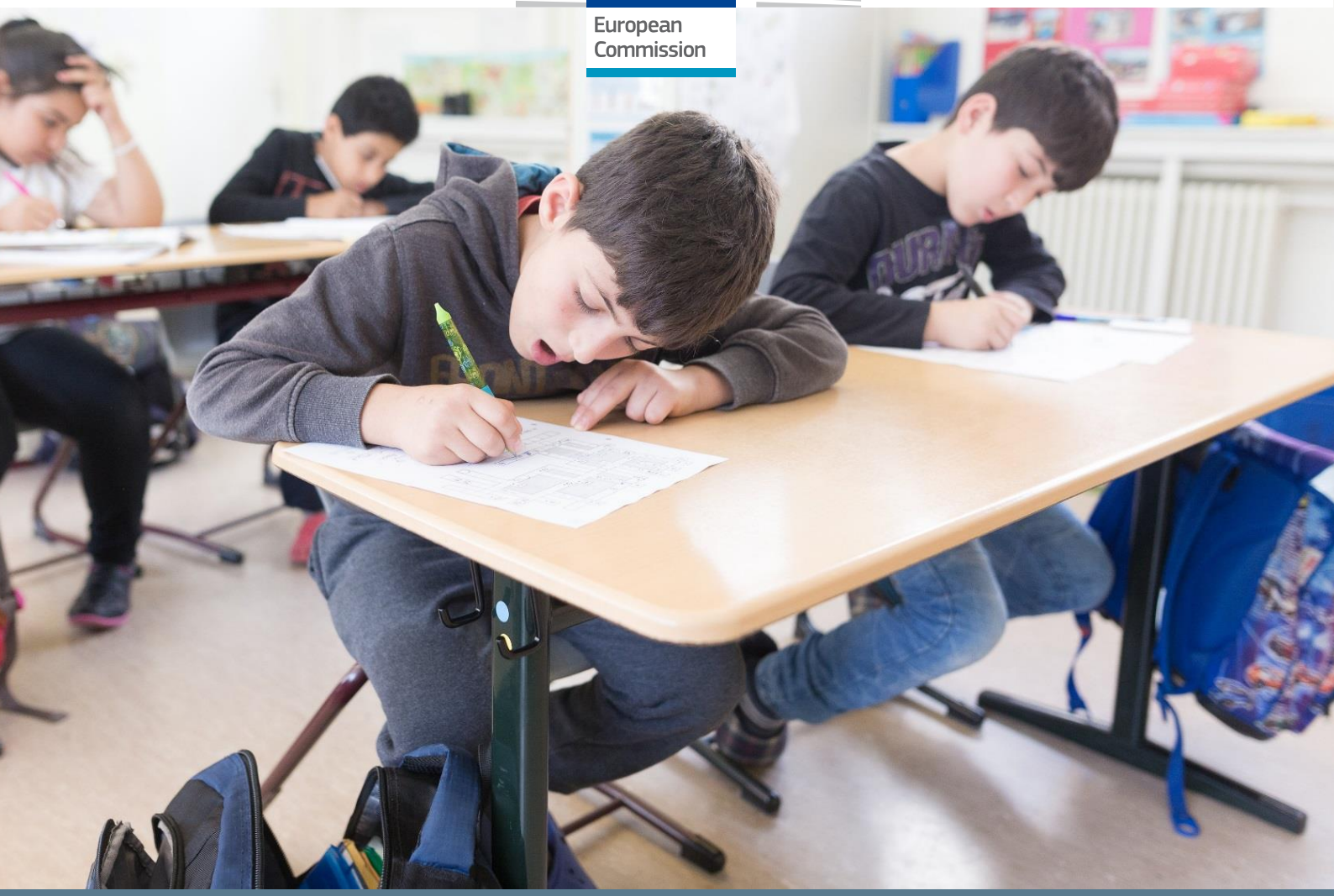
European Commission



Migrants in European schools: learning and maintaining languages

Thematic report from a programme of expert workshops and peer learning activities (2016-17)

Education and Training

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Directorate B – Youth, Education and Erasmus+

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Thematic report from a programme of expert workshops and peer learning activities

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Prepared by François Staring, Laurie Day and Anja Meierkord (Ecorys)

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

2017 EN

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017

PDF ISBN 978-92-79-79240-3 doi: 10.2766/111543 NC-02-18-064-EN-N

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1. Introduction

Supporting newly arrived migrant children to master the language of schooling alongside maintaining and further developing their personal linguistic repertoire is key for their successful reception and integration, as well as successful teaching. Unlike their native peers, newly arrived pupils often have complicated, multi-country trajectories behind them and have accumulated varied levels of proficiency in multiple languages. This linguistic diversity is a rich and often unexploited source of social and cultural capital. At the same time, however, acquiring the language of schooling is not only key for education, but also for the labour market and wider society[1]. This presents a conundrum as to how best to recognise social and linguistic difference as an asset within Europe's schools, while helping migrant children to thrive and become active citizens by learning the language of schooling.

To discuss and analyse the challenges, the European Commission brought together a network of independent experts in the area of multilingualism and representatives of the policy networks ELINET,[2] SIRIUS[3] and KeyCoNet[4] in four thematic workshops. Among the renowned multilingualism experts who submitted input papers for the discussions were Emmanuelle le Pichon,[5] Dina Mehmedbegovic,[6] Ellen-Rose Kambel[7] and Teresa Tinsley.[8]

In addition, Member State officials were invited to two Peer Learning Activities (PLAs) on the topic of 'multilingualism and the integration of migrants'. The first PLA was organised in collaboration with the Swedish Ministry of Education in Stockholm on 6-7 April 2016 and focused on the 'Reception of newly arrived migrants and assessment of previous schooling'.[9] The second PLA looked at 'Language assessment and integration of unaccompanied minors through education'[10] and was jointly organised with the Federal State of Saxony (Germany). It was held over three days from 31 May to 2 June 2016 in Dresden.

