SIRIUS WATCH 2020

Taking stock of SIRIUS Clear Agenda and new developments in migrant education

Prepared by:
Loes van der Graaf, Justinas Didika, Cosmin Nada, Hanna Siarova
PPMI

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Authors of country reports, which fed into the current synthesis report

Country	Authors
Bulgaria	Bistra Ivanova (Multi Kulti Collective)
Croatia	Elli Pijaca (Forum for Freedom in Education)
Estonia	Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (Praxis)
Finland	Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (University of Lapland)
France	Nathalie Auger (University of Montpellier III)
Greece	Nektaria Palaiologou (Hellenic Open University)
Ireland	Merike Darmody (Economic and Social Research Institute)
Italy	Micaela Valentino (Salesiani per il Sociale APS)
Germany (Bavaria)	Claudia Köhler (Farafina Institute)
Lithuania	Justinas Didika (PPMI)
Netherlands	Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (Risbo)
Norway	Fred Carlo Andersen (Ostfold University College)
Poland	Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (Educational Research Institute)
Portugal	Daniela Silva, Sofia Marques da Silva (CIIE-FPCEUP)
Slovenia	Alenka Gril, Janja Žmavc and Sabina Autor (Educational Research Institute, Slovenia)
Spain (Catalonia)	Miquel Àngel Essomba (UAB)
UK (England)	Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (Leeds Beckett University)

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About SIRIUS

SIRIUS is the international Policy Network on Migrant Education, active since 2012 and co-funded by the European Commission. Its overall objective is to support the major education policy debates with evidence by analysing and co-creating knowledge on the main challenges and policy approaches for inclusive education in Europe, by mobilising migration and education policy stakeholders and building the capacity of migrant and grassroots education initiatives.

SIRIUS Watch is one of the Network's tools to achieve this objective. It monitors and informs policy development and implementation at different governance levels in the field of inclusive education, with a focus on migrant and refugee learners.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Setting the context

Following the outbreak of the "Arab Spring", the European Union faced an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. Since 2015, named by the BBC as "the year that changed a continent"[1], Europe welcomed with open, and not so open, arms a high number of refugees originating from the countries of the Arab region and other regions across the world. While the arrival of refugees itself was no new phenomenon, the increased number of refugees arriving within a short period of time required the EU as well as individual Members States to act quickly and facilitate their arrival and proper immediate placement into reception centres and support their further integration.

The outbreak of the crisis highlighted the importance of effective policies and strategies to ensure refugee (and migrant in general) children's right to education, which were not always in place. A variety of factors hindering (or supporting) quality education provision for migrant children were already identified in the years before. Over the period of 2013-2014, the SIRIUS Network carried out extensive research and stakeholder consultations to identify which policies and practices facilitate the education and integration of different groups of migrant children. The SIRIUS *Clear Agenda for Migrant Education* built on Europe's experience with different migration flows and types throughout recent history, recognising that migration is a dynamic concept, and its directions, content, and scope are evolving throughout the years. Therefore, the goals and recommendations highlighted in the Agenda remained relevant regardless of migration trends, pointing out to the need for sustainable policy frameworks embracing the dynamism of migration.

The Clear Agenda, adopted in 2014 at the eve of the so-called refugee crisis, was intended as a guiding document for SIRIUS partner countries and EU stakeholders to engage in developing inclusive education policies taking into account needs of migrant children over the past six years. While the authors of the Clear Agenda could not have foreseen the extent to which migration to Europe would increase after the adoption of the document, the recommendations have proven to be of crucial importance and relevance for the integration of refugee children in education systems. Both the increased number of refugees and the continuous (ir)regular migration flows within Europe and towards Europe required heightened focus of governments to facilitating equal access to education and to creating inclusive education systems with respect for diversity. Important elements of inclusive education comprise the

1 'Europe's migrant crisis: The year that changed a continent', *BBC News*, August 2020. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53925209 [Accessed 10.02.2021]

training of teachers to support diversity in the classroom; the use of inclusive pedagogies; the promotion of the teaching profession among migrants; and policies supporting the quick and effective integration of newly arrived migrants (NAMs) in mainstream education. In this line, segregation of schools (and segregation within schools), and long-term placement of migrant children in separate classes are perceived as some of the main challenges towards integration and inclusivity.

The landmark year of 2020 presents the six years' anniversary of the SIRIUS Clear Agenda for Migrant Education, as well as the five years' anniversary of the refugee crisis and the focus on new developments influencing migrant education, such as COVID-19 and continuing digitalisation of education. Therefore, the current report takes stock of the achievements that have taken place across the SIRIUS Members' countries and the innovations introduced to promote and facilitate inclusive education for migrant children. The report highlights the areas of the agenda where progress has been made across Europe and where more work is needed. Additionally, the report identifies the new trends and challenges that are likely to influence migrant education in the upcoming years, for which the SIRIUS Network should prepare.

1.2. SIRIUS Watch 2020

1.2.1. Focus and structure

SIRIUS Watch 2020 is designed to reflect on what has/has not been achieved among Clear Agenda recommendations, and what are the emerging threats and barriers to be dealt with by the EU and Member States in the foreseeable future. In 2014, the SIRIUS Network launched a Clear Agenda for Migrant Education in Europe, which included recommendations on policies to ensure equal access to high-quality education and training for all, including supportive measures for learners with a migrant background[2]. Attending to recent and accelerated changes at the societal, technological, economic and political levels, as well as shifting trends in educational policy and goals in the Global Education Agenda 2030, the **landmark year of 2020 marks the need for a stock-tacking exercise.**

To highlight some of the relevant contextual drivers and trends, slowed but **continuous increase in the number of migrants and refugees** is expected to persist[3], posing several challenges to education systems in Europe. Resulting in more diverse classrooms, this trend calls for teaching, learning and assessment practices to become more culturally and linguistically sensitive[4]. Increasingly

2 A complete list of recommendations can be found in the section entitled 'Suggested methodological approach'

3 IOM (2017), World Migration report 2018, International Organization for Migration. Retrieved at: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/docs/china/r5_world_migration_report_2018_en.pdf

4 Miller, T. (2018), 'Measures of Indigenous Achievement in Canada', Indigenous and Minority Education, 12(4), 182-200.

diverse classrooms also present numerous opportunities. As highlighted by many experts, diversity is an asset that – if well handled – can positively contribute to the growth of every individual and contribute to the creation of better learning environments for all students, regardless of their background.

Moreover, the **rise of socio-economic inequalities** is underlined as a pressing issue, having a substantial effect on sustainable growth and the stability of welfare states.[5] This creates barriers to better life opportunities for disadvantaged learners, encompassing skill-gaps and digital divides which are further enlarged in the labour market.[6] Despite the fact that '*Remedying the school concentration of socially disadvantaged learners'* has already been positioned in the Clear Agenda's recommendations, growing inequalities create significant challenges for the equity and quality of education systems, and calls for relevant public policies to catch up.

Socio-economic inequalities are also closely connected to some of **the emergent threats in ensuring inclusive education**. One such example relates to **technological development** and the assumption that a more technological future will ensure access to quality education for all, while being 'borderless, gender-blind, race-blind, class-blind and bank-account blind'.[7] Indicating the potential variation of emergent and/or already articulated threats, another example concerns the **assessment of learning outcomes**, especially in primary and secondary education. Both assessment policies and practices require sensitivity to growing diversity and subsequent contextual disadvantages of students, in order to avoid further accentuation of social inequalities[8].

2020 also marks the end to the Education and Training 2020 strategic framework and calls for the understanding of the changes that emerged since the adoption of the Clear Agenda. **SIRIUS Watch 2020 will reflect on what has/has not been done both at EU and national levels, indicate successful reforms and pressing issues to be addressed, and underline new/ emerging issues to be dealt in the new education agendas.**

5 OECD (2016a), Trends Shaping Education 2016; OECD (2019), Trends Shaping Education 2019, OECD Publishing. Retrieved at: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/trends-shaping-education-2019_trends_edu-2019-en#page1

6 European Education and Training Expert Panel (2019b), Issue paper, Digitalisation of society. Advanced draft for the Forum on the Future of Learning.

7 Watters, A. (2015), 'ED-Tech's Inequalities', HackEducation, Retrieved at: http://hackeducation.com/2015/04/08/inequalities.

8 PPMI (2019), Literature review and trends impact/drivers analysis, Prospective Report on the Future of Assessment in Primary and Secondary Education.

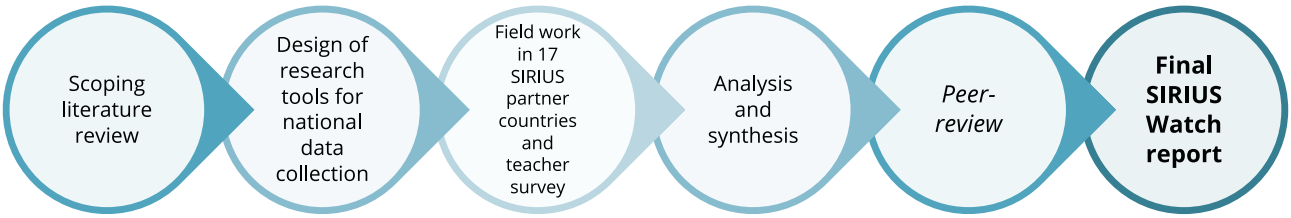
Box 1. Key research questions

1. What is the progress at EU and SIRIUS partner countries levels in implementing SIRIUS Clear Agenda recommendations?
2. What are the key successful developments and remaining barriers in this field?
3. What are the new and emerging threats?

1.2.2. Methods and scope

The analysis provided in this report is based on literature review, exploratory teacher survey and contributions of SIRIUS national partners through a SIRIUS Watch questionnaire. In each of the 17 EU Member States covered by this report[9], researchers and experts from SIRIUS partner countries carried out desk-based research and interviews with relevant stakeholders to explore the recent developments in migrant education policies and emerging policy and societal trends that are likely to affect the provision of inclusive education in the years to come. The figure below outlines the sequence of research steps taken for the preparation of this report.

Figure 1. Research process



A descriptive analysis approach was used to synthesise the key issues and themes arising from the national reports; as well as other evidence and reports from national, regional and international organisations.

Throughout the report, various terms and concepts are presented and discussed. The following box provides the key terms and how they should be understood in the context of this report.

9 Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Germany (Bavaria), Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain (Catalonia), UK (England). It should be acknowledged however, that the national reviews cannot be considered exhaustive. They rather aim to provide a picture on different arrangements that are practiced in various Member States at different levels. Some of the examples described in this report are the initiatives of particular regions or cities, rather than nationally mainstreamed practices.

Box 2 Key terminology and concepts presented in the report

The term **children with migrant background** includes "all foreign nationals below 18 years old who are forcibly displaced or migrate to another country, be it with their (extended) family, with a non-family member (separated children) or alone (unaccompanied children), whether or not seeking asylum". Within the context of migrant children, the following categories are mentioned throughout the report:

- **Refugee and asylum-seeking children** are those children who have fled their home country and applied for international protection in the host country. Refugees are those who have been granted asylum, while asylum-seekers are still in the process of obtaining that status. The human right to education specifies that the status of a child should not influences his/her access to education, meaning that children in reception centres; asylum-seeker centres and other facilities should be granted access to education on the same basis as native children.

- **Unaccompanied minors** are children who have moved to another country without parents, guardians or other adult supervisors. Special attention must be given to ensure access to education for these children as they are not in the care of another person. Unaccompanied minors are therefore more likely to be excluded from protection.

- **Regular migrant children** are children of parents or guardians who made the willing decision to migrate, for example for work, study or other purposes. These children usually come from families with enough resources to ensure that the child has access to education. However, the lack of support systems for these migrants means that parents must proactively search for information on the education system and enrolment procedures.

- **Returning migrant children** have moved abroad for a period of time and returned to their country of origin. As a result, they have to be re-enrolled in the national education system. Although parents may be more aware of how the system works compared to other migrants, the child still needs to go through assessment to determine the right class and learning path.

CHAPTER 2.
SIRIUS Clear Agenda: achievements and remaining challenges

2.1. EU policy context and recent developments in migrant education agenda

Since the adoption of '**Education and Training 2020**' (ET2020) strategic framework in 2009, the key EU policy developments in education increasingly had put more priority to inclusiveness and social cohesion. This landmark framework, ending this year, outlined the need to enable all citizens, irrespective of their circumstances, to acquire and develop skills and competences for work, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue. The framework formulated 'Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship'[10] as one of its strategic objectives[11]. In achieving these objectives, the ET 2020 agenda set the following benchmarks:

- At least 95 % of children should participate in **early childhood education.**
- Fewer than 15 % of 15-year-olds should be under-skilled in **reading, mathematics and science.**
- The rate of **early leavers** from education and training aged 18-24 should not surpass 10 %.
- At least 40 % of people aged 30-34 should have **completed some form of higher education.**
- At least 15 % of **adults should participate in learning.**
- At least 20 % of higher education graduates and 6 % of 18-34 year-olds with an initial vocational qualification should have **spent some time studying or training abroad.**
- The share of **employed graduates** (aged 20-34 with at least upper secondary education attainment and having left education 1-3 years ago) should be at least 82 %.

As the global economic crisis continued to unfold, the most disadvantaged were hit the hardest. Responding to these issues, the **Council of the European Union conclusion on the social dimension of education and training** adopted in the following year (2010) stipulated that there remains significant scope to reduce

10 Other ET 2020 objectives include:
Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.
Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

11 Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')

inequalities and exclusion in the EU, through structural changes and additional support[12]. The understanding was clear: European cooperation can help identify ways to promote social inclusion and equity, while not compromising in terms of quality. A few years on, the need to ensure developments towards more inclusive education was strengthened further and became increasingly linked with the learners' diversity. This became the case for migrant learners in particular, especially in the light of the human tragedy in the Mediterranean which caused vast increases in migration flows to Europe. Such developments fostered swift response in the EU's migration policy strategy, reflected in the **European Agenda on Migration** (2015) [13]. The agenda, among other aspects, outlined the need for effective integration where inclusive education constitutes a fundamental part.

An indicative reflection of the developments towards more inclusive education policy in the EU, which specifically outlined the needs of migrant learners, is the **2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the New priorities for European cooperation in education and training** (ET 2020)[14]. The report formulated six priority areas for achieving the strategic objectives of ET 2020, where the most important one for migrant learners is the *Inclusive education, equality, equity, non-discrimination and the promotion of civic competences*[15]. The issues that this priority was designed to tackle were almost explicitly connected to the needs of migrant students, including:

Addressing the increasing diversity of learners and enhancing access to inclusive and quality education and training for all learners, including disadvantaged groups, such as learners with SEN, NAMs, learners with a migrant background, while tackling discrimination, racism, segregation and violence.

Facilitating effective acquisition of language(s) of instruction and employment for migrants.

Promoting civic, intercultural and social competences, mutual understanding and respect at all levels of education and training.

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12 Council conclusions on the social dimension of education and training, Council meeting Brussels, 11 May 2010

13 Brussels, 13.5.2015 COM(2015) 240 final Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions A European Agenda On Migration

14 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)

15 Other priory areas include:

1. Relevant and high-quality knowledge, skills and competences developed throughout lifelong learning, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, innovation, active citizenship and well-being.
2. Open and innovative education and training, including by fully embracing the digital era.
3. Strong support for teachers, trainers, school leaders and other educational staff.
4. Transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications to facilitate learning and labour mobility.
5. Sustainable investment, quality and efficiency of education and training systems.

