen, W.; Belloni, M. Clycq, N.;
Timmerman, C.; Denkelaar, M.; Palaiologou, N.; Toumpoulidis, G.

European Forum for Migration Studies (EFMS)
Institute at the University of Bamberg
Katharinenstraße 1, 96052 Bamberg, Germany
tel +49-951-932020-0, fax +49-951-932020-20
efms@uni-bamberg.de, <http://www.efms.de>

Directors
Prof. Dr. Friedrich Heckmann / Prof. Dr. Daniel Goeler

Project Manager
Claudia Koehler
claudia.koehler@uni-bamberg.de

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Introduction

THE MULTI-COUNTRY PARTNERSHIP TO ENHANCE THE EDUCATION OF REFUGEE AND ASYLUM-SEEKING YOUTH IN EUROPE

The ‘Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe - PERAE’ was initiated by the SIRIUS Network – Policy Network on Migrant Education in 2016 with the support of the Mercator Foundation. The initiative builds up on the SIRIUS ‘Agenda on Migrant Education’ (SIRIUS, 2014) and the Statement on Urgent Response for the Education of Refugees (SIRIUS, 2015) that “... calls on the EU and its Member States to respond to the specific education needs of refugee children and students in the EU and abroad”. The partnership between seven countries (Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria, Germany (Bavaria, Hamburg), Greece, the Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom (England)) addresses inadequate access to quality education for asylum-seeking and refugee youth¹ throughout the European Union (EU) with a focus on secondary education.

The recent drastic rise in asylum applicants has placed increased pressure on EU Member States to develop strategies for effectively integrating new arrivals into society. Notwithstanding efforts in recent years, third-country nationals continue to be placed at a disadvantage regarding employment, education and social inclusion compared to EU citizens (OECD/European Union, 2015).

Research has shown that education is one of the most important paths to the structural integration of young asylum seekers and refugees; they have particular social and emotional needs that quality education can help them overcome (Fazel, 2012). Equally, education has a key function from the perspective of building peace and stability in the countries of origin of refugees. Considering that some refugees will eventually return to their countries of origin, the education and skills they acquire in EU countries are tools they can apply for transformation processes in the concerned countries.

EU Member States have been facing challenges in providing decent opportunities in education for newly arrived refugees and integrating them into mainstream education. These challenges have intensified since 2015 with the arrival of larger numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. At the same time, there is insufficient understanding of the challenges that refugee youth face. Knowledge on potential solutions and good practices had inadequately been shared on a national and transnational level.

Before this background, the ‘Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe’ aims to contribute to the improvement of the access to quality education for refugee children and youth through the adaptation of policies in the European countries to their needs. Through an interactive process with stakeholders and policy makers, the ini-

¹ The report does not differentiate between different forms of protection or different statuses. It rather includes all young people in the analysis who have entered Europe in the search for protection as a refugee or asylum seeker, regardless of the status they hold at the time of the data collection.

tiative will ensure that the developed recommendations will be owned and implemented by them. It is expected that this will contribute to better educational opportunities for refugee children and youth in a long term perspective.

The initiative is implemented in two stages:

- 1) In a first stage, funded by the Mercator Foundation, empirical assessments were done in the seven participating countries. These included desk research and interviews and focus groups with refugee students, teachers, principals, social workers, and policy makers involved in refugee education issues. The findings were documented in national reports identifying challenges, good practices and recommendations in each of the participating countries. It is expected that these reports will serve national stakeholders and policy makers as a basis for their work and the project partners for the counselling of national policy makers and stakeholder. The national reports provide the basis for this comparative report. The report is expected to facilitate the communication between the European countries and on the level of the EU about issues of migrant education.
- 2) On the basis of the empirical findings, an exchange of good practice and experience through transnational workshops on an international level – in Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Hamburg, Germany; and Stockholm, Sweden - has been initiated. This stage is being implemented through the support of the European Commission, Erasmus+ as the project 'Exchange of knowledge and good practice to enhance the education of refugee and asylum seeking youth – RefuEdu'. It is expected that this stage contributes to improved cooperation between practitioners, scientists and policy makers, and among the European countries in the area of refugee education.

The partners of the 'Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe - PERAE' are:

- Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies (CeMIS), University of Antwerp, Belgium
- european forum for migration studies (efms), Germany – coordinator of stage one
- Fryshuset, Sweden – coordinator of stage two
- Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom
- Multi Kulti Collective, Bulgaria
- Risbo, the Netherlands
- University of Western Macedonia, Greece
- Verikom, Germany

This report constitutes a comparative analysis of the national reports compiled in stage one of the 'Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in

Europe'. Hence, a particular focus is placed on approaches of policies and initiatives for ensuring access to education and opportunities to succeed in education for refugees and asylum seekers in school age (with a focus on secondary education) in Belgium (Flanders), Germany (Bavaria and Hamburg), Greece, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (England). While using the national reports of the 'Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe' as the main resource, the comparative analysis also draws on other existing studies in order to complement the available information. On the basis of desk research, Finland and Italy were further included in the comparison due to their relevance for the topic of concern in regard to the implementation of good practices (Finland) and the hosting of large numbers of young refugees and asylum seekers (Italy).

- The report starts off with an overview of policies and legal frameworks for refugee education on the international level, the EU level and the level of EU Member States.
- The second section, following the logic that was applied in the design of the empirical stage of this initiative, analyses the three stages of education for refugees that are understood to constitute the path of the integration into mainstream education: education at first arrival (stage one), reception education (stage two), and mainstream education (stage three).
- The next section takes account of three factors that, apart from school arrangements, are considered as particularly relevant for enabling access to education and opportunities to succeed for refugees and asylum seekers: quality of teaching, funding, and multi-stakeholder cooperation.
- Successful transitions into further education and training and/or labour market entry after secondary education are among the key goals of school education. This is why the fourth section of this report analyses the opportunities for vocational and higher education for refugees and asylum seekers.
- Sections two, three and four close with an overview of the identified good practices in the respective fields.
- The sixth section provides an overview of the identified obstacles and challenges for ensuring access to education and opportunities to succeed in education for young refugees and asylum seekers in the EU.
- The final section formulates recommendations for policy makers and stakeholders.

1 Policy and legal frameworks for refugee education in receiving countries

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Education is a human right and an instrument for realising other human rights. The right to education for all, including refugees and asylum seekers, is documented in several international agreements, such as:

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948, states that ‘everyone has the right to education’. The ‘development of the human personality’ and the ‘strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’ shall be core elements of education (United Nations, 2015a, p. 54). Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966, equally recognises the right of education with the same understanding as Art. 26 of the UDHR and makes provisions for free and compulsory primary education for all and the general availability and accessibility of secondary education to all (OHCHR, 2016b). The Refugee Convention of 1951, Article 22 makes provisions for the access of refugees to elementary, secondary, higher and other education, and for the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, financial support for education and the quality of teaching (OHCHR, 2016a).

The application of the above rights to children is further emphasised by Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, with particular emphasis on regular school attendance, the reduction of dropout rates, and ‘access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods’ (OHCHR, 2016c).

The UNHCR Education Strategy 2012-2016 further calls for receiving countries to promote the inclusion of refugee and stateless children in national education systems or to develop responsive, quality education opportunities where this is not possible (UNHCR, 2012). In addition, Goal 4 of the United Nation’s (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets education and instructs states to ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ (United Nations, 2015b).

EU DIRECTIVES AND FRAMEWORKS

At the EU level, a number of policies are in place to ensure the education of refugees and asylum seeking children and youth, which include the following:

Article 14 (1) of the Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (replacing Directive 2003/9/CE) provides that children of asylum seekers and minor asylum seekers should be granted access to the education system ‘under similar conditions as nationals of the host Member State’, while Article 27 of the Council Directive 2011/95/EU provides that minors granted refugee or subsidiary protection status should be granted access to education ‘under the same conditions as nationals’. It also provides that adults granted international protection should be allowed access to the general education system, further training or retraining, under the same conditions as legally resident third-country nationals. Article 14 (2), Directive 2013/33/EU further

requires that children entering a Member State should be included in education within three months and that ‘preparatory classes, including language classes, shall be provided to minors where it is necessary to facilitate their access to and participation in the education system’. The proposal adopted in 2016 to revise the Reception Conditions Directive maintains these guarantees, and is further strengthened, as the rules under Qualification Regulation will be directly applicable.

The European Agenda for Migration, with its relocation and resettlement framework, emphasizes *inter alia* the necessity of integrating into EU societies those refugees and asylum seekers who are eligible for protection (European Commission, 2015).

In extension of the Agenda for Migration, the European Commission adopted the Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals in 2016. The Action Plan provides a framework for Member States’ efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies and the Commission’s support for these efforts; a special focus is placed on responses to the challenges of refugee integration. In education, Member States are encouraged, *inter alia*, to provide language learning and prevent educational segregation, ensure that teachers have the skills to manage diversity, to promote the recruitment of teachers with a migrant background, to promote the participation of migrants’ children in early childhood education and care, to enable access to vocational training, and to assess, validate and recognise skills and qualifications of third country nationals (European Commission, 2016). Due to the overlap between refugee and migrant education, researchers, policy makers, and practitioners often draw from their knowledge in the latter area.

Furthermore, the recently adopted Commission Communication on the protection of children in migration confirms the Commission’s commitment to prioritise safe access to formal and non-formal education, reducing the length of time that the education of minor asylum seekers is disrupted. It also underlines that early and effective access to inclusive, formal education, including early childhood education and care, is one of the most important and powerful tools for the integration of children, fostering language skills, social cohesion and mutual understanding and hence is crucial for ensuring durable solutions (COM 211 final, 2017).

NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

While some countries in Europe guarantee access to the same educational opportunities as nationals to migrants including refugee and asylum-seeking children (e.g. Spain, UK, Norway, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Malta), other countries grant them differentiated access, with their legal status used as the main argument and criteria for differentiation (e.g. Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Germany, Sweden) (Centre for the Study of Democracy, 2012, p. 57-58).

The right to access compulsory education is usually guaranteed by law in EU countries (Crul, 2017, p. 5). However, the European regulation that requires that children entering a Member State should be included in education within three months (article 14 (2) Directive 2013/33/EU) is not fully put in practice in some EU countries due to prolonged procedures (multiple relocation, time lag in finding a school place, etc.). It may take up to six months for children to enter a stable school

setting (Eurocities, 2017) and in some cases even longer than that. Meanwhile, some countries' laws mandate a shorter waiting period. In Sweden, for instance, refugees must start attending school within one month of their arrival (Rydin et al. 2012, p. 193) and as a general rule, as soon as appropriate to the child's personal circumstances. Similarly, in Bulgaria, procedures must be completed within 24 working days of the asylum application (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 10).