[1] See e.g., Beadle et. al. (2015). *Study on foreign language proficiency and employability.* Brussels: European Commission. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/study-foreign-language-proficiency-and-employability-published_fi

[2] European Literacy Policy Network, http://www.eli-net.eu/

[3] SIRIUS, the European Policy Network on the Education of Children and Young People with a Migrant Background, http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/

[4] Key Competence Network on School Education, http://keyconet.eun.org/

[5] Le Pichon, E (2016). 'New patterns of migration and society. New needs for language teaching.' Draft input paper for thematic panel on rethinking literacies and language learning, 11 July 2016. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/thematic-panel-migration-society_en.pdf

[6] Mehmedbegovic, D. (2016). 'What every educator needs to know about cognitive benefits of multilingualism. Moving towards "language hierarchy free" policy and practice'. Draft input paper for second thematic panel on languages and literacy: enhancing communicative competences in school, 26-27 September 2017. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/benefits-bilingualism-dina-medmedbegovic_en.pdf

[7] Kambel, E.-R. (2016). 'The cost of doing nothing: Educating language-minoritized students.' Draft input paper for second thematic panel on languages and literacy: enhancing communicative competences in school, 26-27 September 2017. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/langugae-minoritized-students-e-r-kambel_en.pdf

[8] Tinsley, T. (2017). 'The cost of linguistic exclusion: language skills as a key competence for all.' Draft input paper for fourth thematic panel on languages and literacy: 'rethinking foreign language teaching and learning'. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/linguistic-exclusion-teresa-tinsley_en.pdf

[9] EC (2017). 'Reception of newly arrived migrants, and assessment of previous schooling.' Highlight report from the Peer Learning Activity in Stockholm 5-7 April 2016. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/pla-stockholm-highlight_en.pdf

[10] EC (2017). 'Language assessment and integration of unaccompanied minors through education.' Highlight report from the Peer Learning Activity in Dresden. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/dresden-report_en.pdf

This report aims to provide an overview of considerations and good practices with regards to language education for the inclusion of migrants in schools. It particularly draws on the outcomes from the thematic workshops, the two PLAs and other European Commission activities in this field, including insights from the wider research literature on language learning and the inclusion of migrants in Europe and beyond. The 2017 edition of the Eurydice Key Data on language teaching in Europe[11] is also taken into account, as it contains a chapter on how providing support for migrant children in school can help them rapidly and efficiently acquire competences in the language of schooling. The report aims to inspire stakeholders to '**think differently**' about the crucial role language education plays in the inclusion of migrants in mainstream education, and the benefits of language learning, multilingualism and diversity for all learners.[12]

The report is structured as follows:

- This chapter provides an introduction to the report.
- Chapter two sets out the macro-trends within migration and multilingual learners in European classrooms, and presents the key questions the report seeks to address.
- Chapter three presents the linguistic aspects to be taken into consideration for the inclusion of migrants, from arrival to 'full' integration into mainstream education. It particularly focuses on challenges and solutions during the four stages of the language learning pathway: (1) reception and assessment, (2) placement and admission, (3) acquisition of the language of schooling and (4) maintaining existing languages.
- Chapter four summarises findings and presents recommendations, focusing on cross-cutting issues for the successful integration of migrants within the education system through language education.

[11] EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 132. Available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/0/06/KDL_2017_internet.pdf

[12] See also Council of Europe (2014). *Recommendation (CM/Rec(2014)5) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the importance of competences in the language(s) of schooling for equity and quality and for educational success*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Available at: https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805c6105

2. Context

The increased mobility between EU countries and the rising number of third country migrants and refugees coming to the EU in recent years has contributed to greater (linguistic) diversity in European classrooms. The majority of migrants and refugees in 2015 came from Syria and Iraq, and whilst over half of these new migrants were men (58%), a substantial proportion were women (17%) and children (25%).[13] Over 1.2 million asylum applications were made in 2015, of which about 800,000 were in Austria, Germany, Hungary and Sweden alone.[14]

The recent waves of migration pose significant integration challenges for Member States. However, in his State of the Union speech of 13 September 2017, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker re-emphasised that *"legal migration is a necessity for Europe as an ageing continent"*.[15] Evidence suggests that migrants have a positive fiscal net contribution – if they are integrated in a timely manner.[16]

The Commission supports EU Member States in integrating newly arrived migrants through its Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals. The Action Plan states that education and training should be seen as *"the most powerful tools for integration"*,[17] and that actions should be aimed at removing all barriers for the full participation of pupils with a migrant background. One of the most important barriers for the successful integration of migrants into education and training, as was also highlighted in a joint ET 2020 Working Group seminar on the integration of migrants,[18] is their language skills.

2.1 Increasing diversity in European schools

On 1 January 2016, the EU's population was estimated at 510.3 million. At that point, the share of young people aged 0 to 14 years old made up 15.6% of the EU-28's population.[19] According to data from the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015, more than one in ten 15-year-olds in European schools are first and second-generation migrants – with first-generation migrants representing a share of 4.8% of the PISA student cohort, and second-generation migrants (i.e. students who

[13] See https://www.theguardian.com/world/datablog/2016/may/05/quarter-of-child-refugees-eu-without-parents-unaccompanied

[14] Eurostat (2016). *Asylum in the EU Member States.* Eurostat news release 44/2016. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7203832/3-04032016-AP-EN.pdf/790eba01-381c-4163-bcd2-a54959b99ed6

[15] See http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-3165_en.htm

[16] See e.g., OECD (2013). 'The Fiscal Impact of Immigration in OECD Countries', in *International Migration Outlook 2013* and EC (2016). *Policy Review Research on Migration: Facing Realities and Maximising Opportunities*.