Enhancing critical thinking, along with cyber and media literacy.

Less than a year before the Joint Report was published, the need for a strengthened focus on migrant education and training in the EU was underlined by the SIRIUS network, which issued its **Clear Agenda for Migrant Education in Europe** (2014)[16]. With the underlying notion that all learners should have full access to high-quality education and vocational training in inclusive settings, the Agenda stated recommendations in seven thematic areas for children and young people with a migrant background to be addressed both EU-wide and in separate Member States.

Figure 2. SIRIUS Clear Agenda (2014) recommendations on improving education for children and young people with a migrant background

Thematic areas of the Clear Agenda 2014:

1. Remedying the school concentration of socially disadvantaged learners.
2. Promoting multilingualism among all learners.
3. Diversity in teacher training and professional capacity.
4. Increasing the representation of people with a migrant background in the education professionals.
5. Creating effective support for newly arrived migrant learners.
6. Expanding peer-to-peer mentoring for learners with a migrant background.
7. Guaranteeing equal access to high quality vocational education and training for all, regardless of residence status

These areas for improvement are deeply connected to the aims and measures foreseen in the key EU migrant education and integration policy developments that followed. Despite the efforts that were currently in place, third-country nationals continue to do far worse than EU citizens with regards to social inclusion and education outcomes.[17] This presented the need for additional action. Therefore, the European Commission, since 2016, has increased the support for Member States in their efforts to integrate migrants in their education and training systems by issuing **Commission Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals** (2016)[18]. The document identified three key priorities for education, including integration of

16 SIRIUS (2014). *A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education*. MPG, November 2014. Retrieved at: http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Agenda-and-Recommendations-for-Migrant-Education.pdf.

17 OECD/European Union (2015), Indicators of Immigration Integration 2015 – Settling In: http://www.oecd.org/els/mig/Indicators-of-Immigrant-Integration-2015.pdf.

18 Brussels, 7.6.2016 COM(2016) 377 final Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals

NAMs into mainstream education structures as early as possible; preventing underachievement among migrant learners; and preventing social inclusion as well as fostering intercultural dialogue. In order to progress towards these objectives, the Action Plan stipulated the need for measures that closely link to the SIRIUS Clear Agenda recommendations. This includes language integration programmes, adapted to specific needs and competences of migrant learners, providing teachers with necessary skills to work in increasingly diverse classroom, preventing educational segregation and supporting peer learning events on key integration practices.

These ideas were further underlined in the **European Pillar of Social Rights** (2017), which noted that everyone should have a right to quality and inclusive education, right to equal treatment and opportunities, with a particular focus on early childhood education and care[19]. The Agenda's relevance to the more recent EU discourse on inclusiveness in education is best viewed in the context of the European Education Area (EEA), which will guide EU educational policy developments until 2025. The EEA envisions that foreign qualifications are recognised across the EU, studying and learning abroad becomes the norm and everyone has equal access to high-quality education, irrespective of their socio-economic background[20], which are deeply embedded in the core notions of SIRIUS Clear Agenda. The interconnectedness is notable if SIRIUS recommendations are seen in the framework of the **Council of the European Union Recommendation on the key competences for lifelong learning**[21] as well as on **promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching**[22] which forms the some of the foundational measures in the development towards EEA.

19 The European Pillar of Social Rights in 20 principles. The Pillar of Social Rights is about delivering new and more effective rights for citizens, built upon 20 key principles.

20 European Commission, 'European Education Area', November 13, 2020. Retrieved at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

21 Key competences for life-long learning include: 1) Literacy; 2) Multilingualism; 3) Numerical, scientific and engineering skills; 4) Digital and technology-based competences; 5) Interpersonal skills, and the ability to adopt new competences; 6) Active citizenship; 7) Entrepreneurship; 8) Cultural awareness and expression. Council of the European Union (2018). Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (No. OJ 2018/C 189/01). Official Journal of the European Union.

22 Council recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching (2018/C 195/01)

Figure 3. Vision for the European Education Area by 2025

The Commission is developing initiatives to help work towards a European Education Area. The vision contained within this policy is that, across the EU:

- spending time abroad to study and learn should become the norm
- school and higher education qualifications should be recognised across the EU
- knowing two languages in addition to one's mother tongue should be standard
- everyone should be able to access high-quality education, irrespective of their socio-economic background
- people should have a strong sense of their identity as a European, of Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity

The package of measures presented by the European Commission to achieve the above vision, included:

- developing **key competences for lifelong learning;**
- developing **digital skills;**
- developing **common values and inclusive education;**
- founding **European Universities** and a **European student card;**
- improving **Early Childhood Education and Care;**
- **Automatic Mutual Recognition of Diplomas and learning periods abroad;**
- **improving the Teaching and Learning of Languages.**

Source: European Education Area

Promoting multilingualism is one of the notable links. Considered as one of the key competences by the Council of the European Union, it is also underlined by the SIRIUS network in its Agenda as a mean to boost learners' self-confidence, intercultural skills and employment prospects. A positive attitude towards multilingualism involves the appreciation of cultural diversity and fosters intercultural communication, linking to the need expressed in the Clear Agenda for more **comprehensive school systems** with more diverse and mixed classrooms.

Increased diversity, if managed properly, provides opportunities for learners from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds to learn together and improve educational outcomes, fostering inclusion and social cohesion. Effectively, social cohesion along with support and understanding of social and cultural diversity is crucial for developing **cultural awareness** as it is deeply embedded in constructive participation in society, which is essential for fostering **active citizenship**.

To support a competence-oriented education in a lifelong learning context, the use of a **variety of learning approaches** is needed. Such approaches should provide adequate support and inclusive settings to all learners, including those facing disadvantages, helping to fulfil their potential. This includes pedagogies applied by teachers, as well as support from other migrants or peers. Reflecting on SIRIUS recommendations, an appropriate measure to address this issue would be to **expand peer-to-peer mentoring schemes** for learners with a migrant background, both as beneficiaries and as mentors, to empower and encourage them to use their experience to support their peers.

Another necessary step in ensuring the ability to achieve key competences in education and fostering the European dimension of teaching, is the capacity and **provision of support for educational staff**. Practitioners should have the necessary ability to convey common values, promote active citizenship as well as transmit a sense of belonging by responding to the increasingly diverse classrooms. SIRIUS recommendations note that a way to do that is to increase **diversity in teacher training and professional capacity**. In light of competence-oriented education, investment in professional capital is needed to develop training and mentoring programmes for school leaders and teachers to enhance their intercultural skills and competences. SIRIUS Clear Agenda indicated that, as an additional measure to broaden the capacity of educational staff, the **increase in representation of people with a migrant background in the teaching profession** is necessary.

The Recommendations on key competences for life-long learning as well as promoting common values, inclusive education and European dimension of teaching were followed by the **Council Resolution on further developing the EEA to support future-oriented education and training systems** (2019). The Resolution called for further steps towards creating 'a genuine European Education Area' that would enhance its links with the post-ET 2020 framework and ensure that all levels and forms of education and training are promoted equally[23]. Most recently, the Covid-19 health crisis caused for an unprecedented recovery package to counter its effects and ensure that the crisis would not become a structural barrier to learning and young people's employment prospects as well as equality for the society.

For this reason, the recent Commission's communication reinforced the approach to ensure the achievement of EEA by 2025 and tied it with **Next Generation EU and the next long-term budget of the EU (2021-2027)**[24]. Evidence shows that linguistic diversity in

23 Council Resolution on further developing the European Education Area to support future-oriented education and training systems (2019/C 389/01)

24 Communication From the Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025

schools is still linked with persistent inequalities and deficiencies in reading literacy[25]. The Commission's Communication therefore notes that to make education systems more inclusive and have the successful integration of newcomers, increasing diversity of educational needs have to be addressed. If managed effectively, linguistic diversity presents substantial opportunities as being able to speak foreign languages is crucial for studying and working abroad. It also enables students to discover Europe's cultural diversity fully and benefit from the culturally-rich environment. Connecting to this, SIRIUS Clear Agenda has articulated the importance of ERASMUS+ and European Social Fund (ESF) programmes in remedying the school concentration of socially disadvantaged learners, promoting multilingualism and encouraging diversity in teacher training and professional capacity. This is noteworthy considering the above-mentioned EU multiannual financial framework, where both Erasmus+ and ESF+ will receive increased funding and are foreseen to become more inclusive to young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds[2627].

Looking ahead, the new President von der Leyen has further emphasised the commitment to making EEA a reality by 2025 by bringing down barriers, improving access to quality education for all and easing the mobility between educational systems[28]. This notion has found its way into the **six priorities of the new Commission**, which builds on the vision of a Union of equality, tolerance and social fairness, and finds education at the heart of its commitments.

In the context of the current health crisis, as well as looming economic difficulties, it is once again becoming increasingly visible that socially vulnerable groups, whose proportion among migrant populations tends to be higher, are once again among those who suffer the most. However, the educational policy discourse over the last few years has a rather broad focus on inclusion and diversity in education which can lead to situations where the needs of children with a migrant background may be unintentionally left unaccounted for. This notion is supported by European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) which underlines that the migration policy discussions on the EU level mostly focused on developing legal procedures for admitting refugees and asylum seekers for the additional labour force[29]. This results in migrants in Europe being

25 European Commission (2019) PISA 2018 and the EU Striving for social fairness through education. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/pisa-2018-eu_1.pdf

26 EU'S next long-term budget & NextGenerationEU: KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

27 EU Legislation in Progress 2021-2027 MFF EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service Author: Marie Lecerf Members' Research Service PE 625.154 – March 2019 EN European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) 2021-2027

28 A Union that strives for more My agenda for Europe von der Leyen

29 ETUCE Statement on Action Plan on the integration and inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background (adopted by ETUCE Committee on 12-13 October 2020)

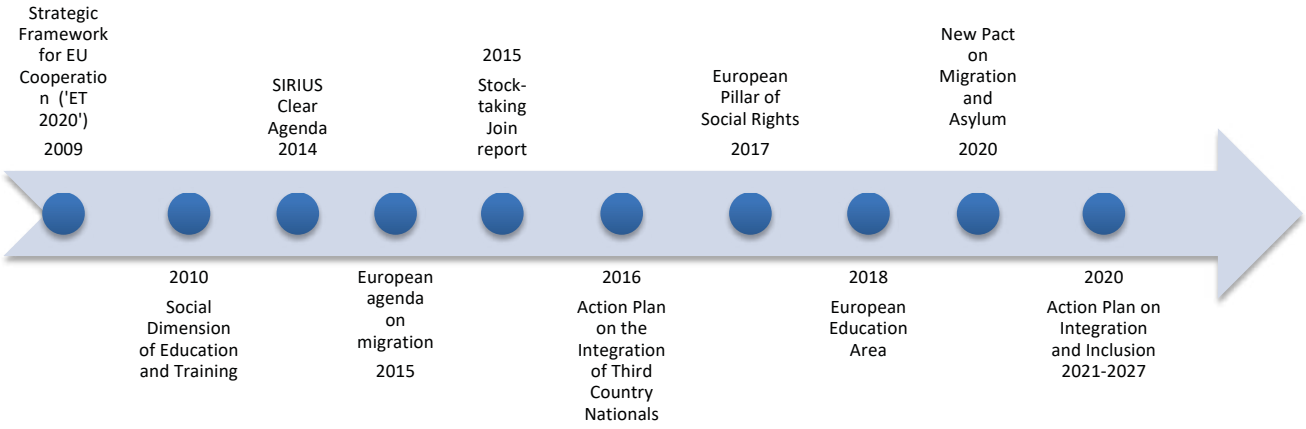
excluded from society, struggling to access health, social and educational services[30]. For this reason, the ETUCE statement continues, a unified, clear policy and a subsequent legislative framework is needed on the inclusion of citizens with a migrant background that would entail that diversity is an added value and would help education systems to prepare tolerant, culturally and gender-sensitive citizens with solid democratic values[31].

The increasing need once again turn the focus to migration and asylum is resonating at the EU level and is reflected in the recently adopted **Communication on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum[32]** and **EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027)[33]**. The former underlines that key societal issues today, including demography, security, climate change, race for talents and inequality, all have an impact on migration and thus calls for an effective migration policy[34]. The New Pact, however, does not address the educational context in detail and so increasing hopes for a prominent and multi-dimensional space for education as a key aspect of migrant inclusion and integration were expressed[35] for the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion. The latter underlined that education is the foundational building block for more inclusive societies. The Action Plan recognises the goal of making schools the 'real hubs' for the successful integration of children and their families. The main focus on achieving this aim includes the following:

- Ensuring access to high quality and inclusive ECEC.
- Fostering teacher skills to work in multilingual and multicultural settings.
- Encouraging the inclusion of different stakeholders in the learning process, including schools, health and social services and parents.
- Making the process of foreign qualification recognition across the EU quicker, fairer, more transparent and affordable.
- Fostering migrant participation in comprehensive language training and covid orientation programmes.

30 Fundamental Rights Report 2019, FRA. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra2019-fundamental-rights-report-2019_en.pdf
31 ETUCE Resolution on Setting the priorities to develop the ETUCE Action Plan for Equality. 2018.
32 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1601291023467&uri=SWD%3A2020%3A207%3AFIN
33 https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/the-ec-presents-its-eu-action-plan-on-integration-and-inclusion-2021-2027
34 Brussels, 23.9.2020 COM(2020) 609 final Communication from the Commission on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum
35 ETUCE Statement on Action Plan on the integration and inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background (adopted by ETUCE Committee on 12-13 October 2020)

Figure 4. Key developments at the EU in the area of migrant education



2.2. Thematic dimensions of SIRIUS Clear Agenda: progress and developments in SIRIUS partner countries

In 2013, the SIRIUS network, in consultation with European Civil Society stakeholders, developed a common vision on migrant education amongst migration and education stakeholders. Seven core areas were identified which are crucial for the successful integration of migrant children, and which still need to be strengthened by countries across Europe:

- Providing educational support to newly arrived migrant children
- Promoting multilingualism
- Strengthening vocational education and training to counter social exclusion
- Combatting school segregation
- Enhancing representation of people with a migrant background in education sector
- Improving teacher training and professional capacity for diversity
- Developing mentoring in education

The following sections provide analysis of the current situation and recent developments across Europe in relation to these seven thematic areas.

2.2.1. School segregation

The concept of "school segregation" describes the disproportional presence of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in schools, or their disproportional allocation to separate classes. In this regard, migrant children are often found to be concentrated in specific schools (e.g., located in migrant-dominated neighbourhoods).[36] While this issue is still prevalent in many

36 Council of Europe (2017) Fighting school segregation in Europe through inclusive education: a position paper.

regions in Europe, there are no clear, holistic approaches on how it can be mitigated.