In some countries, for example the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium, education is compulsory for all school age children regardless of their status, whereas in other countries, for example Sweden and Germany, for some groups of refugee children (in Sweden refugee children whose asylum procedures are still ongoing or who do not yet have a residence permit, in some German Länder children in reception centres, children from 'safe countries of origin', and unaccompanied children in preliminary care²) education is not compulsory³ (Rydin et al. 2012, p. 191; Bourgonje 2010, p. 47, in: Crul et al., 2016, p. 6, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 7-8, Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, 2017). While in all EU countries, all school-aged children have the right to attend school, in the absence of obligatory school attendance, schools have the right to reject refugee pupils⁴. Although language courses are often offered, and are in some cases obligatory for refugee children who are not obliged to attend school, in the majority of cases the amount of schooling considerably lags behind regular schooling (Crul et al., 2016, p. 6). While regulations on compulsory schooling mainly apply on the national level, it is usually up to the municipalities to provide the infrastructure and spaces needed to comply with compulsory school attendance (Eurocities, 2017, p. 10).

Policies on the education of refugees and asylum seekers in EU countries usually pursue three core goals: 1) acquisition of the national language; 2) integration into mainstream education; and 3) integration into vocational education. Multiple measures are targeted at reaching goal (1) as fast as possible and as a facilitator for reaching goal (2); some measures take account of the fact that continuous language support is necessary for educational achievements after the acquisition of basic language skills and within the process of reaching goal (2). While goal (2) applies to all school-aged refugees, goal (3) applies to older refugees but is also relevant as a long-term goal for those in secondary schools.

In many cases, administrative procedures represent obstacles to smooth processes of integration; for example, when access to education depends on migrants' legal status or reaching a certain stage of the asylum process. In the UK, for example, apart from some basic conditions and rules

² Regulations differ among the German Länder. School attendance is not compulsory for children in first reception centers in most Länder. For children from 'safe countries of origin' and unaccompanied minors, school attendance is compulsory in most Länder.

³ 'Compulsory education' is not synonymous with the 'obligation to attend school'. While 'compulsory education' also extends to home schooling in some countries, the 'obligation to attend school' means the actual school attendance. Since homeschooling is rarely the case for refugee children and youth, both terms are used interchangeably in this report.

⁴ Regulations on the right to schooling and obligatory school attendance differ among the German Länder.

on reception education, there is no coordinated central policy approach and no high relevance for reception education. Greece is currently developing an action plan for the care, education and training of refugees within the public schools⁵, also at the hotspot facilities. Concerning hotspot facilities, these were established for the first time in February 2016 in areas with large amounts of refugees, for instance, in the camp of Diavata, Municipality of Delta and in the camp of Polycastro Kilkis near Idomeni (Workshop, 2016; Palaiologou et al., 2018). Also, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has set up a steering group to develop short-term and long-term measures to deal with the education of the increasing number of refugee students (Workshop, 2016).

Notwithstanding the fact that there is not much recent national legislation with concrete provisions for enabling the continuity of learning for newly arrived refugees, a promising example is the Swedish law on assessment of refugee pupils' knowledge and the concept of introductory classes that came into force in January 2016. Within two months of the arrival of a pupil at school, it is obligatory to map her/his previous schooling as well as level of knowledge and skills in literacy and mathematics. On this basis, the school decides on the grade to place the pupil in and on the support the school will provide, allocates teaching time for subjects, and makes mapping materials available in order to assess the prior knowledge of the pupil. So far, mapping materials are available for biology, physics, chemistry and technics. The maximum period for attendance of an introductory class is two years. Within this time, the pupil should also hold a place in a mainstream class where she/he will attend lessons according to the assessed educational level. After the termination of the introductory class period, additional support is provided for mainstream schooling if needed (Ministry of Education and Research Sweden, 2016).

National education authorities in Italy recently started ad hoc initiatives targeting the education of asylum seeking children and Unaccompanied Minors (UM). A recently approved law enforces some aspects of the right to education for UM in Italy. In particular it makes provisions for UM to be able to obtain a school leaving certificate even if they reach the maximum age for the specific course before completing it (Grigt, 2017, p. 14).

Policies and curricula in Finland stand out with a strong focus on multiculturalism, societal participation and internationality. One cross-curricular goal of education includes 'Cultural identity and knowledge of culture providing students with opportunities to build their cultural identity by means of their native language, analysis of the past, religion, artistic and natural experiences and other aspects that are meaningful to them'. Teacher education is increasingly addressing multiculturalism, social justice and similar issues, aiming at preparing teachers for working with migrant students (Finnish National Board of Education, 2003, p. 23, in: Dervin et al., 2017, p. 5-7). Nevertheless, work is needed to ensure these goals are properly taken up in strategies for their translation and implementation in pedagogical processes and actions (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 11, 16-17).

⁵ This scheme for public education is coordinated by the Greek Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Institute of Education Policy (I.E.P.) for the development of education support material, such as Open Curricula in ICTs, English Language, Science and Maths, Arts. Relevant website (in Greek language): <http://www.iep.edu.gr/el/component/k2/content/5-ekpaidefsi-prosfygon>

2 Three stages of education for young refugees and asylum seekers: from first arrival to mainstream education

A smooth transition process from education upon first arrival until their integration into mainstream education is key to refugees' successful attainment of education in receiving countries. This section analyses practices of school arrangements in EU countries differentiated by the three main stages – yet while not clearly distinguishable in many cases – that can be identified in this process: education at first arrival (stage one), reception education (stage two), and mainstream education (stage three).

STAGE ONE: EDUCATION AT FIRST ARRIVAL

Interviews conducted by the 'Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe' revealed that many young refugees and asylum seekers are highly motivated and ambitious; many of them see education as their main chance of succeeding in the receiving country. This is backed by the findings by Bunar (2017, p. 7) that the ambition of newly arrived migrant students (NAMS) to succeed in school in Sweden is 'one of the largest opportunities for the education system'. He identifies in NAMS a 'great enthusiasm for learning the language and hope for a bright future in Sweden.'

Delayed integration into school settings

During the first months upon arrival, education is often arranged in an improvised manner, in temporary facilities, therefore, the integration into a school setting is often delayed.

In some cases, access to education is limited due to unstable and unfavourable housing arrangements – no space to study hampers the learning of the new language and the adaptation to the new school environment (Crul et al., 2017, p. 5; PERAE). Especially during the course of the large numbers of new arrivals since 2015, refugees have frequently been moved from one location to another. Accommodation in these temporary arrangements is prolonged by lengthy asylum procedures (Eurocities, 2017; PERAE).

In nine EU Member States (Austria, Finland, France, Bulgaria concerning pre-removal detention, Denmark, Hungary, parts of Germany, Greece except for informal activities by NGOs, Sweden) out of 14 covered by a FRA survey, children in immigration detention⁶ had no access to any form of education. Three of the Member States surveyed (the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia) provide education in detention facilities immediately after arrival, even if children stay only for a short time. In the Netherlands this applies to primary education while secondary pupils often have to wait several months until they are able to attend school. Alternative cases are 'family locations' in the Netherlands, where families can move around freely within the municipality. This gives chil-

⁶ In most cases, only people whose requests for asylum or refugee status were rejected or who have no regular status of residence are detained.

dren in some locations the possibility to attend a regular primary school nearby. In Spain, asylum-seeking children are not detained, except for the temporary reception centres in Ceuta and Melilla, Spain (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 2, 6-7). In Italy, UM are by law not detained alongside adults. However, there are significant numbers of UM who are detained in ‘hotspot’ facilities together with adults. According to a two-phase accommodation system introduced in 2015 and amended in 2017, UM should not stay in ‘short-term’ accommodation structures longer than 30 days. However, due to the lack of ‘long-term’ accommodation places, their stay in ‘hotspot’ and other ‘short term’ facilities is often extended over weeks or months. During this time, they have no access to education and training. Furthermore, since significant proportions of UM in Italy aim to reach other EU countries, many of them ‘disappear’ from accommodation facilities to continue their journey. This phenomenon is intensified by the fact that many UM appear to be not aware of their rights of family reunification or relocation to another EU country. This situation exposes UM to considerable risks and prevents them from exercising their right to education (Grigt, 2017, p. 16-18).

Some municipalities in Germany, such as Hamburg, have installed ‘learning groups’ in reception centres (classes of up to 15 children and adolescents, roughly divided into age groups, who receive German language lessons and partly alphabetization in Latin writing). In principle, attendance at the learning groups is obligatory for all young people under age 18, but absenteeism is high. The teachers for the groups are frequently free-lancers or former teachers who have retired; they are coordinated and accompanied by neighbouring schools. These schools also assess the school level of the children to smooth the allocation and transition to the next educational steps, especially once families or UM have been assigned to more permanent accommodation (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

STAGE TWO: RECEPTION EDUCATION

Provisions for smooth entry into mainstream education

In most EU countries there are provisions to smooth refugee children’s entry into mainstream education through special language courses, different types of immersion classes and additional support.

Among the countries surveyed by the Fundamental Rights Agency and by PERAE, different forms of immersion classes to help refugee children follow or join regular classes are in place in Austria, Germany, Finland, France, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands and Poland. In some of these countries (Flanders (Belgium), Denmark, Hungary, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands) refugee pupils attend school in separate classes for one, or in some countries up to two years, until they are ready to join mainstream classes (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8-9; PERAE).

Arrangements for these classes (e.g. in the Netherlands, Flanders (Belgium) and Germany in a nearby school or in some cities a school or special classes on the premises of the asylum seekers centre) and names (e.g. ‘immersion classes’ in the Netherlands, ‘reception classes’ in Flanders

(Belgium) and ‘preparation’ or ‘welcome classes’ in Germany) differ across countries. Common features of the classes include a focus on quick acquisition of language skills and a general orientation in the host society and culture (Crul et al., 2016, p. 7 – 11; PERAE; Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8). Often the range of subjects is broadened stepwise.

In Germany, when entering the education system after primary school, the vast majority of refugee children are allocated to preparation classes at lower secondary schools. Only small numbers of preparation classes exist at medium and higher secondary schools (Crul et al., 2016, p. 7- 11). Since this system has been in place for several years, the drastic increase of new arrivals in 2015 represented less a conceptual challenge than a challenge of magnitude. Schools had no space for additional classes and there has been an immense shortage of qualified teachers. Some secondary schools in Hamburg operate with a longer and more intensive preparatory system aimed at facilitating the transition to the upper secondary track for high-potential students. In these longer courses pupils stay two years in the preparation class, repeat 10th grade at upper secondary school (in order to smoothen the transition and get extra support for adaptation) and then move on to higher secondary education with reasonably good chances for graduation after another two years. The Land Bavaria tries to keep the time spent in preparation classes as short as possible in order to hasten the educational integration of refugee children within the regular system. This has the advantage that pupils are confronted with the full range of subjects from the very beginning. However, lacking German language skills and a lack of appropriate teaching methods represent major obstacles. The pilot project ‘InGym’ has been implemented in selected cities in Bavaria since school year 2015/16 in order to ease access to higher secondary education. Within six months, pupils with a migrant background, including refugees, who have a qualification level that is comparable with the upper secondary school level (Gymnasium) attend a special six-months transition class to prepare them for their integration into mainstream upper secondary schools (Koehler and Schneider, 2018). In order to ease transition from reception classes to regular classes, the Senate of Berlin set up additional ‘bridge courses’ as a step between the two systems, particularly providing language support (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11).