[17] EC (2016). *Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals.* European Commission: Brussels, p. 7. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_action_plan_integration_third-country_nationals_en.pdf

[18] EC (2017). *Joint Working Group seminar on the integration of migrants, Brussels, 28 March 2017. Meeting report*. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/2017-report-migrant-integration_en.pdf

[19] Eurostat statistics explained: Population structure and ageing. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing

were born in the country of assessment with both parents being foreign-born) a share of 6.5%.[20]

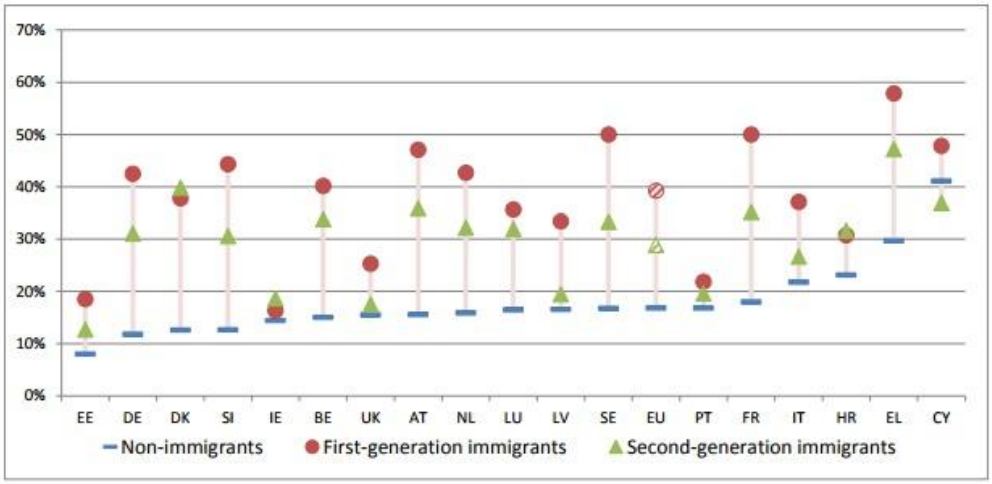
The very same PISA 2015 data reveals that an average of around one in ten (9%) of 15-year old learners speak a different language at home than the language of schooling across EU Member States.[21] There are, however, large differences between Member States; in Poland (0.9%) and Hungary (1.8%), less than two in every one hundred pupils speak a different language at home, while between 10% and 22% of pupils do so in Belgium, Germany, Spain, Cyprus, Austria and Sweden.

In societies where the share of young people is decreasing rapidly – in 2014, the share of 15-year-olds accounted for 15.6% of the total EU population, down from 18.6% in 1994[22] – and diversity is only expected to increase, it has become more important than ever to tap into the potential of migrants to prepare for the skills needs of tomorrow. This can be done by investing in language support measures for newly arrived migrant pupils today, to increase their opportunities to access and succeed in mainstream education.

2.2 Educational achievement and functional literacy of migrant pupils

Looking again at the data from PISA 2015, the skill levels of migrants in reading, mathematics and science lag behind those of non-native students in almost all EU Member States, with a significantly high number of low achievers in science. Second-generation migrants also generally perform better than first-generation migrants (see Figure 1). This indicates that young people's migration and linguistic backgrounds continue to have a strong impact on their educational success.

Figure 1 – Share of low achievers in science by migrant status



Source: OECD (PISA 2015).

[20] EC (2016). *Pisa 2015: EU performance and initial conclusions regarding education policies in Europe.* Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu//education//sites//education//files//pisa-2015-eu-policy-note_en.pdf

[21] EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017). *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union: p. 22. available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/0/06/KDL_2017_internet.pdf

[22] Eurostat (2015). *What it means to be young in the European Union.* Eurostat news release 67/2015. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/6783798/1-16042015-AP-EN.pdf/5d120b02-c8df-4181-9b27-2fe9ca3c9b6b

Addressing this situation is clearly a priority for policy makers across Europe. Research has shown that investing in the early years achieves greater returns than at any other educational stage,[23] while more years of education are associated with higher 'earnings advantage' during adult life.[24] There is therefore a strong case for investing in the education of migrant children in order to achieve greater equity within national education systems, while simultaneously ensuring the more efficient and effective targeting of education budgets.

Functional literacy is the most basic of foundation skills and a prerequisite for cognitive progress across the curriculum.[25] From an educational equity and inclusion perspective, it is therefore crucial for migrant pupils to be supported in the development of their linguistic repertoire – their home language(s), the language of schooling and any other language(s) they might speak – to facilitate their inclusion and success in mainstream education.

To provide targeted language support measures to newly arrived migrant students, Member States should consider three questions in particular:

- How can the language skills of newly arrived migrants be assessed?
- Which teaching approaches, methods and tools are effective to help migrant learners acquire the language of schooling?
- What is the added value in maintaining learners' home languages? What kind of support is needed?

3. The language learning pathway

Effective language support measures for migrants require interventions from their pupils' reception and assessment, through their initial placement and admission, up until their immersion within the educational and social life of the school, and subsequent attainment and progression. Linguistic support measures should ideally also be aimed at maintaining students' existing languages alongside developing their proficiency in the language of their schooling, since this is known to have a positive impact on functional literacy, including educational success as a whole.[26] At the same time, these diverse repertoires bring added value to the host country's classroom, as a means of engaging with migrant learners while challenging all learners to develop their linguistic skills.[27]

This section presents considerations and good practices for designing effective policies, tools and methods aimed at supporting the development of migrants' linguistic repertoires:

- during **reception and assessment**;

[23] Heckman, J. and Masterov, D. V. (2004). *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children*. In: Working Paper 5. Chicago: Invest in Kids Working Group, Committee for Economic Development.
[24] OECD (2015). *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD.
[25] Council of Europe (2015), *The Language Dimension in all Subjects – A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
[26] Cummins, J. (2001). 'Bilingual Children's Mother Tongue: Why is it important for education?' In: *Sprogforum 19* (2), p. 15-20. Available at: http://bibliotek.magnificat.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/CumminsENG.pdf
[27] See Herzog-Punzenberger, B., Le Pichon Vorstman,E. and Siarova, H. (2017). *Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned.* NESET II report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

- during **placement and admission**;
- to help them acquire the **language of schooling**;
- to help them maintain **existing languages**.