High concentration of migrant children in segregated schools is considered harmful for their learning opportunities and can be perceived as discriminatory as teachers and schools often do not receive the additional support necessary to address the (educational) needs of migrant children.[37] In fact, segregation negatively affects the educational outcomes of both migrant and native children and contributes to social exclusion and stigmatisation in society overall.[38]

For this reason, the SIRIUS Clear Agenda for Migrant Education advocates for "*mixed schools and classrooms that allow learners from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds to learn together, thus improving the educational outcomes of disadvantaged learners, as well as fostering inclusion and social cohesion, without undermining the educational outcomes for other learners*".[39]

There are many factors (often related to other sectorial policies) that can cause and reinforce school segregation. Claudia Koehler and Jens Schneider (Koehler & Schneider, 2017) noted that migrant and refugee families are more likely to move to migrant communities, often in more socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Consequently, their children will go to the neighbourhood (migrant-dominated) school.[40] Schools located in migrant-dominated areas face numerous challenges regarding the integration of children in host communities, host-country language acquisition, and the lack of financial and human resources in schools themselves.[41] The persisting issues of school segregation to a various extent were reported in most SIRIUS partner countries. For example, a concentration of refugee and migrant students in the centre of Athens (Greece) is observed. This was seen already before 2015 as central Athens has many 'ghetto' neighbourhoods inhabited mainly by newly arrived migrants due to lower rents and higher availability of old buildings, affordable to low socio-economic populations. These neighbourhoods attract new migrants to live close by due to ethnicity and cultural links with neighbours. The schools in the area, as expected, have a high proportion of students with refugee/migrant background. Additionally, the possibility to enrol in the reception class is

Retrieved from https://rm.coe.int/fighting-school-segregationin-europe-throughinclusive-education-a-posi/168073fb65

37 Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights (2016), "Time for Europe to get migrant integration right", Issue Paper, available at https://rm.coe.int/16806da596.

38 Kohler, K. and Schneider, J. (2019) Young refugees in education: the particular challenges of school systems in Europe. Comparative Migration Studies (2019) 7:28

39 SIRIUS (2014). A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education.

40 Kohler, K. and Schneider, J. (2019) Young refugees in education: the particular challenges of school systems in Europe

41 Sinkkonen, H.-M., Kyttälä, M., 2014. Experiences of Finnish teachers working with immigrant students. European Journal of Special Needs Education, 29(2), pp. 167-183.

mostly available in central Athens, whereas northern and southern suburbs of Athens have hardly any such classes on offer.[42]

Some governments justify segregationist policies in schools, or consider intervention unpractical, by language difficulties, the need for specific education support, and cultural emulation of ethnic minorities. Privileged families sometimes actively resist anti-segregation policies that would potentially harm their relative privileged position in the education system. Their voices are louder and stronger than those of vulnerable, migrant families.[43] Native, middle-class parents often prefer to send their children to schools with lower shares of immigrant children, which reinforces the patterns of segregation.[44]

The increase in refugee arrivals in countries across the EU regions put a stronger pressure on education systems and policy-makers to ensure healthy distribution of migrant children over schools in the countries. While policy-makers have worked towards the development of more inclusive education systems, school segregation remains a common phenomenon, particularly in urban areas. Eurydice reported in 2019 that while many European countries have strategies for access to mainstream schools for migrant children, only eight countries[45] indicated that they developed a comprehensive national strategy to address school segregation of migrant children.[46]

Figure 5. Countries with national strategies to combat school segregation

*Countries in dark blue reported national strategies combating school segregation
Source: Eurydice https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/integrating_students_from_migrant_backgrounds_into_schools_in_europe_national_policies_and_measures.pdf

42 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece.
43 Council of Europe (2017) Fighting school segregation in Europe through inclusive education: a position paper.
44 Kohler, K. and Schneider, J. (2019) Young refugees in education: the particular challenges of school systems in Europe.
45 Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Romania, Switzerland
46 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Figure I.1.5

SIRIUS Watch analysis confirms the lack of comprehensive strategies to combat segregation. For some policy-makers this issue has not been a priority or even a concern due to the low number of migrant children and in such systems the intent has been to the swift inclusion of migrant children in mainstream classrooms (e.g. Croatia, Estonia). Segregation also happens in the form of refugee reception facility centres (e.g. in Greece and Germany) or introductory classes for NAMS (e.g. in Norway and the Netherlands). This may serve as educational strategy and is not necessarily a bad practice, unless pupils are stuck in separate classes for lengthy periods of time, limiting interaction with native children : In Greece, children in Reception facility centers (acronym in Greek: KYT) are expected to stay in the centre which offers also education services, aiming to transfer the children to the local schools. However, refugee children who live in Identification Reception Centers (KYT) in the Greek islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, were unable to be enrolled in mainstream education, due to inadequate provision of education, negative reactions of the local community and the harsh conditions in the centers.[47]

Nevertheless, a few countries have attempted to address an issue of school segregation through various policy measures. However, the effectiveness of these measures is still questionable and needs to be researched, as SIRIUS reviews demonstrate.

Box 3. A nation-wide approach to combat school segregation in Bulgaria, France, Italy and the UK

In Bulgaria, school segregation is tackled in the latest Strategy for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (2015-2020)[48]. It is supported by Action Plan and Rules for Coordination Unit for the implementation of the Strategy for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (2015 -2020)[49]. The concrete measures include, among others, information campaigns among parents and the general public to explain the mutual benefits of the educational integration of children from ethnic minorities - in regions with ethnically mixed populations, working with school boards and parents' associations to overcome negative stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes towards different ethnic groups, preparation of an analysis of educational needs for desegregation on a national scale, planning and implementation at the municipal level of a step-by-step process of desegregation and overcoming secondary segregation.

47 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece.
48 Ministry of Education, Strategy for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (2015-2020), https://mon.bg/bg/143
49 Ibid.

In addition, the Ministry of Education runs a National Programme Supporting Municipalities for the Implementation of Activities for Educational Desegregation and Prevention of Secondary Segregation" which provides funding at local level.[50]

In France, there is a school card system to avoid segregation. The school card allows a student to be assigned to a general or technological college or high school corresponding to his place of residence. However, each family has the possibility of making a request for exemption so that their child is educated in an establishment of their choice. However, the interviewee emphasized that the residence of the migrant family (in the migrant or socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhood) still prevents anti-segregation efforts to take effect.[51]

Similarly, in the UK policies were adopted to disperse refugee-families to "non-choice locations" so they are better distributed across the country. However, migrant families are still likely to choose a school that is known as friendly to migrants or which is well-recognised in the migrant community, even if this school is further away.[52]

In February 2014 the Italian Ministry of University and Research issued new Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign students. They constitute an update of the previous Guidelines, issued in 2006. In particular, the Guidelines have proposed operational indications and models of integration and didactic support that some schools have already been receiving. Specifically, with reference to the phenomena of concentration of students with foreign citizenship, the document called for a balanced distribution of enrolments through an agreement between schools, organized in school networks, and targeted collaboration with local authorities. In the context of individual schools, the most widespread orientation is to favour the heterogeneity of cultural backgrounds in the composition of classes, rather than forming homogeneous classes by territorial or religious origin of foreigners.

Source: Bistra Ivanova (2020), Nathalie Auger (2020), Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020), Micaela Valentino (2020).

50 Ministry of Education, National Programme "Supporting municipalities for the implementation of activities for educational desegregation and prevention of secondary segregation", https://www.mon.bg/bg/100831

51 Nathalie Auger (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for France.

52 Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for the UK.

However, even if some countries do develop explicit national strategies to combat school segregation, there remain many challenges with enforcing them consistently across the regions. Furthermore, the flexible and tailored approaches adjusted to the needs of local contexts seemed to be more successful. The Swedish School Inspectorate conducted a review on how municipalities combat the negative impact of school segregation. Their report found that there is not one clear system of anti-segregation measures that works for all municipalities. In fact, the Inspectorate noted various approaches and models used successfully[53]. As many European countries have a decentralised school system with high educational autonomy for schools and municipalities to organise education, and as different municipalities often face different challenges and realities regarding their migrant population, a top-down national approach may not always correspond to the needs in each municipality.

Furthermore, the example of France –and reflected in many other SIRIUS country reports and literature- demonstrates that education measures alone are not sufficient to combat segregation. Residential segregation shows to be a key determinant of school segregation, which is based on affordability and availability of housing, presence of other migrant communities, availability of jobs, etc. Therefore, education policy-makers need to collaborate closely with other stakeholders working in housing, labour market, social policy sectors to achieve inclusive and socially coherent cities.

2.2.2. Multilingualism and language education

The increasing migration towards and within the EU is accompanied by increasing linguistic diversity in the classrooms with often uneven proficiency in various languages. This linguistic diversity is a great source of social and cultural capital not always recognised sufficiently.[54] A strong focus on host-country language acquisition alone does not do justice to the other languages known by the migrant child. However, a lack of proficiency in the language of schooling can prevent migrant children from fully benefiting from the education process and reaching their full potential.[55] The mastering of the host language while maintaining and further developing their mother tongue (and other linguistic skills) is therefore key for migrant children's successful personal growth and the application of linguistically and culturally

53 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures.

54 Staring, F., Day, L. and Meierkord, A. (2017) Migrants in European schools: learning and maintaining Languages. Thematic report from a programme of expert workshops and peer learning activities. Retrieved from http://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/c0683c22-25a8-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1.0001.01/DOC_1

55 Ahad, A. and Benton, M. (2018) Mainstreaming 2.0: How Europe's Education Systems Can Boost Migrant Inclusion. MPI Report, retrieved from https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mainstreaming-how-europes-education-systems-can-boost-migrant-inclusion

sensitive pedagogies in the classroom can provide benefits for native children as well.[56]

For this reason, the SIRIUS network advocates for increased multilingualism in schools, ensuring that "*all learners with limited skills in the language(s) of instruction receive general and targeted language support that is free of charge*"; that "*governments should incorporate Content and Language Integration Learning methods (CLIL) into teaching languages*", and that " *governments can support the learning of immigrant languages for learners interested to learn other European and non-European languages*". The focus of multilingualism is therefore not only on migrant children and their ability to learn the host country language, but also on the multilingual skills of all children, including native-born.

Support for NAMS to learn the language of schooling

Article 14 (2), of Directive 2013/33/EU 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".

In most countries, migrant education policies (particularly for refugees) include language acquisition as an important goal that has to be achieved within the shortest possible time. Host language courses are offered to refugee and migrant children when attending school, and are often mandatory[57] Additionally, some countries designed policies to ensure that language support continues after basic acquisition, to ensure that children can achieve their potential in education.[58]

Research by the SIRIUS network demonstrates that the vast majority of countries have adopted legislation or policies for the systematic provision of linguistic support to migrant children. Only the Netherlands and Portugal have no top-level guidance on this whatsoever.[59] While the national government sets the minimum requirements and proficiency levels, local authorities often enjoy a certain autonomy regarding the execution and organisation of the language support. For example, the national law determines who has the right to receive language support and for how long, while the municipality or schools arrange the curriculum and teachers (e.g. Estonia, Finland), and in Poland general rules for language support are set on the national level, but local authorities are in charge of provision of that support. In

56 Staring, F., Day, L. and Meierkord, A. (2017) Migrants in European schools: learning and maintaining Languages.
57 Kohler, K. and Schneider, J. (2019) Young refugees in education: the particular challenges of school systems in Europe.
58 Koehler, C. (2017) Continuity of learning for newly arrived refugee children in Europe. NESET Ad Hoc Report.
59 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures.

other countries, there is significant regional authority. In Germany, all federal states have a system of preparatory or integration classes for newly arrived migrant minors who are at the age of compulsory education, but the content and regulations strongly depend on each state.[60] In Portugal and the Netherlands, all decisions regarding additional language support and language acquisition are made on a school-level, based on diagnostic language tests.[61]

Box 4 National and local responsibilities for NAMS' language acquisition in Estonia

According to the national law, all students who have resided in Estonia less than 3 years and whose first language or language spoken at home is different from the language of instruction are classified as newly arrived migrants. Upon the arrival of NAMS, the schools can apply for a language learning subsidy (400 euros per student, minimum subsidy per school is 1000 EUR). It is the school's responsibility to organise the studies of NAMS. In the beginning of a migrant learner's studies in Estonia, the individual curriculum can be focused entirely on acquiring Estonian language skills. All migrant learners whose level of the language of instruction or previous knowledge is not sufficient to follow the national curriculum will be provided an individual curriculum tailored for their needs.

Source: Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020)

There are two general strategies to the provision of linguistic support to NAMS, namely through preparatory classes (with a focus on the host country language alone or with other subjects as well) or through direct inclusion into mainstream education with additional language training. In Italy and the UK (excl. Scotland), the law authorizes local schools to make these decisions.

60 Claudia Köhler (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Germany

61 Daniela Silva, Sofia Marques da Silva (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Portugal; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures.

Table 1 Approaches to host language acquisition

Preparatory classes with language of instruction and other curriculum subjects	Preparatory classes for the language of instruction only	Direct integration into mainstream education
Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Finland, Sweden	Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Romania, Spain, France (part-time)	Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary, Slovakia, Scotland, Slovenia, France (part-time)

Source: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/integrating_students_from_migrant_backgrounds_into_schools_in_europe_national_policies_and_measures.pdf

Within mainstream education, nearly all EU countries (except Luxembourg and England) have regulations in place that provide for additional language classes mostly within, but also outside normal school hours.[62]

In addition to government-led language acquisition programmes, NGOs in various countries fill gaps in language education for migrant children. For example, in Poland, schools and NGOs can apply for funding for projects focusing on language acquisition specifically.[63] Croatian NGOs in Zagreb organise language courses either in a formalised setting or through volunteers.[64] While NGOs providing non-formal education helps to address the deficiency of national policies towards linguistic support, this does not guarantee equal opportunities for all migrant and refugee children in terms of host language acquisition, as they then depend on the availability of NFE programmes in the locality and the quality of the offered state support.

Box 5 NGO language support programmes in the UK

Various organisations work in the area of English as an Additional Language (EAL). This is done by providing support and guidance on EAL and equality in education through training, webinars, networks, innovation, research and seminars for schools, Local Authorities and delivering national consultancy. In addition, numerous grassroots community groups and voluntary sector organisations provide language support outside of school, as well as organising interim or Virtual School education for young people awaiting a school place.

Source: Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS

62 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures.

63 Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland

64 Elli Pijaca (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Croatia

Policy measures to promote multilingualism

Comprehensive language policies are not limited only to the teaching of the language of schooling, but also foresee the introduction of migrant mother tongue education, bilingual education and pedagogies fostering multilingualism among all children. The integration of multilingual education approaches in schools is associated with various positive effects such as better integration of learners' communities in schools, inclusion of prior home and community experiences in the classroom, and the development of metacognitive skills. Additionally, prior studies on bilingual education found that bilingual children taught in two languages performed better in literacy than bilingual children taught in just one. Since migrant children across Europe are consistently performing worse than their native peers (as demonstrated by PISA results in recent years), the adoption of multilingualism in education can have significant benefits for their overall learning outcomes as well as overall learning outcomes for native-speaking children.[65]

Within the European Union, the topic of **mother-tongue language** education for migrant children dates back to the 1977 Council Directive on the education of children of migrant workers, which encourages Member States to "*take appropriate measures to promote [...] teaching of the mother tongue and culture of the country of origin for the children for whom school attendance is compulsory in the host state", and "who are dependants of any worker who is a national of another".*[66] More recently, the Council adopted a Resolution in 2008 on A European Strategy for Multilingualism, which states that EU countries should "*endeavour to provide young people, from the earliest age and continuing beyond general education into vocational and higher education, with a diverse and high-quality supply of language and culture education options enabling them to master at least two foreign languages, which is a factor of integration in a knowledge-based society*" as well as "*endeavour to broaden the selection of languages taught at different levels of education — including recognised languages which are less widely used*".[67] Therefore, the EU clearly advocates for multilingualism and the integration of language acquisition at all ages.