In Italy, no preparation classes are foreseen on the national level, but due to school autonomy, schools are free to organise preparatory courses in order to ease integration into mainstream classes (Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, 2017). Data suggests that early childhood and upper secondary education are the most difficult for refugee children to access in Italy. Most UM attend courses of the Provincial centers for adult education and training (CPIA). The courses allow those 16 years and older to attain a lower secondary school degree and are experienced in assessing skills and teaching migrants and people who are illiterate. But at the same time they are criticized for directing course participants away from mainstream education, not meeting the particular needs of UM in regard to psycho-pedagogical approaches and practical arrangements (e.g. teaching alongside adults), and not providing them with opportunities to integrate into society. This is partly because they were initially designed for adult learners and lack staff and resources to appropriately cater for the needs of UM. Provisions for CPIA to adapt to the changing needs were made in 2015/16 but are yet to be implemented (Grigt, 2017, p. 21-24).

In Greece, during the ‘first semester’ of the recent refugee flows, that is the period from February 2016 until October 2016, education support for refugee children was mainly provided by NGOs within the camps. Since mid of October 2016 this situation started to change through the implementation of an official education policy scheme by the Greek Ministry of Education (Palaiologou, 2018). In this frame, education for refugee children was initially offered exclusively through afternoon classes at public schools, after the morning mainstream school programme. Gradually, morning classes were added, i.e. within the mainstream school programme, aiming at the inclusion of refugee children within the public school system. From January 2018, morning Reinforcing Coaching Classes will be implemented for refugee children from 13-15 years (Palaiologou et al., 2018).

In Flanders (Belgium), schools can request to open reception classes during the entire school year instead of only at its beginning; this enables flexible responses to rising numbers of newcomers. The large majority of schools offering reception classes are mainstream schools. Furthermore, in reception education in Flanders (Belgium), different ability groups are organized in order to enable teaching based on students’ prior education and abilities. Follow-up coaches in secondary education prepare students for the transition to mainstream education, guide and support them and follow-up with them after their transition to mainstream education. Coaching teachers further initiate exchange with mainstream schools and coach the teachers of former reception class students. The Flemish Ministry of Education allocates resources for 0,9 teaching hours per reception pupil which amounted to 175 coaches in school year 2016/17 (Ravn et al., 2018).

Some specific support systems have been set up to accommodate the needs of UM. In Leeds, for instance, a ‘virtual school head’ was appointed whose responsibility it is to make sure that all children in the care of the local authorities are in appropriate education, and additional transition classes were opened for UM (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11).

Usually in the Netherlands and Finland, NAMS attend a preparation class at a specific school before transferring to a mainstream class. These classes last one year in Finland. In the Netherlands the period has been extended up to two years; depending on their needs, refugee children spend between a few months and two years in preparation classes (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 4-5; Tudjman et al., 2016; Ravn et al., 2018).

Sweden has a policy (formally legalised in 2016) of integrating children as quickly as possible into mainstream classes; hence the time they spend in immersion classes is usually rather short, sometimes only a few months. In order to facilitate the process of transition from immersion to mainstream classes, immersion class pupils already hold a place in a mainstream class where they attend some classes according to their competences (Crul et al., 2016, p. 8-11; Ministry of Education and Research Sweden, 2016, p. 1-2).

Information about the education system

Transparent information about the education system enables informed choices.

Most European education systems are characterised by complex structures and regulations and a diversity of trajectories and opportunities. It is necessary to provide newly arrived refugee chil-

dren and their families with transparent information about the receiving education system and educational opportunities in order to enable informed choices.

In Flanders (Belgium), newly arrived families can get information about the education system from the local Integration Centre, from the reception centres and from NGOs working with refugees. Some schools organise 'network days' within reception education in order to enable connections among students, parents, principals, teachers and follow-up coaches. Nevertheless, refugees often feel that they are not well informed about the education and labour market system. At some schools, there is a lack of targeted and individual guidance for NAMS, especially during and after the transition from reception to mainstream education, whereas other schools manage to provide individual guidance and information (Ravn et al. 2016). In Leipzig, Germany, an educational advisory service offers monthly group and individual study sessions for asylum seekers where they learn about the German education system and opportunities with a particular focus on further education. In Malmö, study advice is being offered to around 3,000 NAMS in their own languages (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11). In Hamburg, the School Information Centre (SIZ) provides information about the education system and schools in Hamburg (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

Connectivity of education

Enabling connectivity of education requires functioning systems to assess prior education and knowledge.

Refugee children arrive in Europe with a multiplicity of prior education and schooling. Children of the same age cohort are found to have completely different prior education experiences. At one end of the scale, there are children and young people who had little exposure to school in their countries of origin, whereas on the other end of the scale there are those who attended school without interruption until their departure and in some cases have already attained educational qualifications. Integrating these children and young people into education that builds up on their prior schooling requires the connectivity of the existing systems with the prior education of NAMS, and structures to identify the level and type of their prior education.

For the assessment of prior education, cities have started to develop different methods: Sweden has been implementing the 'START' project where city staff, an interpreter and a mother-tongue teacher meet the entire refugee family to assess the student's knowledge in the core subjects (math, English, native language). The city of Munich has made plans for a central 'assessment and assignment centre' to assess NAMS' knowledge and needs and support them in finding the appropriate type of education (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11). In Hamburg, all minors are presented to the Hamburg Institute for Vocational Education (HIBB) in order to assess their prior education. The teachers of the 'learning groups' in reception centres recommend the children to certain types and levels of schooling. The first step is a consultation at the SIZ, which then assigns the students to the schools according to the regional availability of places. The families can normally not ask for a place in a particular school. The preparation classes later assess the appropriate school level for the transition to mainstream education. In Bamberg and other cities of Bavaria, the welfare organization that is assigned to running the refugee accommodation units assume the role of faci-

tators in identifying a school. They contact the schools that are either the ones responsible for the neighbourhood of the centre – in the case of primary and lower secondary schools – or the most suited ones according to the level of German language and general academic skills. In general, however, the ability of schools in Germany to connect their teaching with prior learning of refugee students and provide individual support to them is quite limited (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

The Finnish model of integrating NAMS into mainstream education provides that within the first year, an individual curriculum is designed for each student tailored to his/her needs and based on their previous school history, age and other factors affecting their school work (e.g. being an UM, coming from a war situation). The individual curriculum is set in cooperation between the teacher, the pupil and the family (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 5, 15). In the Netherlands, some schools apply a similar strategy of assessing the prior education and social and family conditions of each child, together with the parents or caretaker, and design an individual learning schedule. Schools are encouraged to give parents regular updates on the learning progress of the child in order to ensure continuity and avoid class repetition (Tudjman et al., 2018). Similarly, in the UK, an individualized learning plan is designed for each refugee student once they enter school. It remains a challenge, however, for families and students to acquire the necessary information about schools and social services in the UK, in the absence of a coordinated system to provide relevant information to newly arrived refugees (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, 2018).

Accommodation arrangements

Reception education is much dependent on accommodation arrangements.

Asylum seekers and refugees in reception facilities in some parts of Germany, Greece (concerning asylum seekers) and Hungary have no access to formal education; the only education available is provided by volunteers or NGOs (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 7-8). In Germany, refugees are housed in reception centres or apartments in social housing after the first few months of initial reception until their cases have been processed and a residency permit has been issued – which may take years. Because of the provisional and temporary nature of this form of accommodation, it is impossible to establish and maintain fixed groups of children (Koehler and Schneider, 2018). In Germany and Belgium, refugees are frequently moved between different accommodation centres during their asylum procedure. This comes with challenges for the school attendance, for example having to travel long distances to reach the school. In Belgium, the fact that the different regions have different official languages contributes to the hardships refugee students face and slows their integration. In the refugee centres, refugee children often share small rooms with many people, which hampers their ability to focus on studying (Ravn et al., 2018, Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

In some countries, such as Belgium, many asylum centres are located in distant or rural areas where schools are not always easily accessible by public transport. As a result, some refugee children do not attend school. This may be one of the factors (but not the main one) leading to the worrying absenteeism among refugee children. Rural schools are not always able to divide the newcomers in different classes according to their prior schooling level due to low numbers of newcomers (and thus lack of funding) and have little experience with reception education and

refugee students (Ravn et al., 2018). Similarly in Italy and the UK, refugees in distant accommodation centres face the challenge of transportation to a school. There is a shortage of places in schools located near accommodation centres in Italy and schools tend to be hesitant to accept large numbers of refugee pupils (Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, 2017; PERAE).

In Greece, since the beginning of school year 2016/17, refugee students living with their families in accommodation centres or camps have been able to attend classes at Reception School Annexes for Refugee Education. These additional support classes were opened up as part of existing schools in school districts where accommodation centres are located (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 10-11; Palaiologou et al., 2018).

STAGE THREE: MAINSTREAM EDUCATION

Goals for integration into mainstream education

Contradicting goals for integration into mainstream education: rapid integration into regular classes and optimal language support.

Generally, the transition to regular classes in mainstream education is not only the main goal of the preparatory or transition classes, but also seen as the crucial point of ‘integration’ for refugee youth. Yet at the same time, it is also difficult to achieve. Two goals seem to contradict each other: the rapid integration into regular classes and the provision of optimal language support. The attendance of regular education may not offer enough time and space for the provision of sufficient teaching in the national language. This is less a problem in primary schools than in secondary education because pupils are not only older and less able to simply ‘pick up’ the new language, the formal requirements are much more demanding and strict, and the subjects to be learned more complex and extensive. Therefore, some stakeholders, for example in Germany, are drawn between a position that pleads for longer periods of time in preparation classes (i.e. mostly separated from the regular classes) in order to continue putting more emphasis on training in the national language, and the emphasis on an early integration into regular classes and a mixing of the pupils, so that social integration and the application of the newly acquired language skills is facilitated as soon as possible. Others plead for a mixed system that would bring NAMS and their age peers in regular classes together in all subjects in which language is not necessarily as central, such as sports, arts, religion, maths and science (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

In some Member States (Austria, Italy, parts of Germany, Greece since school year 2017/18, Sweden and Poland) refugee students may enrol directly in mainstream classes. At the same time, they benefit from introductory classes and language support (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8, see *Table 1: Reception education in selected EU countries*).

In Italy, challenges appear to be the fact that some schools reject enrolment of refugee children and that they are often assigned to classes that do not correspond to their age. This is partly the result of some schools not being aware of respective guidelines, not being able to assess competences independent from language and not feeling equipped to meet the needs of refugee children, e.g. those who are illiterate. Whereas there is no system of preparatory classes in Italy, refu-

gee pupils are subject to additional linguistic support in small groups and to individualised educational learning plans. However, due to the lack of resources, the full schedule of language support often cannot be provided and teachers often teach extra hours without payment (Grigt, 2017, p. 20, 28-29).