3.1 Reception and assessment

Helping newly arrived students to acquire the language of schooling in their host country is crucial for their initial reception and for providing them with access to the school curriculum, giving them the necessary continuity in their education.[28]

Participation in **early childhood education and care (ECEC)** has been associated with better integration of children with migrant backgrounds, since it contributes to the early development of key transversal skills such as critical thinking, social behaviour and overall literacy.[29] Language learning activities at this age can be particularly beneficial, as evidence indicates that children in this 'critical' or 'sensitive' period of their lives are particularly sensitive to auditory input such as music and language, which can have "*long-lasting effects on behaviour and the brain*".[30] Activities are especially effective when they combine support for the development of children's native languages and the language of schooling, and link to promoting the intercultural awareness of parents, other children and teachers.

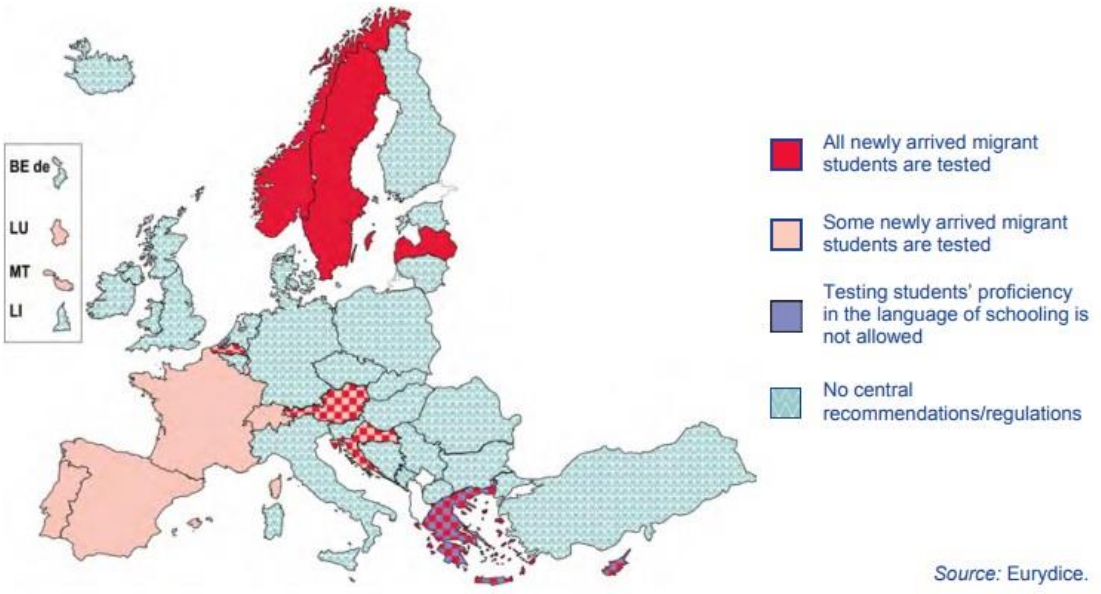
The older the children, the richer and more complex their linguistic repertoire becomes, and the smaller their neural plasticity.[31] Tailoring language support to individual needs therefore becomes increasingly important as age increases. Migrants – and in particular refugee children – *"often have complicated, multi-country trajectories before arriving in Europe, [and] are likely to be confronted with several more transitions after their arrival"*.[32] They represent a heterogeneous group of children. At one end of the scale, there are children and young people who have had little exposure to school in their country of origin, and therefore often have low academic abilities in their home language. At the other end of the scale, there are children who have attended school consistently since departing their country, and who have been exposed to many different teaching methods and languages in which they have acquired mixed abilities.

Pupils' language support needs should therefore be based on a **comprehensive assessment** of their entire linguistic repertoire – including the language of schooling – and prior education. In Sweden, central regulations require schools to conduct a comprehensive assessment of students' language skills – which includes Swedish and any

[28] See Köhler, C. (2017). *Continuity of learning for newly arrived refugee children in Europe.* NESET II Network. Available at: http://nesetweb.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Refugee-children.pdf
[29] EC (2016). *Education and Training Monitor 2016.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 54. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016_en.pdf
[30] White, E.J., Hutka, S.A., Williams, L.J. and Moreno S. (2013). 'Learning, neural plasticity and sensitive periods: implications for language acquisition, music training and transfer across the lifespan'. In: *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience*, p. 7-90. Doi: 10.3389/fnsys.2013.00090
[31] EC (2015). *Language teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 33. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/multilingual-classroom_en.pdf
[32] Emmanuelle Le Pichon (2016). 'New patterns of migration and society. New needs for language teaching.' Draft input paper for thematic panel on rethinking literacies and language learning, 11 July 2016. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/thematic-panel-migration-society_en.pdf

other languages the pupils may speak – and their prior knowledge and skills to determine which year the child should be placed in, and to draw up the most appropriate individual study plan.[33] However, in most European countries, there are no central regulations or recommendations for schools on how the language skills of newly arrived migrant pupils should be assessed. Today it is only the case in one third of European countries (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Testing the language of schooling of newly arrived migrant students in pre-primary, primary and secondary education, 2015-2016



Source: EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017). *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 133.

Language assessment is typically organised using either observation or standardised testing methods. In most cases though, **standardised testing** is the preferred method by practitioners and schools, since it provides them with a familiar and comparable process for assessing pupils' language skills. The disadvantage of this approach, however, is that it often only provides a narrow insight into students' language competence and cognitive abilities and doesn't take into account important external factors such as illness or trauma, which can significantly affect student performance. As a result, students' language difficulties are often mistaken for learning difficulties, which leads to migrant children being disproportionately directed into 'special' or more vocationally-oriented education tracks compared to their native peers.[34]

It is of crucial importance for language assessments to be designed and executed in as accurate and unbiased a way as possible, and offer a complete picture of students' linguistic repertoires. Language assessment through **observation** offers itself as a viable

[33] EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017). *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 132. Available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/0/06/KDL_2017_internet.pdf

[34] EC (2015). *Language teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 36. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/multilingual-classroom_en.pdf

alternative to standardised testing. Although it is less structured and requires a wide range of interdisciplinary, analytical and linguistic skills (therefore making it more challenging for the observers/assessors), it can allow for an in-depth and flexible assessment over time, closely tailored to individual students.