Teaching mother tongue language in schools has already become a common phenomenon across Europe, although it is not always adopted in compulsory, nation-wide curricula or implemented to a large extent. The following table demonstrates how different countries arrange or guarantee mother tongue education.

65 Herzog-Punzenberger, B. Le Pichon-Vorstman, E., Siarova, H. (2017) Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned. NESET Analytical Report.

66 Council Directive 77/486/EEC of 25 July 1977 on the education of the children of migrant workers (77/486/EEC) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31977L0486

67 COUNCIL RESOLUTION of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism (2008/C 320/01)

Table 2 Entitlement to mother-tongue language education

National regulations / guidelines on mother-tongue education	Responsibility of schools or local authorities	No regulations or guidelines in place
Austria, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden	England, Finland, The Netherlands	Bulgaria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Scotland, Wales

Source: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/integrating_students_from_migrant_backgrounds_into_schools_in_europe_national_policies_and_measures.pdf

In the Netherlands, multilingualism (teaching foreign languages in school) and content and language integrated learning (CLIL) are widespread, but mother tongue education is absent from national policies due to prioritization of the instruction in the language of the state.[68] Migrant children in Norway have the right to adapted education in Norwegian and simultaneously the right to mother tongue education.[69] In Sweden, children from minority groups have the right to instruction in the mother tongue regardless of their origin.[70] Croatia and Bulgaria have introduced policies allowing for (limited) education in the mother tongue, although, in Bulgaria, this is mainly tailored to traditional ethnic minorities rather than migrant languages.[71] However, mother-tongue education is almost always conditional, based on the number of students who speak the language or limited to a certain selection of languages only. Therefore, mother-tongue language is not an unconditional entitlement.

68 Kambel, E.R. (2014). Language Support for Migrant Children in Early School Years: Mapping European Policies. Sirius Report. Retrieved from: http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/WP2.2-Language-support-mapping-report.pdf p.6

69 Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Norway

70 Salo, L.; Ganuza, N.; Hedman, C.; Sif Karrebaek, M. (2018) Mother tongue instruction in Sweden and Denmark. Language Policy volume 17, 591–610.

71 Bistra Ivanova (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Bulgaria; Elli Pijaca (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Croatia

Box 6 Mother tongue education in Croatia

In the primary and secondary education, special care is dedicated to the possibilities for education of students of national minorities in their mother tongue. Hence, a number of schools – almost fifty - provide tuition in Serbian, Italian, Czech, and Hungarian languages. Just as national minority students can enrol into regular schools providing tuition in Croatian, students of Croatian nationality can enrol into schools providing tuition in some of the minority languages. Additionally, the newly adopted Language and Culture of the Roma National Minority curriculum (May 2020) by the Ministry of Science and Education allows children to attend extra classes for two to five hours per week, taught in their native tongue.

Source: Elli Pijaca (2020)

In addition to mother tongue education for NAMS, multilingualism can be promoted through the integration of foreign, regional and minority languages in curricula. Eurydice found that about 5-10% of the curricula across Europe are devoted to learning foreign languages.[72] Eurydice noted three clear approaches to the **teaching of regional and minority languages**, as highlighted in countries' legislation or policy frameworks.

Figure 6 Approaches to promoting regional and minority language learning

Teaching regional and minority languages:		
Teaching regional or minority languages in schools	Teaching through regional or minority languages in schools	Promoting regional or minority languages beyond schools

Source: Eurydice, The teaching of regional and minority languages in schools in Europe

In some countries without nation-wide multilingualism policies, schools enjoy certain freedom to introduce either additional foreign languages or mother tongue classes, or pedagogies involving CLIL (for example in Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia). NGOs or cultural institutions can support schools with multilingualism as well. For example, in France the National Museum of the History of Immigration (MNHI), the Quai Branly Museum and the Philharmonie de Paris offer tools and workshops to promote the languages and cultures of NAMs.[73] In Spain, foreign language education can also depend on framework agreements closed between Spain and other countries.

72 Erasmus+ Infographic available via: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/infographic_languages_2017_09_25_0.pdf

73 Nathalie Auger (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for France

Box 7 Foreign / mother tongue education in Spain through international cooperation

The Spanish Education law 12/2009 of 10 July focuses on strengthening multilingualism at school and stipulates that schools can determine, through their language project, the criteria for teaching currwcontent and other educational activities in any of the foreign languages on the curriculum. One example of this is the actions carried out in the framework of the Cultural Cooperation Agreement signed by the Spanish State and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco in 1980 and which entered into force in 1985, establishing the bases of the Arabic Language and Moroccan Cultural Programme (LACM). Through the Languages and Cultures of Origin Programme, this agreement enables a number of schools to offer Arabic language and culture courses outside school hours and, from 2017 onwards, also during school hours, at both primary and secondary school.

Source: Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020)

Various efforts are visible across Europe to not only support mother tongue education, but also encourage majority group students to study minority or regional languages. France, Lithuania, Slovakia, Sweden, Poland and the United Kingdom (Scotland) have legal provisions to guarantee the teaching of regional or minority languages in schools.[74]

Box 8. Regional and foreign languages in the French curriculum

Education reforms in France in 2017 provided for additional optional courses within the school curriculum. They include:

- 'Foreign and regional languages, literatures and cultures' as a course in the last years of secondary school
- S second foreign or regional language ('Regional languages and cultures') in grade 6 (these two languages are then taught for up to 6 hours per week)
- 'Regional languages and cultures' in grades 6 to 9, up to 2 hours a week

The new curriculum went into force in the academic year 2019-2020 and introduced a variety of regional and foreign languages.

Source: Eurydice, The teaching of regional and minority languages in schools in Europe

74 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. The Teaching of Regional or Minority Languages in Schools in Europe. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

Various schools across Europe are also adopting the second approach to regional and minority language learning, namely through teaching in this language. Examples include Slovenia, where there are schools providing education in Italian and bilingual schools providing education in Slovenian and Hungarian; Germany, where special schools teach in Danish or Sorbian, and; Finland, providing education in Sami.[75]

Box 9. Content and Language Integrated Learning in Lithuania

In 2018, national CLIL guidelines were designed in Lithuania[76]. CLIL in Lithuania can be applied in primary and both lower and upper secondary education levels. The *General education plan* No. V-417 (2019) stipulates that CLIL may be implemented on a subject-by-subject level and on the basis of a long-term curriculum developed by foreign language teachers. It can be carried out by a subject teacher, a foreign language teacher or both combined (National School Evaluation Agency, 2019). Such programmes may be used for different subjects, foreign language lessons or as a subject module, with lesson(s) in line with educational needs and learning support.

Considering the preparation of students and teachers, and available funds, schools have the autonomy to decide what lessons module(s) will be taught using CLIL methods. Such model is used for English, French and German languages and is applied to history, geography, information technology, ethics and other subjects. The most common practice is to form 35-hour long module for a specific subject that is taught in foreign language once a week. Such programmes are often carried out by the team of subject and foreign language teachers.

Source: Justinas Didika (2020)

Within the 2008 Strategy for Multilingualism in Europe, the EU also specifically encouraged Member States to "*devote particular attention to the further training of language teachers and to enhancing the language competences of teachers in general, in order to promote the teaching of non-linguistic subjects in foreign languages (CLIL — Content and Language Integrated Learning)*".[77]

Overall, it can be concluded from SIRIUS reviews that countries often lack comprehensive, national approaches for the guarantee of mother tongue education for migrant children, but also for the promotion of multilingualism (e.g., through CLIL) in mainstream education, for the benefit of native children. The increasing diversity of the European populations and classrooms require education stakeholders to ensure that both the native and immigrant

75 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. The Teaching of Regional or Minority Languages in Schools in Europe.

76 Available in Lithuanian: https://duomenys.ugdome.lt/?/tinklai/CLILiG/med=155/900

77 COUNCIL RESOLUTION of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism (2008/C 320/01)

populations can benefit from developing their multilingual competences. While basically all countries provide foreign languages in the compulsory or optional curricula, these approaches to foreign language learning are mainly focused on the main European languages (English, French, German) rather than on languages spoken by non-EU migrant children (e.g., Arabic, Farsi).

2.2.3. Teacher training for diversity

The increasing diversity in the classroom described in the sections above requires a teacher population that is able to facilitate diversity as resource for education and to enhance the skills and competences of all pupils. Teachers equipped with skills to manage diversity in the classroom can address racism, discrimination, exclusion, while enhancing tolerance, respect, intercultural awareness and communication among their pupils.[78]

Prior studies have found that, despite the importance of intercultural competences, teachers across Europe lack sufficient skills to utilise diversity as resource or to manage challenges related to diversity in the classroom. For example, the TALIS survey of 2018 showed that teachers lack both skills and confidence in teaching in multicultural settings, as 15% consider 'teaching in a multicultural setting' as highest need in professional development. Furthermore, 33% of teachers across the OECD region feel unprepared to cope with the challenges of a multicultural classroom.[79] The gaps in teachers' readiness and competences to deal with diversity in the classroom was already recognised by the EU in 2012, in the Commission Staff Working Paper on Supporting the Teaching Profession for Better Learning Outcomes.[80] The 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission subsequently highlighted the need to support *'initial education and continuing professional development of educators, especially to deal with increased diversity of learners'*[81].

Various reports have demonstrated gaps in teacher training for diversity across the EU. For example, multicultural competences in Estonian teacher training are considered inconsistent and fragmented.[82] Only 11,9% of teachers in Finland perceived themselves as prepared to teach in a multicultural environment.[83] The 2017 Eurydice report on language teaching found that only in Denmark and Austria teachers are trained to facilitate the integration of migrant children during their initial teacher education. In fact,

78 PPMI (2017) Preparing Teachers for Diversity: the Role of Initial Teacher Education. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
79 Schleichter, A. (2020) TALIS 2018: Insights and Interpretations. OECD, Paris.
80 Commission Staff Working Document (2012) Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes.
81 Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/documents/et-2020-draft-joint-report-408-2015_en.pdf.
82 Kivistik, K., Pohla, T., Kaldur, K. Mitmekultuurilise hariduse tegevuste kaardistamine, 2019. https://www.ibs.ee/wp-content/uploads/Mitmekultuurilise-hariduse-tegevuste-kaardistamine-2019.pdf
83 "Education and Training Monitor 2019" by the EU, Finland

in the majority of European countries there are no requirements for teachers' qualifications to teach children whose mother tongue is not the language of schooling.[84]

The SIRIUS country reports show a large discrepancy between policies and practice. In various countries, governments have adapted strategies for inclusion or multicultural awareness that highlight the importance of diversity as a horizontal theme in teacher training. However, in practice, the topic of diversity is either optional, taught in a fragmented way or not (yet) included in teacher training. In Ireland, for example, initial teacher education guidelines specify that all programmes need to include the topics of multiculturalism and inclusive education. However, the interpretation of these guidelines strongly differs between teacher training institutions.[85]

There are various examples of good practices in teacher training. A reorganisation of Bulgarian teacher education includes the requirement for teachers to partake in in-service teacher training every four years in order to get recertified. In-service teacher training programmes include key competences in intercultural/ multicultural environment, covering empathy, communication, ethnic and religious tolerance, dropout prevention, as well as a special focus on refugees.[86] In March 2015, the German Standing Conference and the Rector's Conference adopted a joint recommendation "Teacher training for a school of diversity" on the topic of inclusion. The teacher training courses should be further developed so that the future teachers are better prepared for the challenges of a diversified body of pupils.[87] The Finnish "Meaningful in Finland Action Plan: Action Plan to prevent hate speech and racism and to foster social inclusion" includes training of professionals and teaching staff to identify and address issues of hate speech, radicalism, and racism, to spot signals related to hate speech, racist behaviour, and radicalization and how to address these issues.[88] The new 2019 teacher training framework in Poland highlights inclusive education and management of culturally diverse classrooms among core skills for teachers. This is great progress for initial teacher training, although in-service teacher training is left to the discretion of local authorities.[89] These examples demonstrate a willingness and increased attention to, and investment in the inclusion of diversity in teacher training.

84 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017. Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe – 2017 Edition. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
85 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
86 Bistra Ivanova (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Bulgaria
87 Claudia Köhler (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Germany
88 Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Finland
89 Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland

Box 10 Teacher training for diversity in Norway, Finland and Lithuania

Norway has made significant efforts in recent years to enhance multicultural and second language competences among teachers and other staff. Multicultural education and cultural diversity have been a mandatory part of all four-year teacher education programmes for many years. From 2020, the teacher education program has increased its length from four to five years, and provides the student with a Master's degree in pedagogy. The program provides the students with; in-depth knowledge of learning theory and children and young people's development, formation and learning in various social, linguistic and cultural contexts, strengthen international and multicultural perspectives in the school's work, understanding of the Sami's status as indigenous peoples and stimulate democratic participation.

In **Finland**, the Core Curriculum for initial teacher education has an overall objective to support equality in all areas of education. This includes addressing students' needs and supporting their well-being, but also raising awareness on global responsibility, different languages and cultures, regarding them as richness (Halinen, 2013). The updated Finnish National Core Curriculum (2016) further emphasises the opportunities that cultural and linguistic diversity brings to the classroom and the importance of cross curricular language sensitivity.

In **Lithuania**, teachers are expected to develop comprehensive competences about different social-cultural and multilingual backgrounds. This aims to recognise and adapt their teaching to students' special needs, abilities, and talents, as well as to promote an understanding of democracy, human rights, gender equality and the ability for critical reflection. The main teacher competencies are outlined in the minster's order No. ISAK-54 On the approval of teachers' professional competence description, published on 2017 January 15. The specifications particularly distinguish teacher's intercultural competencies from others and lists the following diversity issues:

- Preserving and developing the diverse Lithuanian culture enriched by the experience of national minorities;
- Respecting pupils' social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic identity;
- Integrating the knowledge of world history, geography and culture in assessing impact of the cultural diversity of the EU to Lithuania;
- Assessing the role of home environment and different family values in interaction with students and their parents (guardians);
- Teaching students in accordance to universal human values.

General and professional competencies presented also include creating a change-friendly, tolerant, and cooperative learning environment in which students have the opportunity to show initiative, act independently and discover like-minded people as well as feel safe and confident in themselves and others.