In Bulgaria, Slovakia, Spain and the UK, children are enrolled in regular classes immediately without the option of an immersion stage. Additional support in these countries is limited to NGO-run language classes and tutoring. In the UK, students are allocated to classes based on their age. In England, schools have the autonomy to develop appropriate provisions which can be even the offer of language or preparatory classes. However, the students spend most of their time in school in mainstream classes with additional provision in parallel to mainstream schooling, or all day in school when additional provision is offered after school. The additional support can include but is not limited to NGO-run classes (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8, Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, 2018).

After preparation classes, refugee students in Germany change to a regular class in general education. For those in primary education, this is mostly the same school they have already been attending. For those in lower secondary education this may imply a change of school. Ideally, there are never more than five former preparation class students per mainstream class. Due to the federal system, institutional and curricular requirements and teaching methods for mainstream education are not uniform across Germany but vary between the federal states ('Länder') (Koehler and Schneider, 2018). A similar system is in place in the Netherlands, Belgium (Flanders) and Finland (see above). Large gaps are often found, especially in Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders), between the skills and knowledge NAMS acquire in reception education and the expectations in mainstream education. In the majority of cases, they are in need of extra support in language acquisition and on a socio-emotional level (PERAE). In the aforementioned three countries, second language support is often continued after integrating refugee students in mainstream primary school classes, whereas secondary schools often do not provide extra language classes. Since language instruction is considered as an additional subject, there are no standardized provisions on quality and quantity of teaching (Crul et al., 2016, p. 7 – 11, Eurocities, 2017, p. 10; PERAE). In Sweden, by contrast, a variety of additional support is provided after final placement into mainstream classes. This includes additional language classes and the fact that Swedish is offered as a second language with complete teaching syllabus, instruction and trained teachers at all levels of school; the subject can also be counted as an entrance mark for university (Crul et al., 2016, p. 8-11; Ministry of Education and Research Sweden, 2016, p. 1-2).

Tracking

Early tracking limits refugee pupils' chances to reach higher secondary education.

It seems that inclusion into regular classes in primary schools is widely unproblematic. However, the school systems of most EU countries are characterized by a hierarchy of different streams or tracks, separated by ability level and grade averages from the secondary level on up. As a rule, late and less selective tracking offers more opportunities for higher secondary and academic educa-

tion. Among EU countries, Germany tracks the earliest at age ten, followed by the Netherlands, Greece and Belgium (Flanders), each at age twelve (see *Table 2: Tracking in selected EU countries*). In some countries, e.g. Greece and Germany, there is a certain degree of flexibility to move between tracks. But moving up to a higher track is mostly conditioned by grades while moving down to a lower track is generally possible without conditions. In the scenario of early tracking, refugee children generally have low chances of making it to a higher secondary school after primary school. Those who arrive late during their educational career are disadvantaged because they have missed the entry exams or grade averages for entering an academic secondary path. Much also depends on the previous education and knowledge of the parents.

Students who have the cognitive and intellectual skills to follow the academic track are often advised to enter the vocational track because of their insufficient language skills, or because school advisors may make misjudgements at the end of primary education (PERAE). Entering a lower secondary path effectively means that a student is channelled towards vocational training and has little chance of switching to an academic path. Policies of those countries that particularly target vocational careers for refugees sustain this system; for example, they may present lower secondary schools as the ‘normal path’ to refugees, while at the same time the majority of native students attend higher secondary schools. Hence, disproportionately high numbers of refugee students attend the vocational tracks of secondary schools in the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium (Flanders). This comes not only with limited educational chances, especially regarding opportunities to successfully enrol in higher education, but mostly also with low social appreciation. That said, the apprenticeship systems in the aforementioned three countries are well developed and do indeed offer realistic chances for labour market entry (Crul et al., 2016, p. 15 -17; PERAE). Some attempts have been made in Hamburg and Bavaria to ease refugee students’ access to higher secondary schools through the above described system of prolonged preparatory classes for high-potential students in Hamburg and the pilot project ‘InGym’ in Bavaria. Further facilitating this in Hamburg is by recognizing the most common origin languages of migrant students (Turkish, Russian, Arabic) to meet the obligatory second foreign language requirement, and as a main subject in their final exams. In other German federal states and in some other countries, for example the Netherlands, there is generally not much attention paid to native languages (PERAE).

In Sweden, tracking only takes place at the age of 15 and the general goal is to get as many students as possible, including refugees, into academic education. While this system does offer better chances for a higher education path for refugees, the disadvantage is that those who do not manage to succeed in this path find only limited chances within the vocational sector (Crul et al., 2016, p. 15-17). Late tracking also takes place in Finland, where at the age of 16 students choose between a vocational and an academic track (Dervin et al., 2017). The UK does not apply a system of tracking at all; the different schools that are available at secondary level are open for all ability levels; differentiation instead takes place within each school (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, 2018, see *Table 2: Tracking in selected EU countries*).

Additional support

Additional support is crucial for successful integration into mainstream classes.

In all EU Member States surveyed by the Fundamental Rights Agency, refugee children benefit from the same services as national pupils once they are enrolled in a mainstream school. However, additional support is necessary for refugee children not only for cognitive matters but also in order to respond to their particular situation, e.g. experiences of trauma, loss of relatives and other psychosocial issues. Most countries attempt to meet their respective needs in schools, e.g. through financial, education or material support (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11).

In countries where there is no obligation to assign a support person, for instance in Germany, Flanders (Belgium) and the Netherlands, the type and quality of support varies (Crul et al., 2016, p. 13; PERAE, see *Table 3: Additional support for refugees and asylum seekers in mainstream schools in selected EU countries*). In some cases, a teacher or a school mentor takes up this role, but in most cases the support person is not particularly trained for the needs of refugee students and deals with heavy workload. This often results in a situation where the needs of refugee students cannot appropriately be met and crisis and intervention support cannot be provided (Crul et al., 2016, p. 13). In Italy, schools try to provide as much support to refugee and UM pupils as possible, but there is a lack of trained staff to teach in multicultural classrooms and to respond to psychological needs as well as a lack of linguistic and cultural mediation, also in order to communicate with parents (Grigt, 2017, p. 26-27). The survey by the Fundamental Rights Agency identifies trauma and uncertainty about the future as particular impediments for refugee children's integration in education in Hungary, Greece and Germany. In four of the surveyed countries (France, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Sweden) there is some sort of support for traumatised children. However, this support often does not target refugee children and might therefore be inadequate for their needs (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11-12). In Flanders (Belgium), follow-up coaches are assigned. However, the PERAE study performed in the city of Antwerp showed that they understand their task primarily as being focussed on school-related issues; they rarely reach out to non-school actors (Ravn et al., 2018). In other countries, for example Sweden, schools are obliged to assign a particular support person for students who have attended an international class. The support starts once students enter the mainstream class and can be arranged individually or in groups (Crul et al., 2016, p. 13).

Financial support for school materials and other items is provided to refugee parents in a number of countries, e.g. in the Netherlands, Austria and Slovakia. In Bulgaria, the Ministry of Education and Science, school principals and teachers of refugee students exchange information with NGOs and the UNHCR in order to identify students' specific needs. This may include transport, school materials or legal aids. An online platform is being developed to facilitate this exchange (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11-12). More efforts need to be invested into the efficiency of the cooperation between these stakeholders (PERAE).

Helsinki has started to use the Finnish national support for L1 language instruction to provide additional L1 support for existing school subjects during the school day rather than for L1 language instruction. This helps students integrate into mainstream classes and keep up with regular sub-

jects. Helsinki also provides funds to hire additional teachers and to purchase teaching material for refugees, and provides diverse types of assistance and support for schoolwork (diversified activities, learning in groups, guidance counselling, remedial teaching, special needs education, and student welfare services). The city makes provisions to ensure that parents are aware of these offerings and have the opportunity to meet with the providers (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 6, 11-12).

In Italy, there appears to be a lack of specialised staff to provide psychological support for UM. Some schools in Italy also point to the inadequate training of their administrative staff, who, as the first contact point of newcomers, have a special function for their integration into the new school. Schools lack time and resources to train administrative staff to deal with refugees and with the management of project funds that they have to apply for in order to implement integration activities for refugees (Grigt, 2017, p. 25 - 28).

Creating a feeling of being welcome

Feeling welcome facilitates the integration of newly arrived students into a new school environment.

In order to support refugee students' feeling of being welcome, several schools in the surveyed countries, for example in Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Italy, have set up small welcoming programmes for newcomers. Some schools in Germany give small presents to new students, or ask older pupils to act as guides for the first months at school; ideally, those will be pupils with the same mother tongue, and they receive a certificate at the end of the school year. In the Netherlands, some schools pair NAMS with a student of the mainstream group who will then act as a guide for the newcomer at school (Tudjman et al., 2016, Ravn et al., 2018, Koehler and Schneider, 2018, Crul et al., 2016). Schools in Stockholm and Malmö follow a particular action plan or guidelines for welcoming newcomers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7). A school in Palermo is developing a systematic concept of 'welcome culture' through a 30-hour training programme with the support of linguistic-cultural moderators to a team of ten administrative staff members and teachers. They will acquire linguistic and relational competences and will be tutored by a team of external professionals in order to support teachers' communications with the family and the development of individualised learning plans. The programme will also include workshops with pupils in order to help develop NAMS' linguistic competences and promote cultural exchanges and diversity (Grigt, 2017, p. 31). These strategies and 'rituals' are aimed to facilitate young refugees' initial path into school life.

Age limits

Age is a barrier to attaining a school certificate for refugees who missed out on education for years.

Many countries surveyed by FRA report difficulties with the education of refugees who are above the compulsory school age. This is particularly the case when they have not yet achieved the skills required by secondary schools (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 13). In Sweden and Germany, compulsory education ends at age 16, in Greece and Austria at age 15, and in the Netherlands,

Belgium and the UK at age 18. Regulations and the resulting opportunities for refugees to continue their education after compulsory education vary among countries and among regions.

For example in the Netherlands, if refugee students are over 18 years, their chances of entering a preparation class and attaining a secondary education degree are limited or non-existent (Tudjman et al., 2016). In Germany, refugees aged 16 or 17 are often not offered any schooling, this applies particularly to UM (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 10). While there are vocational integration classes aimed at preparation for vocational training combined with language learning for this target group in Germany, this is not the case for mainstream secondary classes providing general education. For UM in Italy who are qualified to enroll in an upper secondary school, systemic barriers often hinder their access when they reach the age of legal majority, as schools often reject UM who do not have a residence permit (Grigt, 2017, p. 21-24).