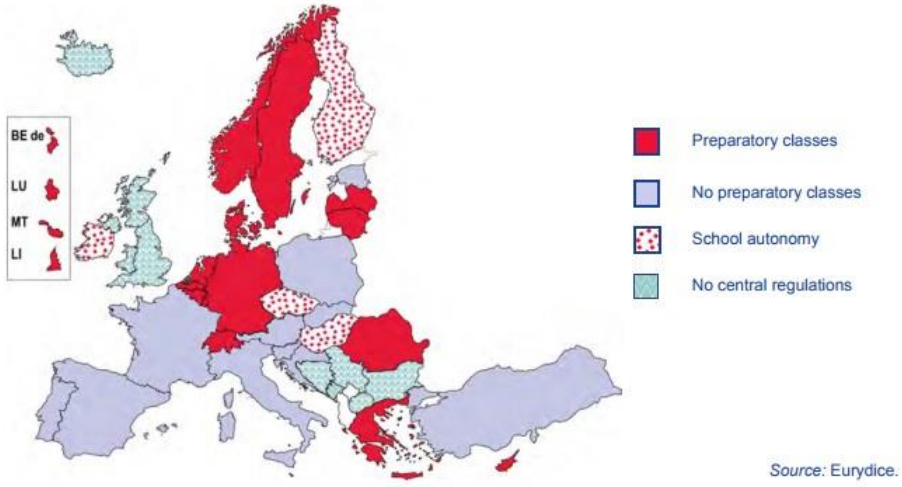
*In **Lower Saxony (Germany),** an observational language assessment tool has been developed for teachers at three levels: primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level. In each version, four to five levels of language proficiency based on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation are specified. The description of each language competence indicates a child's ability to use the language based on an evolutionary model moving from words to sentences and to more complex clauses. The results of the initial and continuous observation of the children's German language proficiency – which is based on constant interaction between all stakeholders involved in the children's education, i.e. not only language teachers, but all subject teachers – are recorded in a form, which provides the basis for any future support measures, and maps the child's development throughout their educational career.*[35]

3.2 Placement and admission

Depending on a range of factors, including different educational policies within European countries and pupils' linguistic skills after initial assessment, decisions have to be made as to whether or not children should be directly integrated into mainstream classroom settings ('immersion'), or receive additional academic and/or linguistic support in special classes instead, prior to entering mainstream education.

[35] For more information, see EC (2016). *Language assessment and integration of unaccompanied minors. Report for Peer Learning Activity in Dresden May 31 – June 2 2016.* Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/peer-learning-dresden_en.pdf

Figure 3 – Preparatory classes for newly arrived students, primary and lower secondary education, 2015-2016



Source: EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017). *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 135.

'Preparatory classes' for intensive language learning are usually limited to 1-2 years, and are offered in almost half of all European countries (see Figure 2). There are also big differences between countries in the way in which these preparatory classes are organised, and how long newly arrived pupils with migrant backgrounds are required to attend them.[36]

Although preparatory classes have proven to be crucial and very effective in supporting the integration of migrants into mainstream education in many cases,[37] there are a number of key considerations that should be taken into account by policy makers when adopting legislative frameworks or recommendations for the organisation of such classes.

Evidence indicates that separate classes should be **short-term** and that a **smooth transition** from reception class into mainstream education should be guaranteed to avoid segregation.[38] Although there are clear academic benefits to providing targeted language support for disadvantaged students, the segregation of pupils into separate classes for a sustained period of time may lead to social exclusion and have the opposite effect. A study in Spain, for instance, shows that mixing students from different

[36] In Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Lichtenstein, the maximum is set at one school year; in Denmark, Cyprus and Norway it is two years; and in Greece it is four years. In Belgium (French Community), the government also specifies the content of the preparatory classes: at least 15 hours per week should be devoted to the language of schooling, alongside other key school subjects such as mathematics and science. Source: EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union: p. 134-135. Available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/0/06/KDL_2017_internet.pdf

[37] The field visits to three primary schools during the PLA in Dresden, for example, revealed that working with small groups of learners in basic and preparatory classes for a number of hours per week allows teachers to pay attention to the needs of each child, which can differ widely according to their origin, degree of literacy and personal circumstances. See EC (2016). *Language assessment and integration of unaccompanied minors. Report for Peer Learning Activity in Dresden May 31 – June 2 2016.* Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/peer-learning-dresden_en.pdf

[38] EC (2015). *Language teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 42. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/multilingual-classroom_en.pdf

backgrounds enhances children's *"cognitive, social and emotional development"* due to the transformation of the classroom into *"a complex, heterogeneous, rich and stimulating environment"*.[39]

> *"In **Denmark**, students from reception classes can gradually participate in the main subjects within regular education to ensure their smooth transition once it is decided that they can study in a regular class; the main part of the teaching happens in inception classes though. Special classes can be organised at grade 8-10 for late arrivals (over the age of 14)"*.[40]

3.3 Acquiring the language of schooling

Whether or not they have been placed in preparatory classes first, it is important that students continue to receive support to develop the language of schooling once they have entered mainstream classroom settings. This is particularly true if migrants are to develop the same level of academic language proficiency in the language of schooling as their native peers, which is crucial for educational success.