Source Fred Carlo Andersen (2020), PPMI (2017)

Despite the lack of an overarching policy approach to diversity in teacher training, many individual universities and teacher training institutions across Europe have already adopted principles of multicultural awareness, diversity and second language teaching in their own curricula. The Netherlands, for example, has no national strategy, but the vast majority of teacher training institutions provide some form of intercultural skills training.[90] Universities and university colleges in Norway provide optional, in-service, supplementary education programmes in multicultural understanding and multicultural pedagogy.[91] Greek universities also include courses, such as "Teaching Greek as a Second Language", "Social Pedagogy", "School Socialization, Differentiation and Inclusion".[92]

Many initiatives supporting teachers' professional development in diversity are led by NGOs and international organisations alongside government strategies or plans and are therefore more often focused on in-service training rather than pre-service training. A recent report on multicultural education in Estonia indicated that there is quite a large number of activities for improving intercultural competences of teachers, but these are often project-based and offered by third sector initiatives and organisations.[93]

90 Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands

91 Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Norway

92 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece

93 Kaldur, K., Kivistik, K., Pohla, T., Veliste, M., Pertsjonok, N., Käger, M., Roots, A., 'Adaptation of Newly-Arrived Migrants in Estonia', The Institute of Baltic Studies, Tartu, 2019. https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/uussisserandajate-kohanemine-eestis-2019-ee_1.pdf

Box 11 Teacher training for diversity by NGOS

The Bulgarian Ministry of Education has been partnering closely with UNHCR on teacher training. Since 2017, about 10 trainings have been held with teachers from all across Bulgaria. The topics included specifics of teaching Bulgarian as a foreign language to asylum-seekers and refugee students, tolerance, effective inclusion, sharing best practices. They have been financed by UNHCR. Similar teacher trainings have been conducted by Bulgarian Union of Teachers and State Agency for Refugees though EU-funded projects.

The Croatian Association Step by Step in 2018 started innovative web site "Article 28" aiming to collect materials (policy briefs, handbooks, example of good practices, teaching materials) for helping teachers and schools in education of children with migrant background, refugees and asylum seekers.

The Vilnius Lithuanians' House provides seminars for teachers' professional development, where its representatives share their experience and good practice working with diverse groups.[94] News on such events as well as number of manuals and methodological guidelines produced by the research community that help teachers to deal with diversity in classrooms are presented in the digital environment for teachers 'Educational Garden' (lit. Ugdymo Sodas).[95]

In Greece, a free and voluntary project 'Teach for Integration' was funded by UNICEF and delivered by the University of Athens. Project staff trained hundreds of teachers across the country on teaching Greek as a second language, dealing with psychosocial challenges of integration in class and promoting intercultural education principles.

Source: Bistra Ivanova (2020), Elli Pijaca (2020), and Nektaria Palaiologou (2020)

Although numerous initiatives exist across Europe to support teachers with diversity management in their classrooms, it cannot be ignored that many teachers still feel insecure in this regard and that numerous small-scale initiatives cannot replace holistic, nation-wide teacher training for diversity. Most importantly, in most countries there is

94 The most recent series of seminars for pre-school, lower and upper-secondary school teachers and other representatives on integration of students who come from/returned from abroad in schools was held in November-December 2019. For more information: http://www.lietuviunamai.vilnius.lm.lt/index_files/2019_11_26_29_seminaro_refleksija.pdf.

95 Ugdymo sodas is an interactive digital environment for the teachers in which one works, seeks information and communicates with other teachers. Here teachers may plan the educational process and improvement of his/her qualifications as well as to update portfolio of own competencies. For further information: https://sodas.ugdome.lt/apie.

no systematic integration of diversity and multicultural competences in initial teacher training. Initiatives to promote teacher training for diversity are either linked to specific teacher training institutions (as optional course) or provided by NGOs as in-service training. The fact that European countries are becoming more and more heterogenous requires teachers to not only teach in a multicultural classroom, but also teach students how to live in a multicultural society. Much work is still to be done in all countries to achieve this.

2.2.4. Diversity within the teacher profession

It is perceived by various experts that increased classroom diversity would benefit strongly from increased diversity in the teacher population. Benefits offered by a multicultural teacher workforce include a higher intercultural awareness, better understanding of the minority perspectives in class, and the possibility to present positive role models. Studies conducted in the USA and Europe showed that native teachers often have lower expectations for children with a migrant background, leading to lower achievements of these children – a trend that could be remedied through the introduction of a more diverse workforce in education.[96] Ethnic minority teachers can raise the motivation and self-worth of minority and migrant students.[97]

The need to increase the share of minority or immigrant teachers in the education workforce was first recognised on the EU level in the 2009 Council conclusions on the education of children with a migrant background, which encouraged Member States to take measures to increase the number of teachers with a migrant background.[98] While this has not been repeated explicitly in following documents, the EC study on Educational Support for Newly Arrived Migrant Children (2013) states that increasing the share of migrant teachers would help to 'decrease the cultural distance between migrants and the school', particularly by connecting the school to the migrant children's families and the wider community and providing positive role models for migrant students.[99]

Limited data is available or systematically collected on a national level on the ethnic composition of the teacher workforce. Data

96 For example: Dee, T. S. (2005). A teacher like me: Does race, ethnicity, or gender matter? *American Economic Review*,
158-165, and Schofield, J. W. (2006). Migration background, minority-group membership and academic achievement: Research evidence from social, educational and developmental psychology. *AKI*

97 Edelmann, D. (2008). Pädagogische Professionalität im transnationalen sozialen Raum. Eine qualitative Untersuchung über den Umgang von Lehrpersonen mit der migrationsspezifischen Heterogenität ihrer Klassen. 2. Aufl. Wien: LIT Verlag. (Title: Pedagogical Professionalism in Transnational Social Space: A qualitative investigation of teachers' management of the migration-specific heterogeneity of their classes).

98 Council of the European Union (2009). Council conclusions on the education of children with a migrant background 2978th education, youth and culture Council meeting. Brussels, 26 November 2009.

99 European Commission (2013). Study on Educational Support for Newly-Arrived Migrant Children, Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union.

that could be found indicates that teachers with minority or migrant backgrounds form a small share of the total teacher population and do not reflect the overall minority or migrant population in the country. For example, statistics from 2015 in Croatia indicate that 2,4% of teachers have a minority background.[100] Only 0,2% of Greek teachers are native Arab speaking.[101] In Ireland, 99% of the teacher population identify as "native white Irish" compared to 85% of the whole population in Ireland.[102] A similar share was found in Portugal.[103] In 2018, 8% of teachers and only 3% of head teachers in the UK were of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, which increased slightly to 8,6% and 2,5% in 2020.[104] A higher share of migrant teachers is witnessed in the Netherlands and Sweden where generally more than 10% of teachers have a non-native background.[105]

Box 12 Teacher diversity in the Netherlands

For the last 15 years, around 1 out of 10 primary school teachers has a migrant background, which is lower than the proportion of people with a migrant background in the Dutch population. In percentages, 3.7% of the teachers nationally has a non-western migrant background. In secondary education 5% of the teachers has a non-western migrant background. Numbers show that when the amount of non-western migrant background students increases in a school, the amount of teachers with a non-western migrant background also increases. From August 2015 onward, everyone without a higher secondary level diploma, has to meet certain knowledge criteria for geography, history and nature and technology to access teacher training. Since the introduction of this knowledge criteria, the amount of students with a non-western migrant background at PABO teacher training programmes has dropped from 8 percent in 2014 to 4 percent in 2015.

Source: CBS, 2018; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, (2019), Vereniging ons middelbaar onderwijs (2016).

The low shares of migrants in the teacher profession exist despite the fact that the vast majority of countries have legal and policy frameworks for the recognition of qualifications abroad. This means that migrants with a degree from an education institution abroad can apply to have this degree recognised in their host country. However, the recognition procedure can include additional requirements, for example related to language proficiency. In the UK,

100 country profile DG EAC - Study on the diversity within the teaching profession with particular focus on migrant and/or minority (2015.)
101 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece
102 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
103 Daniela Silva, Sofia Marques da Silva (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Portugal
104 Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for the UK
105 OECD (2013). Excellence through Equity (Volume II), Paris: OECD Publishing.

only teachers who trained in the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the USA can apply to have their teaching qualification recognised in the UK. Any teacher from a country not on this list who wishes to qualify for Qualified Teacher Status and be able to apply for a permanent teaching post, must complete an accredited training programme in England.[106]

Only a few countries in Europe have made proactive efforts to recruit more persons with a migrant or minority background into the teaching profession (see Box below).

Box 13 Policies and strategies to increase teacher diversity

In the **UK**, a 'Statement of Intent' was published by the Department for Education to instigate collaboration between schools, teachers, multi-academy trusts and governing boards to develop a clear plan for increasing diversity (Department of Education 2018). As part of this initiative the Department undertook to provide £2 million funding for 'equality and diversity hubs' to promote leadership by people of BAME backgrounds, and to make equality and diversity a priority in recruitment at all levels.

In **the Netherlands**, the Primary Education Board (PO-raad in Dutch) holds diversifying teaching staff in primary education as one of its main pillars (PO-raad, 2018). In their Strategic Agenda 2018-2021 they mention that they will stimulate diversity in the job market, to diversify the population of teachers. However, most emphasis in the initiatives seems to be placed at underrepresentation of male teachers within the teacher population.

To improve the availability of qualified teachers in **Norway**, immigrants with bilingual/multicultural backgrounds and basic teacher training from their native countries are eligible for stipends/grants so that they can acquire the supplementary education they need to qualify as teachers. This was introduced for the first time in 2002, where five universities offered the program.

In 2017 the **Irish** Department of Education funded six centres of teaching excellence across Ireland, under the Programme for Access to High Education (Path) scheme, to widen access to initial teacher education for underrepresented groups.

Also in 2017, the **Finnish** Minister of Education, Sanni Grahn-Laasonen, announced a €5.5 million funding package to support the learning paths and integration of immigrant students. One

106 Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for the UK.

purpose of these funds is to promote and support training to provide immigrants with an official qualification to work as subject teachers and kindergarten teachers.[107]

Source: Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020), Laurinde Koster & Tomislav Tudjman (2020), Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) and Merike Darmody (2020)

In countries without overarching national strategies, some teacher training institutions themselves have made efforts to attract more students with a migrant background. The University of Helsinki Equality and Diversity Plan 2019-2020 includes the establishment of a committee to promote diversity in the University. Several Norwegian universities offer programs for mother tongue teachers to attract more non-Norwegian students. The teaching is provided in Norwegian, and students from more than 100 language backgrounds have attended so far.[108] Some local governments in Poland have undertaken efforts to recruit foreign teachers to account for the local teacher deficit.[109] It is important to note that some efforts to recruit more migrants into teacher education were initiated due to the overall lack of teachers and not for the creation of a diverse workforce in the profession.

107 Education International (2017) Finland: government increases support for education of immigrant students and teachers, retrieved from : https://www.ei-ie.org/en/detail/15320/finland-government-increases-support-for-education-of-immigrant-students-and-teachers

108 Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Norway

109 Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland

Box 14 Programmes to increase teacher diversity in Germany

In Germany, several states, universities and private foundations have carried out campaigns to encourage more migrants to study and qualify as teachers and to enter the teacher workforce. For example:

- *Schülercampus Mehr Migranten werden Lehrer'* (Students campus more migrants become teachers) Between 2008 and 2015 the ZEIT-Foundation fostered the interest of students with a migrant background in becoming teachers. The program was implemented in 10 federal states in 15 locations with over 770 students of higher secondary schools; many of them later became teachers. Within 3-days workshops, the participants were introduced to the basics of pedagogies, the teaching professions and challenges and opportunities. Teachers with a migration background shared insights into their own biographies and their experiences from studying and working as a teacher

- *Scholarship programme "Horizonte*"
  The program was initiated by the Hertie Stiftung and was in 2017 transferred to the Claussen-Simon Foundation. The program is designed for the support of migrants who want to become teachers. They receive a monthly scholarship of 300 Euro and monthly coaching and seminars including issues of collaboration with parents, classroom and conflict management.

In some regions, networks of teachers with a migrant background have formed in order to improve access and motivation of migrants to the teacher profession and support migrants who after entering the teacher force, e.g. Northrhine Westphalia Network of Teachers with a Immigration History.

Source: Claudia Köhler (2020)

Despite various efforts on national or regional levels to make the teacher profession more attractive to migrants, research has indicated numerous challenges for migrants to enrol in teacher education or to be employed as teacher. Barriers to the teacher profession for migrants as identified in prior research include comparatively lower learning outcomes of students with a migrant/minority background during their school careers; language barriers; lack of financial resources; lack of confidence and awareness to opt for a teaching career; low prestige and low salaries associated with the teaching profession; structural barriers; and negative/discriminatory experiences in schools deterring those from a migrant/minority background to train as teachers themselves.[110]

110 Donlevy, V., Meierkord, A., Rajania, A. (2016) Study on the Diversity within the Teaching Profession with Particular Focus on Migrant and/or Minority Background. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

This is supported by SIRIUS reviews. In Ireland, financial barriers, a lack of experience or third level education, lack of knowledge of the Irish education system and the high academic standards required to access initial teacher education were mentioned as obstacles for young people with migrant background.[111] In Greece, migrant teachers are often excluded due to the requirement for teachers to be Greek citizens.[112] The barriers highlighted by the academic literature and available data in Croatia include the lack of qualifications of migrants and minority representatives needed to take part in teacher training; language barriers, and; the high supply of qualified teachers which makes it harder for migrants to compete for a job.[113] In addition, people with a non-western migrant background in the Netherlands are more often employed in educational support jobs and the most underrepresented in management jobs.[114]

A prior study on teacher diversity demonstrated that students in teacher education who have a migrant background are often more likely to drop out compared to their native peers. In the Netherlands, this number is 45% compared to 35% of all teacher education students. In Sweden, drop-out rates among migrants in teacher education were 17% compared to 12%. The difference in Estonia is slightly smaller (15% compared to 12%). Contrarily, research in Denmark suggests that migrant students in teacher education are actually less likely to drop out compared to their counterparts.[115]

The research has demonstrated a significant gap in evidence and statistics on the presence of students with a migrant background in teacher education. SIRIUS review also points out that this topic is not covered by national statistics, and it is not an immediate concern of the government. In recent years, more attention has been paid to the potential benefits that migrant teachers can bring to the multicultural classroom and the first initiatives to recruit more migrant teachers in teacher training programmes have been visible. However, the barriers for migrants to enrol in teacher training are persisting. Therefore, future efforts to increase enrolment of migrants in teacher training should not only focus on recruitment itself, but also on the more structural challenges hindering migrants from applying.

2.2.5 Reception of newcomers

The right to education for all children, regardless of their legal status, nationality, or circumstances, is recognised both in

111 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
112 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece
113 Elli Pijaca (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Croatia
114 Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands; CAOP (2018).
115 Donlevy, V., Meierkord, A., Rajania, A. (2016) Study on the Diversity within the Teaching Profession with Particular Focus on Migrant and/or Minority Background.

international and in European law.[116] In practice, the education reception procedures in EU Member States distinguish between refugees, EU migrants and non-EU migrants.

Migrant children originating from other EU countries generally do not experience bureaucratic barriers to school enrolment as they can access education on the same grounds as native children. Refugee or asylum-seeking children also enjoy the right to education on equal grounds as native children, at least theoretically. In fact, asylum-seeking children should be enrolled in education no later than three months after they or their parents initiated the asylum-seeking procedure.[117] Education may be provided in alternative facilities (e.g. within refugee reception centres or separate classes) instead of mainstream education.