There is the argument that limiting education to certain age groups is a means of countries to release themselves of the obligation to provide education for all age groups depending on their needs. Ideological aspects play a role as well and in some cases block the way for open and needs-oriented educational opportunities.

Segregation

Segregation is a common phenomenon with a negative influence on equity in education.

Segregation is a result of different factors, for instance housing patterns and school selection. Natives tend to prefer schools with low shares of immigrants. Hence, their school choices reinforce segregation patterns. Evidence indicates that desegregation contributes to equity and efficiency: segregation inhibits equal opportunities and has negative effects on school performance of native and immigrant students and can have personal and social effects such as xenophobia, social exclusion, radicalization and violence. Measurements of the Duncan index – an index for the segregation of immigrants and natives in specific schools – indicate relatively high levels of segregation (0,52 – 0,71) in Hungary, Latvia, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal and Finland (De Paola and Brunello, 2017, p. 1-2). In Flanders (Belgium), school segregation is a result of early tracking and freedom of school choice (Ravn et al., 2018). School segregation often features in cities, for instance in large cities of the UK (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, 2018). In Italy, refugee students are overly represented in Centro Provinciale di Istruzione per Adulti (CPIA) courses. While they were initially developed for adult learners (native and migrants), they have over time turned into institutions that are normally attended by refugee, especially UM students who are 16 years or older. This limits their peer contacts considerable; concerns of ‘ghettoisation’ have been expressed by several stakeholders (Grigt, 2017, p. 24-25). Housing arrangements for refugees and in some cases their segregation, with the attendant effects on education seem to represent a challenge in many EU countries.

Table 1: Reception education in selected EU countries

Model of reception education	Reception classes exist		No reception classes/ refugees enrol directly in mainstream classes
Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austria • Belgium (Flanders) • Germany • Finland • France • Italy • Sweden • Denmark • Greece • Hungary • The Netherlands • Poland 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulgaria • Slovakia • Spain • UK • Greece (since school year 2017/18)
	Reception classes as separate classes	Option to enrol directly in mainstream classes	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belgium (Flanders) • Denmark • Hungary • Finland • France • Germany • The Netherlands • Greece (in 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austria • Italy • (parts of) Germany • Greece • Sweden • Poland 	

Table 2: Tracking in selected EU countries

Model of tracking	First ability tracking with 10 years	First ability tracking with 12 years	First ability tracking with 15/16 years	No tracking
Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany (differences among the Länder)⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Netherlands Greece Belgium (Flanders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweden Finland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK

Table 3: Additional support for refugees and asylum seekers in mainstream schools in selected EU countries

Model of additional support	No obligation to assign a person for additional support	Obligation to assign a person for additional support
Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany Belgium (Flanders) The Netherlands Greece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweden

⁷ In some Länder, e.g. Berlin, the age of first tracking is 12 years.

GOOD PRACTICES

Based on the PERAE research and other available information, the following approaches appear as good practices of accommodation arrangements for refugee children:

- ‘Family locations’ as alternatives to detention facilities⁸ where families can move around freely within the municipality of the location and children in some locations being able to attend a regular nearby primary school (as in the Netherlands);
- No detention of asylum-seeking children (as in Italy and Spain);
- Where recourse to detention facilities cannot be avoided, provision of education in detention facilities immediately after arrival (as in the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia).

Success factors for school arrangements that facilitate the process from reception to the integration into mainstream schooling appear to be:

- Late or no tracking (as in Finland, Sweden, and the UK);
- Additional language support after entering mainstream education (as in Sweden);
- The option to enrol directly in mainstream classes while benefiting from introductory classes and language support (as in Austria, Italy, parts of Germany, Greece, Sweden, and Poland);
- Coaching teachers facilitating the transition from preparation to mainstream classes (as in Flanders);
- The option to enrol in certified courses and tests for the national language as second language (as in Sweden) and for the native language as a second foreign language (as in some schools in Hamburg, Germany); and
- Facilitation of the entry into higher secondary education through a prolonged and more intensive preparatory system (as in some schools in Hamburg).

The following initiatives appear to be successful for the provision of additional support to refugees:

- Obligatory assignment of a qualified support person in each school (as in Sweden);
- Diverse types of assistance and support for schoolwork (as in Helsinki, Finland);
- Cooperation among multiple stakeholders for the identification and meeting of refugee

⁸ In most cases, only people whose requests for asylum or refugee status were rejected or who have no regular status of residence are detained.

students' needs (as in Bulgaria);

- Programmes for welcoming new students at school (as in the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and Sweden); and
- Particular support mechanisms for UM (as in Leeds, UK).

The following approaches appear to be successful in informing refugees about education opportunities and enabling connections with their prior education:

- Group session or 'network days' to inform refugees about the education system (as in some schools in Belgium (Flanders), in Leipzig, Germany, and in Sweden);
- Parents, teachers, city staff, students and interpreters together assessing students' prior knowledge (as in Sweden); and
- Designing individual curriculum or learning plans for each student (as in Finland, the UK, and in some schools in the Netherlands).

3 The role of the quality of teaching, funding and multi-stakeholder cooperation in the process of the education of young refugees and asylum seekers

Besides school arrangements, multiple factors impact the way that access to education and opportunities to succeed in education can be guaranteed for refugees and asylum seekers in the EU. The quality of teaching, funding and multi-stakeholder cooperation are considered as particular relevant and are here analysed.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teachers should be able to meet the diverse needs of all students and foster tolerance, respect for diversity and civic responsibility. Whereas most European countries already faced challenges in matching teaching methods and quality with the needs of diverse classrooms, the challenges intensified with the arrival of large numbers of refugee students and their particular needs. “Europe’s teachers generally lack the training and support to properly serve immigrant pupils or teach about immigration and diversity” (SIRIUS, 2015). According to the OECD (2014, in: Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p.12) working with multicultural and multilingual students is one of the areas that teachers feel the least prepared for.

The need for intercultural education and improved teacher competences to teach in diverse classrooms has been recognised by EU Member States and responses have increasingly been developed. This is reflected in the growing body of teaching materials and methodological guides as well as the increase of courses on intercultural education and diversity in teacher training. The project NAOS – an Erasmus+ project of the SIRIUS Network – made the collection of good practices and the exchange of experience through peer learning on professional capacity concerning dealing with diversity related to migration its topic with the goal to foster transnational learning (Risbo, 2017).

In this regard, several European countries set policy goals to better prepare teacher students for diversity (Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p. 37). Diversity is conceptualised differently in EU Member States, this refers to the operationalisation of diversity (e.g. linguistic or multicultural aspects, ethnic or national minorities) and the view of diversity. The deficit view sees diversity as a challenge to be dealt with whereas the potential view sees diversity as an asset and educational opportunity (ibid, p. 30; Ahmadi et al., 2017). Policies of the Member States are informed by the different conceptualisations. An analysis by the Public Policy Management Institute (2017, p. 102) found that countries increasingly recognise the benefits of cultural, linguistic, religious and social diversity for schools. Nevertheless, in many countries approaches informed by the deficit view prevail. At the same time, the study found that policies for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) systems in numerous EU countries have adopted a more inclusive approach and that support measures have been implemented in many countries for ITE systems to adjust to the needs of classroom diversity (ibid, p. 104).

The Teacher Training Institute in Hamburg is a good practice example for the training of ‘intercultural mediators’ and ‘cultural actors’ which contributes to diversity competences of schools and was as such analysed in the NAOS project (Schneider, 2017). Similarly, in Malmö, staff was trained for intercultural competences to facilitate their work with pupils and parents (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7-8). The National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO) in Norway conducted the project ‘Education for newly arrived youth’ in 26 municipalities in seven countries. Goals included the increase of competences of school managers and teachers to deal with newly arrived youths (Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p. 75).

Greece has developed education materials in the most common languages of immigrants, has organised in-service training programmes for teachers and has declared intercultural education as a compulsory course for most pedagogical departments of universities (Workshop paper Greece). The Institute of Education Policy (I.E.P.) supervised by the Greek Ministry of Education, has offered training for school teachers at schools that are attended by refugees. A few universities have also been offering free training cycles addressed at all teachers who wish to learn about refugee education as far as teaching methods, pedagogy approaches and practices are concerned. For example, the Xenios Zeus project in collaboration with the University of Western Macedonia, during school year 2016/17, offered 130 hours of free training; in collaboration with the Aristotle University summer courses, with the Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia as coordinator. Also, the Hellenic Open University in the frame of PRESS project’s implementation⁹, offers free training cycles about refugee education issues, since school year 2016/17 (Palaiologou, 2018).

Projects developed by the Ministry of Education in Italy foster teacher training and school-based inclusion initiatives for awareness raising of issues of migration and human rights, and for linguistic and cultural mediation (Grigt, 2017, p. 14-15.)

Belgium (Flanders) and Spain have introduced self-assessment tools for trainers and teachers: An online screening instrument on diversity in teacher education enables ITE providers in Belgium (Flanders) to screen their policies. Another online tool in Spain enables teachers to review their perspectives on diversity and provides practical resources for diversity in schools (Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p. 79). There is need to establish and mainstream these policies and good practices.

Currently, many teachers in several EU countries, for example Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, the UK, Sweden, Finland, Italy and the Netherlands, are still not trained or have no experience with general issues of migration and diversity, to work with refugee students and their particular needs, to teach the national language as a second language, to provide psychosocial guidance, and to enable connections with students’ prior knowledge (Crul et al., 2016 et al., p. 11; PERAE, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11, Grigt, 2017, p. 27-28).

⁹ PRESS Project: “Provision of Refugee Education and Support Scheme” is an initiative of the Hellenic Open University which aims to address the educational and integration needs of refugees currently residing in Greece. For more information please visit the project’s official website: <http://www.press-eap.net/>

In Belgium, frequent changes in class composition due to students being moved between locations contribute to the difficulties. An integrated and personalized approach that enables connections with the different life domains and prior knowledge of newcomers is often missing and special teachers who are trained to deal with the increasing number of unschooled and illiterate students are lacking (Ravn et al., 2018).

Similarly, in the Netherlands, due to refugees being moved around frequently, municipalities are often not prepared for new arrivals and lack appropriate facilities and staff. Emergency reception centres have been opened up in municipalities that had no prior experience in teaching refugees, which compromises the quality of teaching. There are no national laws or guidelines in the Netherlands on how to acquire additional teaching skills for teachers of NAMS (Tudjman et al., 2016). In Bulgaria, there is a lack of teachers who are qualified to teach Bulgarian as a second language (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 16).

In Italy, the UK and most other countries, the insufficient training of teachers is often linked to the difficulties of schools in integrating refugee and UM pupils. There is a lack of teachers who are qualified to teach in multicultural environments, to evaluate pupils' competences independently from language skills, and to teach Italian as a second language. A new law in Italy ('La Buona Scuola') that was introduced in 2015 made provisions for progress in recognising academic qualifications to teach Italian as a second language in teacher recruitment processes. However, none of the 500 teachers who qualified in 2016 as teachers of Italian as a second language had been assigned to a school by the end of 2016 (Grigt, 2017, p. 27). It can be assumed that this is due to funding issues rather than their level of training.