> The distinction between **basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)** and **cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)** is a useful one to make in this respect.[41] The distinction was initially proposed to draw attention to the fact that language acquisition in strongly linked to the context in which it is acquired, and that a much shorter period of time is usually required for immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in the language of schooling (BICS) as compared to academic proficiency in that language (CALP), that is: the ability to express complex concepts and ideas in oral and written form. The underlying risk is that students who have been identified as having acquired a high level of BICS – either after initial assessment or after completion of conversational classes – are often mistaken as having also acquired an equal level of CALP. However, CALP is acquired by applying the language in academic contexts, which often is not the primary focus of preparatory classes or other contexts in which BICS in the language of schooling were acquired.

Providing **additional language classes** in the language of schooling is the most common way of helping pupils to acquire CALP. With the exception of Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia and the UK, all EU countries offer additional language classes to newly arrived migrants. Migrants attend these classes either after school or during school hours, instead of following other school subjects. The number of hours per week of the classes also



[39] Aubert, A., Molina, S., Schubert, T., et al. 2017. *Learning and inclusivity via Interactive Groups in early childhood education and care in the Hope School, Spain*. Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 13, June, 90-103. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2017.03.002

[40] EC (2013). *Study on educational support for newly arrived migrant children.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 94. Available at: http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Educational-Support-for-NAMS.pdf

[41] See Cummins, J. (2008). 'BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction'. In: Street, B. V., and Hornberger, N. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education, Volume 2: Literacy*. New York: Springer, p. 71-83.

varies significantly per Member Sate, from 11 integrated 50-minute German language lessons per week in Austria to three additional lessons per week of 45 minutes in Finland.[42]

There is, however, a growing trend in a number of Member States to provide in-class support to migrants to develop the language of schooling alongside subject-specific knowledge using **innovative, inclusive and multilingual pedagogies**. These include the use of ICT, offering language education across the curriculum through language-sensitive teaching and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and whole school approaches involving the wider community in language education.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has been proven to have a positive impact on the development of children's language competences. It is said to provide non-judgemental, student-centred learning experiences, reducing learner anxiety. By exposing pupils to different audio and visual media, it also connects the learners to the cultural context of the foreign language, strongly contributing to their language development.[43]

Language-sensitive teaching is based on the principle that 'all teachers are language teachers' and children's language skills should be developed in all school subjects. This is strongly linked to the teaching principles involved in CLIL, which usually applies to the teaching of foreign languages through non-language school subjects, but can also be transposed to the teaching of the language of schooling.[44] Two principles underpin the CLIL method, the first being that languages are used to learn other subject knowledge and the second that subject matter shapes language learning.[45] Besides developing children's language skills in the target language, CLIL is also said to have a positive influence on cognitional development, motivation and confidence, and to be a highly inclusive method.[46]

> *In **Austria**, the Ministry of Education's Language Competence Centre set up an online platform that contains information and tools to support teachers with the subject-oriented language development of students across the curriculum.[47]*

However, if all teachers have a role to play in the language development of their pupils, they also need **support to develop teaching skills** that will help them deal with diversity.

> *The **EDINA project**, for example, which brings together policy makers, schools and researchers from Finland (Helsinki), Belgium (Ghent) and the Netherlands (Utrecht and Rotterdam), works on the development of a multi-modular training programme for primary and secondary school teachers. The programme helps*

[42] See EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 136-139. Available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/0/06/KDL_2017_internet.pdf
[43] See Scott, D. and Beadle, S. (2014). *Improving the effectiveness of language learning: CLIL and computer assisted language learning.* European Commission: Brussels. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/clil-call_en.pdf
[44] Scott, D. and Beadle, S. (2014). *Improving the effectiveness of language learning: CLIL and computer assisted language learning.* European Commission: Brussels. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/clil-call_en.pdf
[45] See https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/clil-a-lesson-framework
[46] Ibid.
[47] See http://www.oesz.at/sprachsensiblerunterricht/main_02.php

them to develop teaching skills that promote active differentiation in the classroom, and optimise the reception, observation and transition processes for newly arrived migrants.[48]

In addition to mobilising and supporting teachers across all subjects to foster children's language development, the **whole school and wider community** should be involved and made to understand their role in developing the language capabilities of migrants.

*The **Swedish National Centre for Swedish as a Second Language** is based at Stockholm University, financed by the government, and links academia and schools by working with municipalities for the effective integration of migrants. The Centre emphasises the importance of cooperating across the school – between school leaders, all staff and teachers – and the wider community. Parents, family and the wider community all have a role to play in developing their children's language of schooling. Hultsfred, for example, is a small municipality of around 14,000 inhabitants in south-eastern Sweden. It reached out to the Centre seeking support to improve the poor educational outcomes of the high number of asylum seekers in its area. After a deeper analysis conducted by the National Centre, a tailored whole school approach was devised, and in-service training for teachers and schools was organised, with a special focus on "content and language-integrated teaching".*[49]

3.4 Maintaining existing languages

Compared to supporting pupils' proficiency in the language of schooling, mother tongue tuition is less widespread across EU Member States. To date, only six European countries provide classes in the mother tongue of newly arrived migrants or a form of bilingual teaching in the classroom.[50] According to these countries, supporting children's proficiency in their mother tongue is considered an important asset for acquiring the language of schooling. Referring to increased risks of dropout and repetition, Kambel emphasises that *"[n]ot educating children in a language that they understand comes at a significant cost to our societies"*.[51] This is also widely supported by the research literature.[52] Other countries tend to question this, emphasising the importance of learning the language of schooling for successful integration into the education system, and raise questions as to whether mother tongue tuition may be counter-productive and

[48] EDINA (Education of International Newly Arrived migrant pupils at primary and secondary school level), https://edinaplatform.eu/

[49] For more information, see EC (2016). *Reception of newly arrived migrants and assessment of previous schooling. Peer learning activity in Sweden Stockholm, 6-7 April 2016.* Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/peer-learning-stockholm_en.pdf

[50] EC/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), *Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe: 2017 Edition: Eurydice Report*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 136-139. Available at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/0/06/KDL_2017_internet.pdf

[51] Kambel, E.-R. (2016). 'The cost of doing nothing: Educating language-minoritized students.' Draft input paper for second thematic panel on languages and literacy: enhancing communicative competences in school, 26-27 September 2017. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/langugae-minoritized-students-e-r-kambel_en.pdf

[52] See e.g. Eisenachlas, S. A., Schalley, A. C. and Guillemin, D. (2013). 'The importance of literacy in the home language: The view from Australia'. In: *Sage Open*: 1-14. Available at: doi 10.1177/2158244013507270 and British Council (2015). 'Why schools should teach young learners in home language'. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/why-schools-should-teach-young-learners-home-language

lead to 'language loss' – despite evidence proving the contrary.[53] They also raise more practical concerns, related to how schools and teachers should organise mother tongue tuition if migrant pupils have different home languages.