Children who have an irregular or undocumented migration status are legally most at risk of exclusion from education. In 2019, only seven EU countries[118] explicitly ensured the right to basic formal education for undocumented migrant children. Contrarily, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania explicitly denied undocumented children the right to education. In the remaining Member States, the right to education is considered applicable to all children, without discrimination. However, in practice the lack of an explicit guarantee for education often leads to significant delays in access to education for irregular migrant children due to local procedural requirements. For example, the requirement for schools to report children without proper documentation to the authorities is an important barrier for families to enrol their children. UNHRC documented such practices in Cyprus and Slovakia.[119]

While access to education for migrant children is in most cases guaranteed by law, the quality of education for migrant children remains an area of discussion and area for improvement. As demonstrated in section 2.2.1., school segregation has significant negative impact on the learning outcomes of migrant children, yet there is still a consistent trend across Europe to focus on individual measures for migrant children (e.g. reception classes, separate school facilities) than on how the overall structure of the education system can facilitate the integration of these children in mainstream education (with additional support). Educational and linguistic, as well as psychological or other forms of support should be provided as much as possible within the mainstream education

116 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13), Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 28 and 29), revised European Social Charter (Article 17) and – for EU MS – to Article 14(1) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
117 Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU), Article 14(2).
118 Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden
119 UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM (2019) Access to education for refugee and migrant children in Europe. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/neu/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/09/Access-to-education-europe-19.pdf

system.[120] Therefore, reception of migrant children includes both their effective access to quality education as well as the provision of a welcoming, inclusive mainstream education environment.

For this reason, the SIRIUS Clear Agenda states that "*Temporary policies targeting newly arrived migrant learners are necessary, yet ineffective if they are segregating learners and are not accompanied by general educational reforms moving towards more inclusive education systems. Governments should provide funding and other necessary support for networks of social interpreters and intercultural mediators to ensure better communication between newly arrived parents and schools to contribute to a more welcoming environment.*"[121]

Access to education and placement

Research conducted by the SIRIUS network shows two clear trends across Europe: In one group of countries, migrant children are immediately (or as soon as possible) placed in regular, mainstream classrooms, while in the other countries a period of segregation exists where migrant children are taught in separate classes, focusing mainly on language acquisition.

Immediate enrolment in mainstream education is most common and it is generally based on the age of the migrant child and on any evidence available of his or her previous learning background. A review of practices across Europe shows that in most countries, age is the first criteria for placement. The knowledge presented during the assessment and the evidence of prior learning or years of schooling are of a supportive nature in this regard.[122] Researchers identified inappropriate grade placement as an important issue that affects many migrant children. This is problematic since the assignment of the right grade has a strong influence on the educational achievements of the child in the future. Placement in a too high grade can lead to underperformance, while placement in a too low grade (with far younger children) can have adverse socio-emotional implications.[123]

120 PPMI (2013) Study on educational support for newly arrived migrant children. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
121 SIRIUS (2014). A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education.
122 Van der Graaf, L., Strauka, O., Szonyi, E., Siarova, H. (2019) Mapping prior learning of newly arrived migrant pupils in Europe. SIRIUS Watch Report 2019.
123 Eurydice (2019) "Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures"

Box 15 Mainstream education with targeted support in Portugal

NAMS in Portugal are immediately placed into mainstream education. Learners can apply to a school and when there is availability, the school prepares the reception according to the national guidelines. The key criteria used to determine the grade and educational pathway for newly arrived migrant student is the documented evidence of prior learning and/or prior assessment.

In addition, the school, within the scope of its autonomy, will be able to provide other projects, activities or courses aimed at the development of the Portuguese language and culture and that also promote the recognition and appreciation of diversity as an opportunity and as a source of learning for all, with respect for the multiculturalism of the school community (e.g. schools that have intercultural mediators, international exchanges of students, Erasmus projects).

Source: Portuguese fiche

In Finland, education for refugee children takes place initially in reception centres where children are taught in Finnish or Swedish based on a personalised learning plan.[124] NAMS in Germany are first placed in reception classes. These classes are a combination of the German language, central school topics and general information about Germany and its school system.[125] In Lithuania, reception classes can be formed if there are significant differences in terms of education level or if a newly arrived migrant pupil does not know or lack Lithuanian language skills.[126] Similarly, the Polish system allows for placement in either reception classes if available, or directly in mainstream classes, based on the decision of school heads and parents.[127] In the Netherlands, education for newcomers is often limited to one or two years of care in a language class, after which a learner has to blend in with the regular group of learners.[128]

Inclusive school climate

NAMS welcoming and reception strategies focus predominantly on 1) language acquisition, and 2) immediate or subsequent enrolment in mainstream education. SIRIUS country reviews demonstrate that little reception procedures and classes focus on other topics such as the host country's culture and society.

124 Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Finland
125 Claudia Köhler (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Germany
126 Justinas Didika (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Lithuania
127 Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland
128 Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands

Box 16. Content of reception classes and procedures in Germany, Lithuania, and Portugal

NAMS in **Germany** are first placed in reception classes. These classes offer a combination of the German language, central school topics and general information about Germany and its school system. Though they do not have classes together with native students, sometimes they get to sit-in the regular classes as guests. Before school entry, children and young people go through an assessment of the stage of linguistic competence, and if necessary, take subsequent language promotion courses. These measures are particularly meant to support migrant learners and learners with deficits in language development. They receive individual support which enables them to achieve inclusion both in school, at work and in the society with as much independence as possible.

As part of the reception procedure, **Lithuanian** schools are recommended to apply a holistic approach during the initial conversations with the child and their family and identify learning, psychosocial and emotional needs of the pupil and provide targeted support measures to ensure successful integration.

In addition to formal language learning, **Portuguese** schools (within the scope of its autonomy) will be able to provide other projects, activities or courses aimed at the development of the Portuguese language and culture and that also promote the recognition and appreciation of diversity as an opportunity and as a source of learning for all, with respect for the multiculturalism of the school community (e.g. schools that have intercultural mediators, international exchanges of students, Erasmus projects).

Source : German fiche, LT fiche, PT fiche.

The results of the SIRIUS watch study demonstrate that welcoming and reception strategies are mainly focused on the acquisition of the schooling language and transition to mainstream education. Inclusive pedagogies facilitating the reception of NAMS in mainstream education are limited, besides the more general approaches to inclusive education listed in 2.2.3. and 2.2.6.

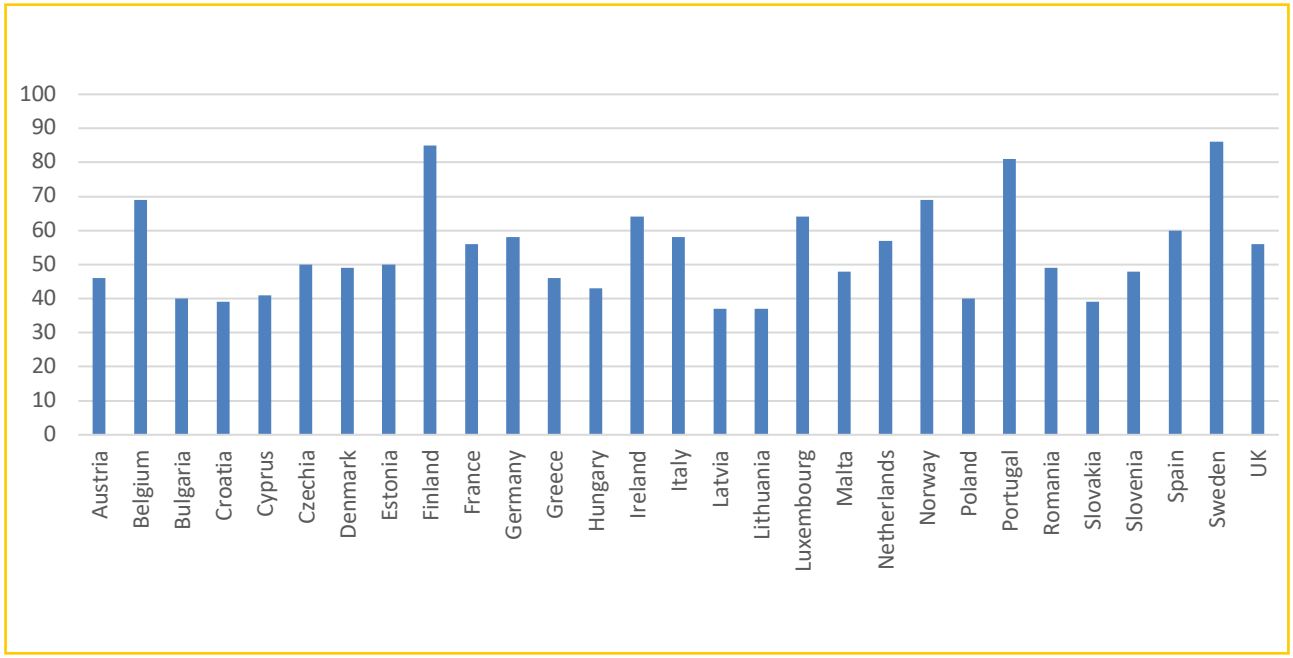
It is crucial that countries recognise that the transition to mainstream education is facilitated not only through language acquisition, but also inclusive climate supporting sense of belonging of newcomer children. This is a two-way street which requires the migrant child to have sufficient knowledge of the culture and habits of the host community, but also requires native children to understand how reception procedures and cultural differences may affect the integration of a migrant child in the classroom. Therefore, reception procedures should be expanded to include cultural awareness training for both the migrant child and the native children.

2.2.6. Inclusive pedagogies

Literature reviews and country studies for the current report have demonstrated that various approaches to inclusive education can be introduced to support the integration of migrant children. Firstly, governments should have overarching principles and strategies focusing on inclusive education for the purpose of migrant integration. Secondly, as mentioned in the previous section 2.2.3., teachers should be prepared to mediate and facilitate learning in a multicultural environment. Thirdly, schools should explore additional options and staff to support integration and inclusion, such as teaching assistants and peer mentors. This section will discuss the presence of policies to support inclusive education for migrant children in general, and the presence of support staff and peer-mentoring efforts in European schools.

According to the **Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) index (2019),** not many EU countries yet have inclusive education policies in place that would support integration of migrant learners and no country yet scores 100.

Figure 7. Level of education integration policies in the EU countries, 2019.



Source: MIPEX 2019, accessible via https://www.mipex.eu/play/ *(indicator: Education)*

Finland and Sweden are among the top countries in terms of their policies to promote inclusive schooling, closely followed by Portugal. The chart demonstrates great diversity among European countries and shows that some countries are still quite behind on their introduction of inclusive policies.

Across Europe, the creation of a welcoming and inclusive school climate for NAMS is mostly conducted on a school-by-school basis. A few countries indicated that governments developed clear **guidelines and strategies for the creation of inclusive school environments** and these strategies are often of a general nature rather than targeted at migrants specifically.

Box 17 Examples of inclusive school climate strategies

The **Finnish** Ministry of Education and Culture developed a ten-point comprehensive action plan to fight racism, hate speech, and to promote social inclusion. Within this plan, people who work with children and young people gain education and new skills for their work in multicultural settings.

The **French** *Law n ° 2013-595 of July 8, 2013 of orientation and programming for the overhaul of the school of the Republic* reaffirmed the need to promote an inclusive school for all children, under common law, as a tool "to fight against social and territorial inequalities in terms of academic and educational success". The principle of inclusive education and access to quality training for all students is enshrined in the education code.

The **Irish** Intercultural Education Strategy ("IES") aims to ensure that:

- all students experience an education that "respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership" (Education Act, 1998).
- all education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

Source: Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020), Nathalie Auger (2020), Merike Darmody (2020)

However, there is a lot of effort on the ground (by schools and school communities) to promote inclusive school cultures. A variety of initiatives include classes on tolerance, the experiences of refugees and on the cultures of their countries of origin (e.g. in Bulgaria).[129] Erasmus+ projects are also used to develop programmes for schools to build inclusive environment (e.g. the Inclusive Schools project).[130] The Polish government launches yearly calls for project proposals aimed at supporting educational initiatives in a multicultural school setting.[131]

129 Bistra Ivanova (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Bulgaria
130 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece.
131 Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland

Schools in Slovenia often promote an inclusive school climate with special events where the different cultures of their students are presented and the parents of students meet each other.[132] Other countries have similar initiatives. This shows that grants and school-NGO cooperation on a local level are often the main measures used to create tolerant, inclusive school climates and that there are limited systemic approaches (laws, strategies, or national funding models) to facilitate inclusion.

Box 18 Examples of school or NGO-led initiatives for inclusive schools

In **Estonia**, the *Tolerant School project* was launched by the Estonian School Student Councils' Union in 2015. Having facilitated successful campaigns, their latest project offers an opportunity for pupils and teachers to apply for funding to implement a project for fostering tolerance at their school. As the project's first campaigns were social media campaigns, they have already utilised new technologies. A great part of their activities being face-to-face workshops in schools and the annual Conference of Tolerance, and in May 2021, an online conference was held on cyberbullying.

The **Croatian** Step by step association (NGO) developed its own self – assessment tool for social inclusion of schools and kindergartens who are involved in the integration of migrant children. The purpose of the tool is to encourage continuous and systematic monitoring, analysis and planning of social inclusion of migrants and other children from vulnerable groups in kindergartens and schools. The tool can be used instead or together with other self-assessment or self-evaluation tools, all in the function of improving the efficiency of kindergartens and schools and the improvement of the quality of education.

Source: Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020), Elli Pijaca (2020).

Prior research by the SIRIUS network has found that **peer-to-peer mentoring for migrant children** is an effective, hands-on tool for reducing the achievement gap that requires comparatively little legislative and financial effort.[133] The involvement of mentors and role models from the same ethnic background can also support migrant children and their families to integrate better and understand the school system in their host country. In this case, mentors are often older immigrant peers who have successfully completed education in

132 Alenka Gril, Janja Žmavc and Sabina Autor (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Slovenia
133 SIRIUS (2014). Mentoring: What can support projects do that schools can't? Policy brief

the host country themselves and are therefore able to guide the children in terms of individual homework support, but also in relation to family matters that teachers may not be able to relate to or understand.[134] Additionally, a closer cooperation between the education system and migrant-led organisations can facilitate better understanding of the needs of migrant learners by policy-makers.[135]

The SIRIUS Clear Agenda points out that "*peer mentoring projects need to be promoted as an integral part of policy making in education*" and that "*Immigrants should be equally represented in peer-to-peer mentoring schemes, both as beneficiaries of mentoring and homework centres, but also as mentors who can act as role models in their local area for learners with or without a migrant background.*"[136]

Across the countries studied for this paper, only two countries were found to have national-level policies or approaches that facilitate peer mentoring in education.

Box 19 National approaches to peer mentoring

In May 2010, the **Finnish** Ministry of Education and Culture launched the national program for teachers' continuing education (Osaava) within which the Finnish model of Peer-group mentoring (PGM) is implemented. Through Osaava, persons working in education, heads of educational departments and institutions, teachers above the age of 55, full- and part-time teachers, and persons who attended continuing education to a minimum level or not at all, participate in peer-group mentoring. Through this activity, migrant learners who are part of an institution or educational setting that is a member of Osaava can benefit from sharing and reflecting on their experiences, discussing problems and challenges encountered in their work, listening, encouraging one another, and learning from each other.