In Germany, for a long time there were no modified sets of teaching methods and tools for classes with non-native German speakers among the students. Recently efforts have been increased to apply methods of teaching German as a second language in all subjects and meet the needs of diverse student populations. Respective courses have been integrated into teacher training. However, teachers rarely use other languages in class than German to ensure that all students understand and can follow. Peer learning and tutoring are not incorporated in any systematic way, so that it is widely up to the students (and their families) to manage their ways and find help. Teachers interviewed for the PERAE case study report that only exceptional students are able to fulfil all requirements for the academic track and access to higher education, but it seemingly does not lead to considerable re-conceptualizations of teaching methods and other structural aspects of dealing with increasingly heterogeneous student populations (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

In Finland, teacher education, including programmes on multicultural, intercultural, social justice or global teacher education, prepares teachers for working with migrant students, and are among the core values of the department of teacher education. At the same time, the lack of a coherent national agreement on the meaning of multicultural education for teachers and students leads to different ideological teaching approaches that may indirectly lead to new forms of social injustice, for example in discourses that create othering (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 6-8, 17). This relates to the finding of the Public Policy Management Institute (2017, p. 103) that clear definitions of specific competences and guidelines for ITE programmes and a combination of theory and practice in ITE

are necessary to effectively prepare student teachers for diversity. Generally, schools in cities are more experienced and more open towards the specific needs of refugees than schools in rural areas.

GOOD PRACTICES

The following factors appear to be successful in how the quality of teaching can contribute to the continuity of learning for refugee students:

- Training of teachers for migration and diversity issues and for the particular needs of refugee students, especially regarding language teaching, responding to psychosocial needs and enabling connections with prior learning (as done in Greece through Xenios Zeus and PRESS projects, also through the Teacher Training Institute in Hamburg, the city of Malmö, by the NAFO project, and by online tools in Belgium (Flanders), Italy, and Spain);
- Establishment of standard requirements for teachers to teach classes of NAMS;
- Adoption of a more inclusive approach in policies for ITE; and
- Implementation of support measures for ITE systems to adjust to the needs of classroom diversity.

FUNDING

In the process of the high numbers of new arrivals since 2015, the education systems in several EU countries reached their performance limits. The need for additional resources was met in some cases. In most countries, governmental support is available for NAMS who are in possession of a residence permit. Usually this includes funding for increased costs, including education, for the first two years after the residence permit was issued (Eurocities, 2017, p. 8).

Many EU countries increased their budgets for education in response to the increased numbers of new arrivals in 2015/16. In many countries, additional funding is provided for opening up classes for NAMS and hiring additional teachers. However, challenges may arise when this funding is directly related to the number of refugee students: in the Netherlands, where there is high fluctuation of refugee students because of them being frequently moved, schools are hesitant to hire additional teachers, open up new classes and purchase extra materials when student numbers are high because they cannot rely on the numbers to remain high. In the event of a sudden decrease of student numbers they would be left with the additional expenses (Tudjman et al., 2016).

In Flanders (Belgium), in some cases the regional governments provide additional funding to larger cities (for example Ghent and Antwerp) that can be allocated according to their needs, for instance integration programmes, additional language courses, and additional classes for NAMS

with extra teaching time. However, this comes with the risk of moving much of the responsibilities for the education of young refugees to these regions while others distance themselves. In Finland, Germany and the Netherlands, federal funds support the municipalities in the provision of extra staff for NAMS. The city of Leipzig, for instance, used these funds to allocate staff to analyse the particular needs and existing offers in the field of education for refugees; The Hague hired additional teachers and social workers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 9; Dervin et al., 2017, p. 3-4). The Ministry of Education in Italy made additional funds available that schools could apply for in order to provide language classes for NAMS and linguistic and psychological support for UM and other activities for the inclusion of NAMS and UM (Grigt, 2017, p. 14).

Finland allocated additional funding for integration training for asylum seekers who have received residence permits, and for apprenticeship and work-based training for those granted international protection (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15-16). Finland also channels a large amount of funds into L1 language teaching. The Finnish National Board of Education funds 86 % of the L1 teaching of every language that is represented by at least four pupils. In Helsinki this reflects in the instruction of 47 different languages. In addition, Helsinki has started to use this L1 support for additional support in school subjects rather than L1 instruction (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 6). In Germany (e.g. Leipzig) and Sweden (e.g. Gothenburg, Stockholm, Malmö) new schools, new classrooms and new classes were set up (Eurocities, 2017, p. 8). In Malmö and Stockholm schools that receive NAMS receive additional resources (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 16). In the UK (e.g. Leeds), extra funding, training and support programmes were provided to meet the newly emerging needs. In Helsinki, funding was used to set up the Helsinki Skills *Centre* (Eurocities, 2017, p. 8) and funds are provided to hire additional teachers or purchase teaching material for refugees (Dervin, 2017, p. 11-12). Overall, however, there is a shortage of funds for a coordinated approach to integrating NAMS.

In some countries the increase in resources was not sufficient, e.g. in Greece and Italy. Budget in Greece only supports the costs of additional human resources for refugee education, material and management in camps through the International Migration Organization (IMO) but are almost non-existent for formal education. The foreseen additional language support can often not fully be provided to refugee pupils in Italy due to the lack of funds. Funds are also lacking for trained teachers and support staff to respond to refugee and UM students' needs. The 'funds for risk areas' are primarily the only structured annual funds for integration activities in schools for UM and refugee pupils in Italy. However, schools deplore that these funds are not sufficient and that they depend on additional external project funds. At the same time, many schools lack the resources to implement additional projects (Grigt, 2017, p. 27-30). In other countries (Slovakia, Denmark and Hungary), there was no increase in funds. All relevant activities in Slovakia are covered by NGOs. Public schools in Hungary must rely only on EU programmes and initiatives. The Danish Union of Teachers is concerned about decreased and insufficient budgets in municipalities (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15-16).

GOOD PRACTICES

Successful funding mechanisms in the analysed countries include:

- Provision of funds for additional classes, teachers and support staff (as in Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK); and
- Provision of funds for L1 language teaching (as in Helsinki, Finland).

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION

In most countries, different stakeholders interact, especially at the local level, but coherent coordination of their activities for effective support and integration of newcomers is largely lacking. The city administration often plays a key role in coordinating the cooperation of stakeholders such as training institutions, governmental agencies and schools. In the absence of their involvement, the cooperation is often compromised (Eurocities, 2017, p. 5).

Some cities have already established structures for cooperation: the city of Ghent set up a taskforce for refugees, including a working group on integration with education being a main part of it, which coordinates the collaboration between different city services, the public service for social welfare, local NGOs and volunteers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 5). The city of Munich established a Masterplan on Education that involves all municipal actors, employment agencies, apprenticeship organizations, labour market actors, and social actors. Other cities – Nuremberg, The Hague, and Antwerp - are in planning stages; they have been conducting coordination meetings with relevant actors. In large cities like Berlin, coordination happens at district level; each district has a coordination unit that coordinates issues of refugees and their schooling (Eurocities, 2017, p. 6).

Even before the arrival of large numbers of refugees, it has been crucial to cooperate with volunteers and NGOs, mainly to fill gaps that could not be serviced by governments and cities immediately. This has been the case particularly for language learning, the provision of general orientation and information in reception centres, and for basic education for asylum seekers who, due to their status, do not have access to the mainstream education system. Cities often coordinate activities of volunteers and NGOs. In some cases, for example Antwerp, Ghent, Gothenburg and Hamburg, cities formally establish the cooperation with volunteers and NGOs and provide material support. Helsinki developed a pilot scheme to purchase integration and education services from NGOs (Eurocities, 2017, p. 6).

In Finland, besides governmental support for municipalities for education, many government-funded NGOs contribute to education for newly arrived migrants (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 3-4). In Bulgaria, cooperation is taking place between the Ministry of Education and Science, school principals, teachers, NGOs and the UNHCR in order to identify and meet the specific needs of refugee children (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 12). This cooperation needs to be developed to reach a higher level of efficiency (PERAE). The UNHCR is also cooperating with the Ministry of Edu-

cation in Italy where they signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop joint activities for the sensitising of all pupils about refugees' journeys and rights. A website ('Vioggi da imparare') provides materials for this purpose for secondary school teachers (Grigt, 2017, p. 14).

In Flanders (Belgium), schools and non-school actors mostly work separately; in many local contexts little is being invested in education and learning outside of school. Pupil guidance centres play a key role in providing guidance, information and advice for parents, teachers and pupils about learning and studying, school career, preventive health care and socio-economic development. While student guidance centres work closely with external services, such as the welfare and health institutions, there seems to be a lack of cooperation with the follow-up coaches at schools (Ravn et al., 2018).

In the UK, a coherent approach and cooperation among NGOs, policy bodies of the government, schools and refugee families remains a challenge. More clarity amongst local authorities could contribute to the effective addressing of integration issues of refugees (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, 2018). Similarly, in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Italy, communication and cooperation between different stakeholders remains a challenge (Tudjman, 2018, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11, Grigt, 2017, p. 19). There is an inclusive legal framework for the education of migrants and the integration UM in Italy and many schools have developed functioning practices of integrating UM. However, a coordinated mechanism at national and local level seems to hardly exist. In particular, the framework is not supported by resources and guidance, and clarity about rights and duties and mechanisms to mainstream good practices are lacking. Teachers and schools seem ambitious in meeting UM's needs but feel that they do not receive the necessary support. This constitutes a structural limit to the effective implementation of the legal framework (Grigt, 2017, p. 19).

Trade Unions in Italy have been particularly active in establishing funds for schools in 'areas at risk'. The education union 'UIL Scuola' has particularly become involved in the promotion of the right to education for migrant children. They collaborate with the 'Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL) and 'ITAL-UIL' in publishing a brochure in several languages to inform parents of NAMS about administrative procedures of school enrolment. On World Refugee Day 2016, three unions in Italy issued a statement on UM, urging national and EU authorities to establish 'humanitarian corridors' and offer protection and integration opportunities to UM (Grigt, 2017, p. 31-32).

Communication and cooperation with local communities, especially with parents and residents, is essential in alleviating fears and prejudice and in creating welcoming structures for newcomers. Cities such as Antwerp and Edinburgh have invested in providing information and reassurance to the public and local residents, for instance through press conferences and official statements, about changes that newly arrived refugees bring to their neighbourhoods. In Nuremberg, parents associations are active in integration efforts, in The Hague, the city works closely with parents, residents, head teachers and school management boards to alleviate fears and provide information, and the city of Berlin is in continuous dialogue with residents to enable exchange of opinions, for example on issues of perceived unequal treatment between locals and newcomers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7-8).