> Regarding the question of whether or not students' home language(s) should be supported in the classroom, the **'submersion or immersion debate'** has long dominated academic circles.[54] 'Submersion' is often described as the 'sink-or-swim' method. Supporters of this approach believe that full exposure to the language of schooling without additional support or space for pupils to use their home language(s) in the classroom is the fastest way to acquire the target language. Structured 'immersion', on the other hand, is being seen more and more as the way to go. In this approach, students are also taught in the language of schooling, but are allowed to use their home language(s) inside the classroom to increase their comprehension, and receive additional support in their home language to develop their repertoire.

However, in many cases migrant children do not have one 'mother tongue' as such. Their multi-country (educational) trajectories prior to arriving in Europe often result in a **plurilinguistic linguistic repertoire**.[55] As a result, they often need to be supported to draw the necessary links between the different levels of proficiency acquired in different languages. This is a challenging task for teachers, which in many cases requires them to adopt innovative and multilingual teaching approaches.

In this context, the concept of **'translanguaging'** (i.e. the use of different languages by teachers and students for communication and learning)[56] seems to be particularly useful. Translanguaging encourages pupils to use their home language(s) in the classroom, and it may have the potential to foster pupils' reflectivity about the interrelation of languages, and to consciously embed the languages in the classroom routine.

> *In **Canada**, teachers in a highly diverse inner city school implemented an identity project with their students. Students developed showcases of their identity using written, visual, spoken, musical, dramatic or multi-modal methods, and using English, French and their home language(s). The project aimed to increase literacy engagement, to affirm the identity of young learners and to connect with learners' lives outside the classroom. Learners' languages were legitimised in the classroom.*[57]

In addition to support from teachers inside the classroom, there is indicative research evidence that **non-formal and informal learning** by trained volunteers outside the school plays a key role in stimulating children's interest in education and working on their linguistic skills, both in their home language(s) and the language of schooling.[58]

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[53] See e.g. Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.* London: Colin Baker.
[54] Fazio, L. and Lyster, R. (1998). 'Immersion and submersion in classrooms: A comparison of instructional practices in language arts'. In: *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 19* (4): 303-317.
[55] Moore, D. (2006). 'Plurilingualism and strategic competence in context'. In: *International Journal of Multilingualism 3* (2): 125-138.
[56] Garcia, O., and Wei, L. (2014), *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
[57] Ntelioglou, B. Y., et al (2014). 'A multilingual and multimodal approach to literacy teaching and learning in urban education: a collaborative inquiry project in inner city elementary school'. In: *Frontiers in Psychology,* 5: 533. Available at: doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00533
[58] See Herzog-Punzenberger, B., Le Pichon Vorstman, E. and Siarova, H. (2017). *Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned.* NESET II report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: doi: 10.2766/71255.

*In Cologne (Germany), a large network of schools set up the **First Language Learning Lessons Programme (FLLP)**. Each year, the schools collaborate with an external organisation to enable migrant pupils to develop skills in their home language(s). The Cologne Museums project, for example, allowed pupils to become 'museum experts' and guide their parents and family through the museum in their home language. The aim was for the children to improve their self-confidence, cultural identity and mother tongue proficiency, and to raise awareness among their parents and family of the importance of fostering their children's language at home.*

As stated above, the number of countries adopting multilingual education approaches and offering tuition to migrants in their home language(s) remains limited across Europe. If we look into the underlying reasons for these comparatively low levels, they are often deeply rooted in ideological and political beliefs on the perceived value of minority languages, the language of schooling and other international languages. Mehmedbegovic calls this the perceived 'hierarchy of languages' or *"the ranking of languages in which a small number of selected languages are considered high status, desirable to learn and 'to have', while a larger number of languages are not seen as an asset and have a very low value status"*.[59] Research suggests that countries' willingness to adopt multilingual education approaches is particularly low if the home language was standardised lately, lacks dominant status at international level, and as a result, is heavily protected through language policy.[60]

4. Conclusions

As we have considered throughout this report, new patterns of migration in the wake of humanitarian crises present a challenge for Europe on an unprecedented scale, and none more so than for national education systems. Education is vital for positive economic, civic and social development. Yet, evidence from PISA and other research indicates that European education systems are often ill-equipped to identify and respond to the needs of learners with different home languages. This has precipitated a situation in which linguistic and migration status continues to predict future educational achievement. This is clearly an unacceptable situation, and one for which there is growing momentum for change.

Newly arrived migrant children often have complicated, multi-country trajectories behind them and may have acquired a rich and yet uneven pattern of linguistic skills in different languages. They are therefore often ideally placed to reflect on the relationship between languages and cultural contexts, and to bring these assets to bear for the benefit of all learners. While multilingualism is a reality in European classrooms, multilingual education has not always kept apace, and the potential benefits are fully realised on a large scale.

[59] Mehmedbegovic, D. (2016). 'What every educator needs to know about cognitive benefits of multilingualism. Moving towards "language hierarchy free" policy and practice'. Draft input paper for second thematic panel on languages and literacy: enhancing communicative competences in school, 26-27 September 2017. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/benefits-bilingualism-dina-medmedbegovic_en.pdf

[60] See Van de Craen, P., Surmont, J., Ceuleers, E. and Allain, L. (2013). 'The influence of policy on multilingual education and the impact of multilingual education on practices'. In: Berthoud, A.C., F. Grin & G. Lüdi (eds.), *Exploring the Dynamics of Multilingualism. The DYLAN project*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 353-372.