The **Lithuanian** General education plan No. V-417 (2019) stipulates that schools may use the help of volunteer peers in order to foster the learning of newly arrived pupils and integrate them into the school life. Peer mentoring and non-formal education are used for the smooth integration of foreign students in general education institutions. This is especially highlighted by the members of the network of schools that have more experience working with returnees/foreign pupils.

Source: Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020) and Justinas Didika (2020)

134 Lipnickienė, K. Siarova, H., van der Graaf, L. (2018) Role of non-formal education in migrant children inclusion: links with schools. SIRIUS Watch Report 2018.
135 SIRIUS (2014). A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education.
136 SIRIUS (2014). A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education.

Despite the lack of national approaches to peer mentoring, the use of mentoring in education is already quite widespread in several European countries, although mainly implemented on a local level, based on local needs. Schools in Ireland introduced buddy systems whereby a new student is paired with a student volunteer to help them with initial settling-in difficulties.[137] The mentoring approach for migrant integration is gaining popularity in Poland and one can see an increase in the number of local authorities and institutions that are experimenting with mentoring migrant families, employees and students.[138] Some Slovenian schools collaborate with local NGOs which provide assistance in learning Slovene language and culture for migrant children and their parents by cultural mediators, who are professionals with migrant background and speak the same language as the migrant family in need (e.g. Albanian).[139] In the Netherlands, peer-to-peer mentoring is already implemented on a wider scale (see the Box below).

Box 20 Peer mentoring for migrant children in the Netherlands

The **Dutch** organization Onderwijs is Meer has developed a method called Peer2Peer and provides a variety of trainings for schools related to Peer roles. Among those different Peer roles is the Peer Buddy Newcomers role. This specific peer role is developed for the intake in education and the International Transition classes. The peers support migrant learners with the Dutch language, getting used to a different country and dealing with a new school system. In addition, Peer2Peer collaborated with Learn2Gether, another peer mentoring organization, for a 2016-2017 program called Peer Buddy Newcomers. Five different schools across the country where chosen to execute different projects and activities around peer tutoring NAMS. There are also several organizations that connect students and peers to each other, such as "Jij & ik", an organization that works with peer buddies for students in secondary education that recently arrived in The Netherlands.

Source: Laurinde Koster & Tomislav Tudjman (2020)

However, SIRIUS review also shows that a number of country have no clear migrant peer mentoring programmes on national or local levels. A study conducted by PPMI in Lithuania highlighted that although peer mentoring is encouraged, teachers face lack of guidance on how and to what extent they can involve other pupils as well as use non-formal education to help learners with migrant backgrounds in their integration.[140]

137 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
138 Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland
139 Alenka Gril, Janja Žmavc and Sabina Autor (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Slovenia
140 Justinas Didika (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Lithuania

Besides peer mentoring, Eurydice found that **teaching assistants** in classrooms can provide help with both the schooling language, as well with general curriculum access and integration in the class. They are often bi-lingual (speaking the mother tongue of the student) and work individually with students or in small groups. Assistants with a migrant background can mediate between the cultural and linguistic context of the migrant child and the host school and community. They can help to foster relations between pupils, their parents, and the school, as parents often do not speak the language of schooling. In Belgium (German-speaking Community), the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg, Austria, Poland, Finland and Sweden, central regulations allow for hiring assistants.[141]

Box 21. National structures to support teaching assistants for migrant and minority children

Foreseen by the end of 2020, the **Lithuanian** Demography, Migration and Integration Policy Strategy 2018-2030 also notes a creation of a legal and financial framework for having additional practitioners in the classroom: teacher's assistant and an assistant for students who would foster comprehensive integration of NAMS/returnees in schools.

The **Bulgarian** Ordinance on the Financing of the Institutions in the System of Pre-school and School Education, adopted in 2017, specifically allows for the appointment of a social worker, educational mediator or teacher's assistant to support children who do not possess sufficient Bulgarian language skills.

In **Croatia**, according to official criteria for financing national minority programmes, funding is available to employ and train Roma teaching assistants where there are large numbers of Roma students. However, the actual number of Roma teaching assistants in the country is minimal.

One of the solutions instrumental to facilitating the integration of NAMS is the **Polish** education system is the employment of teacher assistants (most often called cultural/multicultural assistants) - non-instructional school staff assisting the school community: students, parents and teachers in day-to-day communication and coordination. Cultural assistants are usually financed by the local governments and employed by schools (local governments are bodies managing schools in Poland) or are employed by NGO's within various projects. It is not uncommon to have them support the integration of migrant students in more than one school. Cultural assistants have to speak the native language of the migrant student, there are no other formal requirements for that position.

Source: Justinas Didika (2020), Bistra Ivanova (2020), Elli Pijaca (2020), Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020).

141 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017. Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe – 2017 Edition

Compared to teacher training for diversity, overall strategies for the creation of inclusive education systems seem to be more prevalent across Europe, although such strategies are not always directly tailored towards schools, or towards migrant children. Existing approaches to inclusive education are based on different strategies which all touch upon a certain element of inclusivity for migrant children or are dependent on the initiative and capacities of individual schools and NGOs. It is also doubtful to what extent inclusive education strategies for multicultural classrooms can be effective when the teacher is not trained to manage diversity and multicultural learning environments (as found in section 2.2.3).

Box 22. Holistic cooperation between teachers, teaching assistants, parents, and other actors to support inclusive education in Finland

Global Education Park, an associate member of Education **Finland**, has outlined several visions for an inclusive school climate in the Finnish city of Joensuu and beyond, through the implementation of its programs. For instance, supporting children from a multicultural background through active co-operation between teachers, teaching assistants, other professionals, and parents; by including pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes; providing special needs education in small teaching groups; providing support for individual students by ensuring education assistants, classroom teachers, and special educators work together in providing varying needs necessary for addressing cases of a cultural, mental, physical, behavioral, cultural, or linguistic nature.

Using guidelines on preparatory education, set up by the national core curriculum, preparatory education is organized for all immigrants to enable them to gain the skills needed to attend basic education. The learning programs are usually organized in Finnish, but there are opportunities for bilingual studies in English and Russian at the level of kindergarten, primary, comprehensive, and high schooling. Activities involving the interaction between minorities and mainstream cultural groups are fostered by the use of technological models and materials such using the means of movies and toolboxes.

Source: Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020)

The fact that inclusive education depends on, and is achieved through, multiple national and school-level conditions, requires governments to design strategies for inclusive education that are multifaceted, involve multiple stakeholders, and provide for a holistic approach to the integration of migrant children through education.

2.2.7 Inclusive VET systems

Quality inclusive VET systems have the possibility to support migrant integration by connecting them to the labour market based on their skills and qualifications. Many countries have already introduced innovations in their VET

systems, including automated self-assessments, fast-track procedures and local community training supported by mentors.[142] However, VET systems need to be adaptive and flexible towards the needs of migrant children to ensure that education is relevant and useful to them and builds a bridge between the host country's labour market and the skills and abilities of migrant learners.[143] Research by OECD informs that multiple barriers to VET exists for migrants which are common across Europe, namely a lack of skills necessary in the host country, prior knowledge or qualifications; the lack of a social network to link them to prospective employers, and; the lack of host-country specific knowledge and understanding, in particular on the VET system and opportunities.[144]

For these reasons, the SIRIUS Clear Agenda encourages governments to *guarantee equal access to high quality VET*. Key factors for success listed in the agenda include for example the *increased cooperation between VET providers and migrant communities; increased number of migrant-led SMEs as apprenticeship facilitators; investment in research on the situation of migrant learners in VET, and; awareness-raising of the opportunities brought by VET to migrant learners and their families*.[145]

Currently, research conducted within the SIRIUS network shows that in many countries, the VET system is the most popular option among migrant learners, but also is usually over-represented with learners with lower socio-economic background in general. In the Netherlands, there is a clear overrepresentation of migrants in VET as 70% of children educated in special international classes transfer to VET.[146] Contrarily, in Italy only 5,6% of working immigrants took part in VET training, compared to 10,9% of native Italian workers.[147]

In countries with different levels of VET (early tracking systems), migrant and children with disadvantaged backgrounds are more commonly found in the lowest tracks. There are various reasons for that, related to urban segregation, low prestige and attractiveness of VET and the low quality of VET. In Germany where migrants are overrepresented in lower secondary tracks and underrepresented in higher secondary tracks lead to an underrepresentation of migrants in VET for highly qualified professions and an overrepresentation in VET for low qualified

142 Cedefop (2017) Vocational Education and Training: Bridging refugee and employer needs. Briefing Note. Retrieved from https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/9120_en.pdf
143 OECD, retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/unlocking-the-potential-of-migrants-through-vocational-education-and-training-vet.htm
144 Jeon, S. (2019) Unlocking the Potential of Migrants: Cross-country Analysis, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training, OECD Publishing, Paris.
145 SIRIUS (2014). A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education.
146 Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands
147 De Angelis (2018) Migrants and vocational training: a «bottom up» research. Retrieved from https://epale.ec.europa.eu/it/blog/migranti-e-formazione-professionale-una-ricerca-bottom

professions.[148] Similarly, in Spain, migrant children are more often found in training and insertion programmes (PFI) and higher-level vocational training (CFGM) courses than in advanced vocational training (CFGS) courses. The Portuguese expert noted that VET and professional courses have a negative stigma as they are associated with underachievers and socially vulnerable students.[149]

Schools offering VET located in disadvantaged socioeconomic areas have a greater number of NAMS in Spain.[150] The majority of young people with an immigrant background in Norway live in Oslo East. Research shows that almost half of the young people in Oslo's eastern districts choose vocational subjects in upper secondary school, suggesting the overrepresentation of migrant children in VET schools or tracks.[151]

Box 23 VET tracks and migrant enrolment in Germany

There are three main factors relevant for the representation of migrant learners in VET institutions, namely: 1) Eligibility for VET, 2) type of profession, and 3) value of the profession for gaining a residence status.

1) The conditions for entering VET vary by profession: VET for rather low qualified professions, e.g. helpers and strongly manual work based professions, only require the minimum amount of schooling of 9 years, a bit higher qualified professions require a qualified degree of the lower secondary education track or a degree of the medium secondary track, while high qualified professions require either a very good degree of the medium secondary track or a degree of the higher secondary track.
2) The above preconditions for entering VET and the fact that migrants are overrepresented in lower secondary tracks and underrepresented in higher secondary tracks leads to an underrepresentation of migrants in VET for highly qualified professions and an overrepresentation in VET for low qualified professions.
3) The new immigration law and the new asylum law provide that people who have a position for VET in a profession that Germany is short of workers (as defined by monthly report of the employment agency) have easier access to a visa or to acquire a secure residence status if already in the country, e.g. as asylum seeker. This leads to an overrepresentation of migrants in VET for some of these professions, especially in professions in the care sector.

Source: Claudia Köhler (2020)

148 Claudia Köhler (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Germany
149 Daniela Silva, Sofia Marques da Silva (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Portugal
150 Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Catalonia
151 Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Norway

The German and Spanish examples show that VET in this case may not be chosen by migrants as ideal option for their development, but as a last resort due to barriers preventing them from accessing VET for higher qualified jobs. SIRIUS reviews indicate various factors that either prevent migrants from accessing VET or that pushes migrant learners towards lower qualified VET. The French researchers indicated that the (perceived) lower skills of NAMS is often a reason for study advisors to recommend the (lower qualified) VET tracks.[152] The Greek expert explained that vocational schools require fluency in Greek language which deters migrants from accessing any form of VET.[153] The language barrier was also mentioned in the Lithuanian, Italian, Dutch and Norwegian country reports.[154] While Ireland has VET enrolment support programmes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the Irish review states that migrant children often do not possess the networks needed to be made aware of such opportunities.[155] VET schools themselves may pose a barrier. In the Netherlands, the experts believes that VET schools are reluctant to enrol NAMS students in VET if they are not convinced that the students have completed the initial reception education at the level that allows participation in vocational education.[156] The German expert indicated that for work-based VET, migrants need to have a work permit, which provides a significant limitation for asylum-seekers and refugees.[157]

Cedefop noted that early support measures are most effective for successful and smooth integration of migrants, which help to address the various challenges listed above. Common measures include the improvement of language skills, but also the assessment of skills, validation of prior knowledge, career guidance and work placements, training and vocational language courses.[158] In less than half of the countries researched for this report, some form of national or local initiatives were designed to support the enrolment of migrant children in VET. Several governments have introduced policies or laws for a more inclusive VET system.

152 Nathalie Auger (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for France
153 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece.
154 Justinas Didika (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Lithuania; Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Norway; Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands
155 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
156 Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands
157 Claudia Köhler (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Germany
158 Cedefop (2017) Vocational Education and Training: Bridging refugee and employer needs.

Box 24 National approaches to increase migrant participation in VET

The **Bulgarian** VET system development programme (2016-2020) defines Inclusion as one of the 5 main principles. The aim of the principle is to strengthen the importance of VET in reducing the risk of social exclusion of vulnerable and underrepresented groups. One of the measures in the Programme is "Incentives for programmes and projects supporting inclusion of all groups at risk from early school-leaving".

One of the most successful political decisions in **Spain** over the past few years to ensure fair NAMS participation was the ruling (236/2007) handed down by the Spanish Constitutional Court (Catalonia was already implementing it because of its autonomy in certain areas of competence) enabling those students without residence status (NAMS and refugees) to enrol (in VET or any other training course) in the same conditions as other students, thus facilitating social inclusion and employment. The Ministry of Education provides schools with points for consideration, methodological guidelines, advice and training related to language and social support for NAMS entering the Catalan educational system directly via VET and who require specific support to follow the curriculum once they are fully incorporated in the mainstream classroom.

Refugees in **Germany** whose claim for asylum was rejected and who found a place for VET have the opportunity to apply for a toleration on the basis of the VET ('Ausbildungsduldung') for three years of vocational training plus two years permission to stay for work after the completion of the vocational training (Weiser, 2017). These measures are meant to facilitate access to VET for third country nationals but also provide more security for employers and thereby motivating them to accept asylum seekers as apprentices. This possibility is open for all refugees, regardless of the type of accommodation

The **Italian** Public Notice 2/2019, with a financial endowment of 3 million euros, funds projects with a focus on pre-departure training and orientation activities for the entry of third country citizens for reasons of family reunification, work and internships. The main objective is therefore that of professional training, learning the Italian language (basic level) and the essential elements of civic education and legislation on health and safety in the workplace.

Source: Bistra Ivanova (2020), Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020), Claudia Köhler (2020), Micaela Valentino (2020).