In Greece, the role of Refugee Education Coordinators (RECs) has been particularly important in facilitating an easier access for refugee children to the school system. RECs are permanent teachers who were already working in public schools and were appointed by the Ministry of Education to undertake the coordination of educational activities in Refugee Education Facilities. But most of all, they function as intermediaries, bringing together the refugee population and the Greek education system and creating bridges between the school and society (Palaiologou et al., 2018). The ‘open schools’ programme of the city of Athens with the support of philanthropic organizations aims to bring communities together by opening 25 schools during after school hours for activities such as language courses, cooking classes or music lessons; the programme particularly targets migrants and refugees (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7-8).

GOOD PRACTICES

The following approaches for multi-stakeholder cooperation appear as successful in contributing to the inclusion of refugees into education:

- Cities or districts taking the lead in coordinating the municipal and local actors (as in Ghent, The Hague, and Antwerp, the Netherlands; and in Munich, Nuremberg and Berlin, Germany);
- Cooperation between the municipality, NGOs and volunteers for the provision of information and informal education (as in Antwerp and Ghent, Belgium (Flanders); Gothenburg, Sweden; Helsinki, Finland; and Hamburg, Germany);
- Trade Unions taking a lead in collaborations for the provision of funds for the education of refugees and the promotion of the right to education (as in Italy);
- Creating bridges between refugees, schools and society (as done by Refugee Education Coordinators (RECs) in Greece); and
- Communication and cooperation with communities and parents for alleviating fears and prejudice and creating welcoming structures (as in Antwerp, Belgium (Flanders) and The Hague, the Netherlands; Edinburgh, UK; Nuremberg and Berlin, Germany; and Athens, Greece).

4 Inclusion of refugees into vocational and higher education

The EU 'Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals' encourages Member States to support fast integration into the labour market of newly arrived migrants, e.g. through combined language and on-the-job training, to remove obstacles for effective access to vocational training for refugees, to assess, validate and recognise skills and qualifications of third country nationals as soon as possible, and to encourage entrepreneurship (European Commission, 2016, p. 10-11). The Council of Europe (2017a) further stresses the need for competences in the host country's language for any occupational field and any level of qualification. In this regard, it underlines the challenges of different needs for language training. Whereas general language training and key competences are appropriate for work purposes of low-skilled non-native speakers, targeted and specific training is necessary for highly skilled non-native speakers and those with particular work-related communication needs.

Access to and transition into vocational, higher and adult education is related to the age at which compulsory education ends, the recognition of educational attainments from the countries of origin, language requirements, and the policy goals regarding professional opportunities for refugees, related information and support mechanisms.

In some countries, for example Germany and the Netherlands, policy goals for the professional development of refugees are rather limited to a short term, vocational training oriented perspective. Hence, support mechanisms focus on the transition and immersion phase. A combination of the effects of the early tracking system and the provision of information and support mechanisms that focus on vocational development leads to the majority of refugees entering or aiming to enter the vocational sector after compulsory education in both countries. In contrast, Swedish policies aim to give refugee students the same educational opportunities as to native students, which means to reach higher education (Crul, 2017).

Regulations on age limits for compulsory schooling (between 15 and 18 years depending on the country) affect the opportunities to enter into vocational or higher education when the school certificates required for entering vocational or higher education cannot be obtained because the person is above the age limit to attend the respective school. This is particular relevant for refugees who have often missed out on schooling for several years and have to invest time into language learning before being able to pursue a school certificate in the country of residence. Regulations that prohibit the attainment of a school certificate for those above the age of compulsory schooling hamper their opportunities for professional development and thereby for labour market integration.

In Greece, for instance, children above the age of compulsory education are not subject to compulsory education frameworks. This is a major barrier for their access to education in Greece. When they are not in possession of a lower secondary school completion certificate, they cannot access general or vocational upper secondary schools. Alternatively, they can enter the labour market but barely have the chance for a job without a lower secondary school-leaving certificate.

Public services for Early School Leavers so far do not include refugees (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 13-14).

Sweden provides unlimited access to adult education and university education and there have been different measures to facilitate entry into the vocational sector. In the Netherlands, students who do not have at least a temporary residence permit at the age of 18 are not allowed to continue their education (Crul, 2017). In Flanders (Belgium), students formerly enrolled in reception education above the age of 18 are mostly referred to the public employment service of Flanders which guides them towards employment or further training. However, interviews indicated that these offers generally target adults whereas refugees who are not much older than 18 years need a rather protected environment. There is a high level of early school leavers among newcomers arriving in Belgium at a late age due to a lack of support measures to keep or re-enrol them in education or training after they turn 18 (Ravn et al., 2018).

An attempt has been made by the city of Hamburg to identify which trajectory is best suited for each young refugee after the end of compulsory schooling. International preparation classes (IVK) assess the potential of each adolescent in choosing between an academic and a vocational trajectory. If a potential for higher education, or at least a good middle secondary school diploma, is identified, the person is sent to a special IVK that prepares them for the middle diploma exam and for the transition to higher secondary education (and finally tertiary education) in the mainstream school system. If the potential or the interest of the young person is instead identified in the vocational sector, the aim is to integrate her or him into the apprenticeship-based vocational system (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Article 26 of Council Directive 2011/95/EU provides that employment-related education for adults and vocational training should be offered to beneficiaries of international protection under the same conditions as nationals. According to a survey by FRA, a core barrier for labour market entry of adult refugees is the recognition of diplomas. This is particularly the case for Austria, Greece, Slovakia and Spain (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 14). In this light, and in accordance with the EU 'Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals' (European Commission, 2016), vocational training has a central role for the integration of refugees in Europe.

In Germany, vocational education is generally open for asylum seekers but those from countries that are classified as 'safe countries of origin' are excluded from vocational education in most Länder. In most Länder regulations have been introduced to grant a residence status for all refugees who have secured an apprenticeship position, regardless of their countries of origin. A variety of measures since the beginning of 2016 aim to equip young asylum seekers and refugees within a short time with the skills and competences that enable them to enter vocational training and to connect them with potential employers, for example through internships and in cooperation with key labour market actors as part of the training measures. A model that has become common is 'international work-entry classes' in Hamburg or 'vocational integration classes' in Bavaria. They target refugees who have come to Germany around the age of the end of compulsory education

but have not attained a formal school qualification. Many of these students have not attended school for a long time or have breaks in their educational biography. The classes place an emphasis on preparing for and facilitating access to vocational training or directly to work, combined with German language training and internships. Vocational schools in Bavaria admit people between the ages of 15 and 21 and in some cases up to 25 years. Classes last two to three years; for those in need of more support, the two-year programme can be extended to three years. On completion of the class, students are awarded a general education school-leaving certificate.

Hamburg created a new training and apprenticeship preparation programme (“work preparation in the dual sector for migrants”): the adolescents stay two years in the programme (30 hours of school per week and three internships in a company in the course of two years). The internships comprise three days in school and two days practice per week. The programme provides the possibility of obtaining a secondary school leaving certificate that gives access to a regular apprenticeship position. The teaching is oriented towards practical aspects of professional life and vocational training. Besides German language, the subjects include Math, English, social aspects of life in Germany, sports, and work related activities. In the preparatory classes in vocational schools especially, the class composition can be very mixed. Often youth in need of alphabetization in the Latin alphabet are mixed with those with good Latin writing skills. Even fewer teachers than in general secondary schools have second language teaching qualifications. Due to the strong specialization of mainstream vocational students for their future profession, it is hardly possible to mix them with language learners of preparatory classes in vocational schools. Access to an apprenticeship position is often difficult. Even if a refugee youth does a very good job in the practical tasks of the company, having problems in the vocational school subjects can severely jeopardize the completion of the certificate (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

Actors who provide vocational preparation measures for refugees include vocational schools, adult education schools, employment agencies, and welfare organizations. Because of a variety of measures and the lack of a systematic overview, refugees and those counselling them find it hard to identify the most suitable measures. In some cases, apprenticeship contracts cannot be concluded because of difficulties in obtaining the permission by the responsible authorities, which is a reason why some employers hesitate to offer positions to refugees in the first place. In cooperation with the economic sector, Hamburg has therefore installed a temporary residency permit for those adolescents (and their families), who have found an apprenticeship position. This is independent from their previous legal status and meant to allow them to find such a position, and to create more planning security for the companies that want to offer apprenticeship places to refugee youth (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

In Finland, Helsinki’s city administration founded a ‘Skills Centre’ which combines vocational education, employment and language training services for refugees over 17 years who are in need for additional skills in order to enter vocational training or employment. In Tampere, asylum seekers have access to the city’s vocational training college with a special training department for adult immigrants. In Vienna, a ‘youth college’ provides basic education courses for asylum seekers between 15 and 20 years (Eurocities, 2017, p. 12).

In Sweden, a ‘fast track’ programme initiated by the government aims to help asylum seekers access the labour market through general and professional language training, assessment of skills and education, validation of education, trainee jobs and job matching (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15). Stockholm launched a three-year project, partly financed by the European Social Fund. The project develops a method of combining language teaching with vocational training for students with limited prior formal education. By enabling students to begin their vocational training before completing their Swedish language courses, their time spent in education is reduced (Eurocities, 2017, p. 12).

In Bulgaria, the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is implementing an employment and qualification programme for people with recognised international protection status. The programme includes professional training and language courses. After completion of the course, the participants will be employed in subsidised positions (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15). In Italy it seems common for UM to be enrolled in short training courses in the Regional Vocational Education and Training system. CPIAs in Trapani are in the course of developing professional training workshops as electricians and chefs for migrant pupils completing the lower secondary degree. They aim at encouraging pupils to continue their education on upper secondary level, interact with teachers and students and become familiar with new structures. The training materials will be made available on an online platform and will be used to identify good practice (Grigt, 2017, p. 22, 32).

The city of Vienna is currently engaged in the EU project CORE. The project aims to start implementing measures to prepare asylum seekers for labour market integration as soon as asylum procedures have started. The Hungarian Association for Migrants has begun cooperating with different Hungarian companies in order to encourage them to train refugees (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15).

HIGHER EDUCATION

According to Article 28 (1) (c) of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Member States are to “make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means” (OHCHR, 2016c). The survey by FRA finds that the impossibility or complicated procedures for recognising diplomas from asylum seekers’ countries of origin are key obstacles to their access to tertiary education and employment. Further key barrier for university admission are language requirements, especially in Denmark, Belgium and Greece (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 14). In this regard, the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (2017) project finds that ‘unrealistic language requirements can hamper migrants’ integration.

In the Netherlands and Germany, high language requirements – at least B2 (and German for University Entry (DSH) in Germany) –and the lack of information often represent barriers for access to university (Crul, 2017, Koehler and Schneider, 2018). Some attempts have been made to facilitate access to higher education. In Germany, the foreign qualifications advisory and support service advises people with foreign degrees on the recognition of qualifications. Since 2015, the German Ministry for Education has been implementing a support program to facilitate university access for

refugees. The program includes measures to identify and recognise qualifications and competences, provide language and subject-related support before university entry, and support integration into university. Respective measures have been implemented at universities across Germany (Koehler and Schneider, 2018). Some scholarship programmes have been developed in Berlin and other cities in order to support the higher education of refugees and asylum seekers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13), and some universities in Germany have started to offer free language courses for refugees, organised by students (Crul et al., 2016, p. 19).