We have reflected upon a range of examples and good practices in the field of language learning and inclusion for newly arrived migrant children within this report, with a view to identifying what can be done at a policy and practical level. It is possible to distil six key recommendations on this basis, which we go on to consider in turn below.

Key recommendations

- **Awareness-raising and promoting inter-cultural and inter-linguistic dialogue within classrooms and schools** – there is a need to make research on the subject of multilingual teaching and learning more widely accessible and understandable, so that schools and teachers are aware of its educational and social benefits.[61] The pro-active use of public communication materials, videos or campaigns is also an important activity to support the case.[62]

- **Embedding effective practices at each stage of the 'language learning pathway' for newly arrived migrants –** we have seen that there are distinct stages within the arrival and engagement of migrant learners with the host country's education system, and key learning points corresponding with each of them.

  Documented good practices in this respect relate to the following:

  (1) **Reception and assessment**: a comprehensive and multi-dimensional assessment of migrant learners upon reception, encompassing literacy, language and other key competencies. This might entail a more formal assessment tool, based on a sound scientific understanding of language acquisition, or assessment methods based on structured observation.

  (2) **Placement and admission**: ensuring that initial preparatory classes are time limited, where they are deemed necessary, and setting in place welfare and academic supports to facilitate a smooth transition into mainstream education. Monitoring is also important, to prevent the geographical segregation of migrant learners through school entry and admissions criteria.

  (3) **Acquisition of the language of schooling**: early immersion within mainstream classes and curricula, with additional one-to-one support provided at an appropriate level to accelerate social and academic learning. Continued access to linguistic and academic support measures and career guidance, along with parental engagement and intercultural education, also plays a key role.

  (4) **Maintaining existing languages**: access to home language instruction, and encouragement to speak existing languages on a day-to-day basis at school, including structured opportunities to do so. Harnessing the potential of non-

[61] See Herzog-Punzenberger, B., Le Pichon Vorstman, E. and Siarova, H. (2017). *Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned.* NESET II report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: doi: 10.2766/71255.
[62] See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration/schools_en

formal and informal learning by trained volunteers outside of the school is also a priority, to secure a wider support infrastructure.

- **Adopting effective and evidence-based techniques for language instruction within multilingual classrooms –** some of the examples documented within the report included the use of ICT, offering language education across the curriculum through language-sensitive teaching and CLIL, and whole school approaches. Furthermore, translanguaging offers a means for learners to share their linguistic repertoire reflectively with their peers. There is a need to widen access to resources, and to provide opportunities for teachers to engage in peer learning. The School Education Gateway offers one platform for doing so at European level.[63]

- **Identifying and implementing the necessary system-level supports –** while the proportion of learners speaking a language at home other than the language of their schooling is increasing in Europe, rates vary at a country level and strategies must be tailored accordingly. The pace and scale of new migration, the range of languages spoken and the capacity within education systems to respond are all key considerations.

  In any scenario, schools cannot tackle the challenge alone. Action at a national or regional policy level, and coordinated efforts between schools are needed, which include the following:

  (1) **Creation of specialist resource centres or advisory teams**, to equip schools with the necessary tools and pedagogies for supporting newly arrived migrant learners and working across multiple localities and schools. The work of the National Centre for Swedish as a Second Language provides an example.[64]

  (2) **Review of funding arrangements for newly arrived migrant learners**, including the use of targeted funds or entitlements to ensure access to tuition or preparatory classes where these are needed, and to accommodate learners who first enter the education system at ECEC, primary, or secondary stage, alongside non-formal or informal learning by volunteers outside the school.

  (3) **Investment in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes**, so that teachers are equipped with the necessary skills for multilingual learning. This measure also requires a suitable qualified pool of teacher educators and a commitment from school leaders to invest in their staff.

  (4) **Promotion of diversity in the teaching profession**, including the recruitment, training and retention of teachers from migrant community backgrounds.

[63] An example of relevant content from the School Education Gateway can be found at: https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/viewpoints/polls/poll-on-multilingual-classroom.htm
[64] See http://www.andrasprak.su.se/english/

(5) **Investment in curriculum development in language education**, to reflect a stronger multi-linguistic dimension. Such curriculum development must attend to the different cultural and linguistic contexts across Europe. Furthermore, it must draw upon the experiences of migrant children and reflect their aspirations.

- **Monitoring and evaluating success, and striving for accountability for migrant learners' outcomes** – a true test of the effectiveness of multilingual language learning is to demonstrate that they help to narrow the attainment gap between migrant learners and their peers. This requires the monitoring and evaluation of learning, personal and social outcomes, and mechanisms for reporting and holding schools and policy makers accountable. National school inspectorates also have a potential role to play in this regard.

Further information

An overview of the European Commission's School policy:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school_en

Strategy on strengthening European identity through education and culture presented in November 2017:
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf

Strategy on school development and excellent teaching for a great start in life presented in May 2017:
https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/school-com-2017-248_en.pdf

Strategy on quality education for all presented in May 2017:
https://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20170530-youth-initiative-school-higher-education_en

More about...

Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe, 2017 edition:
https://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20170601-eurydice-teaching-languages-school_en

The Key Competence Framework:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/competences_en

Multilingual classrooms:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/multilingualism/multilingual-classrooms_en

School education for migrants and Peer Learning Activities about integration of migrant children:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration/schools_en

For further information on programme events supported by the European Commission on the theme of multilingualism and the integration of migrants, please direct inquiries to the Directorate General for Education and Culture:

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NC-02-18-064-EN-N



Publications Office

doi: 10.2766/111543

ISBN: ISBN 978-92-79-79240-3