Refugee youth who come with higher education access diplomas and certified partially completed higher education courses from their countries of origin can validate them for access to universities in most countries. However, the language barrier can be significant for them as well. In this regard, vocational education can offer an intermediate step by apprenticing in a related practical profession. Many technical university careers have a related practical counterpart among the apprenticeship possibilities. It is quite common in Germany to first complete an apprenticeship before entering higher education. Hence, this intermediate step represents rather an asset than a disadvantage; it especially allows gaining better language skills and knowledge of the labour market (Koehler and Schneider, 2018).

The Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland has started a project in 2016 to strengthen the role of Finnish higher education institutions in integrating refugees. Refugees receive information about Finnish higher education institutions and the recognition of previous education is fostered. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development in France has initiated a programme for Syrian students in France. For Syrian students in Lebanon who wish to study in France, the French Embassy in Lebanon has initiated a support programme (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15). Italy was the first EU country that adopted the 'University for Refugees' initiative proposed by the EU Member of Parliament, Silvia Costa. The initiative aims to create educational corridors for refugee tertiary students and researchers. Scholarships were also provided by the Italian government and national organisations to facilitate access to higher education programmes for students granted international protection (Grigt, 2017, p. 15).

Some universities have opened up their courses to refugees, avoiding strict regulations and pre-conditions. A promising example is the University of Ghent, where anybody with official refugee status can enrol in classes without proof of previous diplomas; a preparatory programme enables the smooth integration into the university system. The programme is managed by a contact point for refugees created in 2016. The Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm allows free entry to some of their courses for refugees and asylum seekers who already have a degree in engineering. Efforts to facilitate university entry for refugees have also been made in Madrid and Amsterdam: in Madrid, agreements between the city and universities aim to assist refugees to continue their university studies. In Amsterdam, bridging classes aim to facilitate the integration of refugees into the university system (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13). In Italy, 15 universities have developed actions to improve refugees' access to higher education in Bari, Naples, Rome, Teramo, Siena, Bologna, Turin, Pavia, Verona and Trieste (Grigt, 2017, p. 15).

Generally, more flexibility in document requirements and the implementation of tests assessing previous higher education skills of refugees who cannot prove these skills through documents (as done in the UK) could facilitate the access of university courses for refugees.

GOOD PRACTICES

Successful approaches for the inclusion of refugees in vocational and higher education include:

- Targeted measures of preparation for vocational training with strong practical and labour market related approaches (as in Germany, Helsinki, Finland, Vienna, Austria and Sweden) and with subsequent subsidised employment (as in Bulgaria);
- Cooperation with companies in order to encourage them to train refugees (as by the Hungarian Association for Migrants);
- Identification of the optimal trajectory for each student by qualified agencies (as in Hamburg, Germany);
- Combining vocational training and language teaching (as in Stockholm, Sweden and Germany);
- Temporary residence permits for refugees who found apprenticeship positions (as in Hamburg, Germany);
- Vocational training or adult education as an intermediate step towards higher education (as in Germany and Sweden);
- Informing refugees about higher education in the receiving country and facilitating prior degree recognition (as in Finland and Italy);
- Free (preparation and language) courses and free entry at university for refugees (as in Amsterdam and Ghent, the Netherlands; Stockholm, Sweden, and Germany); and
- Implementation of a more flexible approach to document requirements, allowing refugees who cannot prove their previous higher education to take tests which will assess their knowledge.

5 Overview of identified obstacles and challenges

It was shown in the previous sections that some Member States, regions, cities and individual schools or non-school actors have found ways to overcome obstacles in ensuring the continuity of learning of newly arrived refugee children in Europe. Functioning approaches were pointed out. However, in order to overcome the remaining barriers, there is need for adjustment in many Member States and in most of the areas covered above. Based on the analysis, the following obstacles and challenges remain in regard to the access to education and the opportunities to succeed in education.

1. Access to education

- The provision that access to the education system shall not be postponed for more than three months from the date on which the application for international protection was lodged and that preparatory classes, including language classes, shall be provided to minors where it is necessary to facilitate their access to and participation in education is not fully put in practice in a number of EU countries due to prolonged administrative procedures and the absence of preparatory classes in some countries (Article 14 (2) of the Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council).
- Legal status is a main obstacle to the access to the education system ‘under similar conditions as nationals of the host Member State’ in many EU countries (Article 14 (1) of Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council). This represents a considerable barrier not only for the access to but also for equity in education of refugee children.
- Limited or no access to education for children (including UM) in detention and reception facilities in some countries inhibits their timely integration into education processes.
- Regulations on maximum age limits for particular school types hinder older or late arriving refugees (including UM) from attendance at these schools. This might also hinder them from attaining a school leaving certificate.
- Accommodating refugees in distant and rural locations limits their school choice and in many cases hinders them from attending school.
- Moving refugees frequently hinders their attendance at local schools and their settling into an educational setting.

2. Opportunities to succeed in education

2.1 Enabling informed choices and connecting with prior education

- In most countries, functioning structures for informing refugees about the school system and available educational opportunities and potential trajectories are not in place. This hinders refugees from making informed choices about their educational pathways and makes them subject to the decisions (and agendas) of others.

- Functioning procedures and structures of assessing refugees' prior education and connecting their education with their prior knowledge and educational attainments (e.g. through individualized learning plans) are not in place in a comprehensive way in many countries.

2.2 Enabling the successful transition from reception to mainstream education

- The absence of a coordinated central policy approach on reception education, bureaucratic procedures, and the reluctance of education systems to adapt to changing needs represent obstacles to smooth processes of integration.
- In most countries, teachers lack the training, competences and experience with general issues of migration and diversity, to work with refugee students and their particular needs, to teach the national language as a second language, to provide psychosocial guidance, and to enable connections with the prior education of students.
- In most countries the shortage of funds is a major barrier for a coordinated approach for integrating new arrivals and for meeting refugees' particular needs.
- Coherent cooperation between multiple stakeholders involved in the education of refugees on different levels (schools, municipalities, communities, NGOs, labour market, social actors etc.) is lacking in most countries; this is a barrier to the effective support and integration of newcomers.
- The tracking system, especially early tracking, in several EU countries continues to place refugee children at a disadvantage and hampers their access to higher secondary trajectories.
- The quantity and quality of additional support at schools, for example for psychosocial needs and support for school work for refugees, is not sufficient in most cases, especially in countries where it is not obligatory to assign a support person to each school.
- Different models of reception classes come with advantages and disadvantages. Often insufficient support in the acquisition of the national language hampers a smooth transition from reception to mainstream education. This is particularly the case for secondary education and particularly for higher secondary tracks.
- Adverse conditions in accommodation centres hamper refugee children's ability to study and focus on school.
- In some countries, refugee children are subject to school segregation. This impacts their educational outcomes negatively, hinders their integration, and results in labelling and stigma.

2.3 Enabling successful trajectories after compulsory education

- Policies for the education of refugees after compulsory education mostly favour vocational pathways. In combination with other barriers, such as language and recognition of prior degrees, this considerably limits refugees' opportunities to enter higher education pathways.
- Strict entry requirements and a lack of information about higher education opportunities hinder refugees from accessing universities in many Member States.

6 Recommendations

The analysis shows that even though there is a multiplicity of challenges for the provision of access and opportunities to succeed in education for young refugees in Europe, approaches of good practices can be found for nearly each of the challenges somewhere in Europe. It appears therefore as crucial to foster the transnational exchange of good practices and policies across Europe in order to enable mutual learning.

This report makes a contribution to this exchange and makes the following recommendations:

- It is necessary to form governmental working groups to study the recommendations and good practices from other European countries and on this basis formulate internal recommendations for systemic improvements.
- In order to enable transparency about the education systems of receiving countries and enable informed choices, a multilingual European platform should be created where refugees and newly arrived families can find information about the different school systems. This platform should also 'translate' the respective education system of the country of origin to that of the host country in order to allow comparisons between the systems. This information is already available through networks like Eurydice but needs to be processed into an easily accessible form. To make the information available for all young refugees, their families and guardians of UMs, different channels, including but not limited to a web platform, should be used. Already settled refugee parents and students could assist in these efforts.
- In order to enable the access to education according to individual needs and the individual educational trajectory, education systems should allow for more flexibility with regard to educational provision according to age. Such provision could be extended beyond the age of compulsory education for newly arrived refugee children and for those who have been out of school for long periods.
- In line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 10 December 1948), refugee students as all students need security about their future in order to succeed in education. Regulations on the right to access education or vocational training should be more flexible in order to allow refugees who are in education or have found places for vocational training to stay in the country independent of their asylum procedures.
- On a whole range of competences, not only pedagogical, teachers as well as school-leaders should be well equipped and trained: using appropriate didactical (multilingual) materials, communication styles, knowledge of social psychology issues/ identity issues, know-how to involve parents and build school-community relationships including coordinate multi-stakeholder partnerships.
- Flexible and immediately available Teacher Training on refugee education should be developed in order to enable teaching that targets refugee pupils' needs and the development of

inclusive school ethos. This could take the form of online modules accredited by European Teacher Training Institutes available to be integrated into Initial Teacher Training courses and as short Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses.

- In order to meet the psychosocial needs of refugees, professional therapists should be fully engaged into school systems.
- The detention of children should be avoided.
- Tests to assess refugee' previous higher education knowledge (in absence of certification) should be implemented and they should be allowed to access university courses.
- An approach to foster the connectivity of learning could be an online educational portfolio on refugee students. This portfolio could be opened at the country of arrival and regularly updated with information about schools attended, curriculum covered, student's achievements, etc. from arrival in Europe until the integration into mainstream education in the new country of residence.
- A large-scale European congress that focuses on the presentation of good practices and on successful education trajectories of young refugees would enable to show the high potentials of refugees and how they can develop into successful individuals when they are provided with good educational opportunities; hence it will motivate policy makers and stakeholders to adopt good practices from other countries.

For informing future policies and practices, the following strategic recommendations are made:

- It has to be ensured that newly arrived pupils receive education within a few days after they enter the country.
- Diversity can function as a rich educational resource in classrooms but we need to be more inclusive in thinking and in acting.
- Multiagency collaboration should take place for the design and coordination of the support to schools with refugee students.
- Early tracking limits pupils' chances to reach higher school levels.
- In the design of reception education and the transition to mainstream education it has to be considered that staying too long in welcome classes hinders a successful integration into mainstream classrooms.

Some questions that remain to be answered include:

- How can education systems and teachers be enabled to make proper connections with prior learning?
- How can inclusive learning approaches be built up on?

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