In Finland, migrants can enrol in VET free of charge.[159] In 2019, Estonia introduced the Choice of Profession curriculum, which supports disadvantaged young people, such as NEET youth, young people with limited knowledge of Estonian, and NAMS. The curriculum focuses on transferrable skills and key competences related to choosing a profession and is perceived as great step towards making VET more accessible.[160]

In Greece there has been an initiative of VET career counsellors to visit refugee schools and multicultural (migrant-dominated) schools. Additionally, there is a plan for a pilot VET apprenticeship programme in which 1000 refugee and other migrant groups will have primary access and support.[161]

Box 25 Examples of initiatives to facilitate participation in VET for migrants in Germany and Netherlands

There is a large variety of programs and networks across Germany that target the attractiveness of VET for migrant learners, their access to and integration into VET and support SMEs who employ migrant learners as apprentices. These programs include, but are not limited to:

- 'Berufsorientierung für Flüchtlinge' (Professional orientation for refugees) and 'Perspektiven für junge Flüchtlinge im Handwerk' (Prospects for young refugees in crafts) – both orientation programs for refugees lasting for several months in order to learn about and familiarise themselves with the different craft professions.
- 'Step by Step in die betriebliche Ausbildung' (Step by Step into professional training) – a model for integrating young refugees with ‚high prospects to stay" into VET. Cooperation partners are employers, unions, the Ministry of Migration and Refugees and the Ministry of Labour. For those who find a VET position, the Ministry of Labour provides supports for employers as well as additional language courses.
- 'Integrationsrichtlinie Bund' (Federal intergration guideline) and 'Integration von Asylbewerber/-innen und Flüchtlingen' (Integration of asylum seekers and refugees) – both provide orientation and counselling for asylum seekers who are in search of VET as well as for employers who want to hire asylum seekers for a VET position.
- 'Koordinierungsstelle Ausbildung und Migration' (Coordination point for VET and migration) – a program that targets migrant-led SMEs; it qualifies them as VET-providers and supports the integration of migrants into VET.
- 'Ankommen in Deutschland' (Arriving in Germany) – a network of the Chambers of Industry and Commerce that runs programs for the integration of refugees into VET.

159 Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Finland
160 Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Estonia
161 Nektaria Palaiologou (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Greece.

- 'Netzwerk Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge' (Network companies integrate refugees) – a network that supports SMEs that provide VET for refugees (Stark für Ausbildung, no date).

In the Netherlands, the StartMeter-N (newcomers) helps with mapping education, work experience, language level and the possible opportunities and obstacles to it entering (VET) education. This tool helps with better placement of newcomers in VET and thus the prevention of dropout. The StartMeter-N is a combination of tests that measure different aspects: capacities, personality, the image the student has of education, interests, the study situation, the degree of self-reliance, hindering factors (including possible traumatization), Dutch language level (plus possibly English language level) and competences. The StartMeter-N is an online tool and results in an automated report. It gives the supervisor a clear picture of the newcomer to allow an appropriate trajectory in the direction of education, language, counselling, or care offered. The report easy to interpret for educational staff and counsellors, as well as by students and their parents and carers. The StartMeter-N can be taken in several languages: Dutch, English, Arabic, Tigrinya and Farsi.

Source: Claudia Köhler (2020)

The VET system (both initial and continuing VET) can provide a crucial bridge for migrants to the labour market and overall integration. However, the current study has demonstrated that migrants are overrepresented in (the lowest categories of) VET due to their lower achievement in secondary school, linguistic abilities, or socio-economic status. As a result, access for migrants to VET is often a last resort and not a logical pathway to achieve their full potential.

There are a variety of steps that need to be taken in this regard:

- Firstly, compulsory education systems must ensure that all higher education paths remain open to migrant students and avoid "automatic" transition to VET as last resort. This includes the recognition of diverse skill sets and prior learning, sufficient linguistic support, and the combating of stereotypes regarding migrant children and VET by education and career advisors. Enrolment in VET for migrant children should, like native children, be based on professional ambitions and educational achievements.
- Secondly, like with school education, VET institutions with predominantly migrant students or students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are likely to also suffer from lack of qualified teachers and sufficient, quality, materials. Countries should ensure that VET institutions in disadvantaged neighbourhoods receive sufficient support to provide quality education and apprenticeship positions to both its native and migrant students. This may require -like in schools- the presence of teaching assistants and/or additional linguistic support classes.
- Thirdly, countries should review the barriers for VET enrolment that were found in some European countries and design policies that support smooth enrolment in VET for migrant children.

CHAPTER 3:
Emerging threats and drivers affecting future developments in inclusive education

3.1. Socio-demographic changes and challenges

3.1.1. General trends and challenges in terms of migration

Demographic change is one of the most inert trends that will continue to affect future developments in inclusive education. It may be linked to a number of different developments in society, however, in this context, it is viewed from the perspective of two interlinked issues: growing diversity and raising socio-economic inequalities.

Although temporarily on hold in light of COVID-19 crisis[162], a broader perspective indicates an image on the continuous growth in global mobility generally as well as in the number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (OECD, 2019a[163]; European Education and Training Expert Panel, 2019[164]; IOM, 2019[165]). Looking at the time span of the last 20 years, the estimated number of international migrants increased from 150 million in 2000 to 272 million in 2020. In Europe, this figure increased by nearly 10 % in the last 4 years. At the same time, the influx of newly arrived pupils in European school systems is becoming more diverse in terms of countries of origin and socio-economic background. Students also tend to experience multiple transitions between different school systems (Herzog-Punzengerger et al., 2017)[166]. These developments, combined with the falling birth rate and aging population in Europe, will continue to result in more culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms that provide both challenges and opportunities

162 Looking into the future, experts note that some global developments such as rising sea levels will inevitably mean increasing migrant flows in the future. On the other hand, it is also underlined that more and more companies are speeding up their plans to automate their businesses, which is especially apparent in the context of the pandemic. This may lead to reduction of the need of labour migration. See e.g. Ryhnart, G. (2020), 'Uncertain future for migrant workers, in a post-pandemic world', UN News, Retrieved at: https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1072562.

163 OECD (2019) Trends Shaping Education 2019

164 European Education and Training Expert Panel (2019). Issue paper – Demographic challenges. Advanced draft for the Forum on the Future of Learning.

165 IOM (2019). World Migration report 2020. Geneva: International Organisation for Migration.

166 Herzog-Punzenberger, B.; Le Pichon-Vorstman, E.; Siarova, H. (2017), 'Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned', NESET II report, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017. doi: 10.2766/71255.

in terms of developments in inclusive education (De Backer et al., 2016)[167].

These and other studies show that migrant learners face a lot of obstacles in accessing the public education (especially in pre-school and post-compulsory education), have longer breaks in their education or are pressed to attend vocational education rather than tertiary, also being more prone to drop-out early. As noted in the SIRIUS survey by the equality expert in the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), key obstacles for migrant education include language barriers, administrative bureaucracy, limited capacities of schools and shortage of teachers[168]. The situation is especially challenging for unaccompanied minors. The expert also notes that there is the lack of holistic approach to education as well as educational systems are not sufficiently equipped to deal with migrants and refugees in an effective and inclusive manner which would ensure targeted support. Practitioners and other education personnel are often left alone and unprepared to deal with the issue of including migrant learners in education.

These challenges can have a profound effect on migrant learners' learning and development and will continue to shape education system education systems in the foreseeable future. According to the Eurydice report (2019)[169], such issues can be broadly linked to three categories:

1. **Migration process** – including the issue leaving the home country; acquiring a new language and adapting to new rules and routines in schools (Hamilton, 2013)[170].

2. **Political and socio-economic context** – including favourable policy context for inclusion and equality in general as well as available resources to education systems and school for promoting integration (Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014)[171].

3. **Participation in education** – that, among other aspects, includes the scope of the initial assessment of both academic and non-academic aspects (i.e. social, emotional and health issues); grade placement; access of learning and socio-emotional support; competence of teachers and school staff to deal with diversity in the classroom,

167 De Backer, F., Van Avermaet, P. & Slembrouck, S. (2017). Schools as Laboratories for Exploring Multilingual Assessment Policies and Practices. Language and Education, 31(3), 217–230.
168 SIRIUS stakeholder survey, 2020.
169 Eurydice (2019) Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures
170 Hamilton, P.L., 2013. It's not all about academic achievement: Supporting the social and emotional needs of migrant worker children. Pastoral Care in Education, 31(2), pp. 173-190.
171 Sinkkonen, H.-M., Kyttälä, M., 2014. Experiences of Finnish teachers working with immigrant students. European Journal of Special Needs Education, 29(2), pp. 167-183.

etc. (Reakes, 2007[172]; Nilsson & Axelsson, 2013[173]; Trasberg & Kond, 2017[174]).

Evidence indicates that refugee learners and asylum seekers are particularly vulnerable to these challenges and addressing their specific needs will be increasingly important. Despite facing additional layers of disadvantage that is not necessarily applicable to other migrant groups, refugee learners are often blended with other migrant groups and are not specifically targeted in research (e.g. PISA) or treated as a homogenous group, which prevents detailed examination relevant for developing appropriate educational support (OECD. 2019b)[175]. In addition to the need of adjusting to the new environment, refugee children and asylum seekers, due to the forced nature of migration, frequently face context-specific obstacles related to limited prior education and lack of documentation, insecure housing, poverty, mental issues, disruption of family networks and discrimination (Essomba, 2017[176]; UNICEF, 2017[177]; Dryden-Peterson, 2016[178]).

Due to the cross-border conflicts and intrastate violence, as well as humanitarian and ecological disasters on a global scale, forced migration is likely to continue to be a pressing issue in the future. A specific view on forced migrant groups in the context of the educational trends that are foreseen to be continuously, if not increasingly, present in the upcoming years is thus also highlighted by SIRIUS experts in the countries which faced significant increase of irregular migrants during the last few years, namely Germany, Greece and UK. Among indicated problems, limited access to education for those with insecure legal status, issues in terms of housing, and quality of education are highlighted (see **Section 2.2.1; 2.2.5)**.

3.1.2. Rising socio-economic inequality

Connected to the socio-demographic developments, the other increasingly pressing issue deeply linked to inclusive education is the rise of socio-economic inequality. Globalisation has contributed to significant economic growth for all households. The income and wealth however is becoming increasingly concentrated at the top as today the richest 10 %, across OECD countries, earn more than nine times (up

172 Reakes, A., 2007. The education of asylum seekers: Some UK case studies. Research in Education, 77(1), pp. 92-107.
173 Nilsson, J., Axelsson, M., 2013. "Welcome to Sweden…": Newly arrived students' experiences o pedagogical and social provision in introductory and regular classes. International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 6(1), pp. 137-164.
174 Trasberg, K., Kond, J., 2017. Teaching new immigrants in Estonian schools – Challenges for a support network. Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia, 38, pp. 90-100.
175 OECD (2019) Refugee education: Integration models and practices in OECD countries
176 Essomba, M. (2017), "The right to education of children and youngsters from refugee families in Europe", Intercultural Education, Vol. 28/2, pp. 206-218
177 UNICEF (2017) Education Uprooted For every migrant, refugee and displaced child, education. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/reports/education-uprooted
178 Dryden-Peterson, S. (2016), "Refugee education in countries of first asylum: Breaking open the black box of pre-settlement experiences", Theory and Research in Education, Vol. 14/2, pp. 131-148.

from seven times 25 years ago) the income of the equivalent poorest part of the population (OECD. 2019a). Evidence indicates that the rising economic inequalities are even more profound within countries. This becomes particularly important as such inequalities are felt in day to day context (United Nations, 2018)[179]. Such trends are worrisome as it further adds to the inequality of opportunity that translates into large disparities in well-being.

The importance of this context is underlined by the fact that migrant students tend to be socio-economically disadvantaged as students with immigrant background tend to have a lower socioeconomic status which further adds to the difficulties they face (European Commission, 2018)[180], In many European countries, including Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and Sweden, at least two out of five immigrant students were disadvantaged (OECD, 2018a)[181]. It is shown that education systems in Europe rather than shifting the socio-economic inequality tend to maintain or even reinforce the existing trend as it fails to foster the potential of diversity in classrooms (European Commission, 2016[182]; van der Berg, 2018[183]). Amounting evidence suggests that it is the socio-economic relates to a number of issues faced by learners with migrant backgrounds, including the disparity in educational attainment (SIRIUS, 2014[184]; OECD, 2018a). Therefore, addressing socio-economic inequalities will continue to be a crucial question in fostering the inclusion of migrant learners in education.

3.1.3. Educational response to socio-demographic trends and challenges

Focusing on issues resulting from this trend leads to a lot of opportunities. Migrant education, understood within the wider discourse on inclusive education for all, will certainly be on the agenda for the foreseeable future as it largely interlinks with the core goals envisaged for education in the EU. This is reflected in the new multiannual financial framework of the EU where Erasmus+ and European Social Fund (now European Social Fun Plus) programmes, designed to tackle many of the above-mentioned issues, are foreseen to grow in size and become more inclusive to young people, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds (European Commission, 2018a[185]). One of the main aims

179 Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/en/un75/inequality-bridging-divide
180 European Commission (2018). Education and Training Monitor 2018. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
181 PISA (2019) Volume 2 – Where all students can succeed
182 European Commission (2016). PISA 2015: EU performance and initial conclusions regarding education policies in Europe. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.35709.36328
183 van der Berg, S. (2018). What International Educational Evaluations Tell Us about Education Quality in Developing Nations. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 26(50).
184 SIRIUS (2014). A Clear Agenda on Migrant Education.
185 Communication from the Commission, A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends, The Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027. Brussels, 2.5.2018, COM(2018) 321 final.

is also the creation of the European Education Area (EEA) to be achieved until 2025. It corresponds to the issues and opportunities brought by current and emerging socio-demographic challenges and envisions the need to make foreign qualifications recognised across the EU; making studying and learning abroad a norm; developing a standard of knowing two languages in addition to one's mother tongue; building a strong sense of European identity in terms of its diversity and cultural heritage as well as ensuring access to high-quality education for all, irrespective of socio-economic background (European Commission, 2018b)[186].

Achieving the aim of high-quality education for all, irrespective of socio-economic background, will require continuous development in education systems both in terms of addressing the obvious and immediate issues resulting from this trend but also longer-term, systemic issues. Some of the most important pointers in this field include but are not limited to (OECD, 2019a):

Providing support and targeted skill development (e.g. language learning) for newly arrived migrants, including both students and parents.

Adapting the curriculum, instruction and assessment methods as well as organisational culture of educational settings to reflect increasing cultural and linguistic diversity.

Acknowledging multicultural backgrounds in the classroom and providing educational practitioners with the tools to teach in diverse classrooms.

Fostering international mobility and collaboration between students, educational staff and researchers.

Addressing the issue of segregation through fair admission criteria, controlled choice schemes, and a redistributive use of educational resources.

Providing high-quality early childhood and care, specifically targeting low-income households.

Fostering the translation of international educational aims to the national contexts.

3.2. Rise of divisive attitudes

3.2.1. General trends and examples from SIRIUS partners

The second emerging trend that will affect migrant and inclusive education in general, is rising divisive attitudes. This trend reflects the developments that are, in part, linked with socio-demographic challenges, especially in terms of increased global mobility. In recent years, immigration issues are increasingly contentious throughout the political agenda

186 European Commission (2018). 'Towards a European Education Area', April 9, 2020. Retrieved at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

in Europe as far-right wing groups across the region promote false public statements or 'fake news' designed to provoke negative emotions that are continuously repeated even if proved untrue (McAuliffe, 2018)[187]. Researchers note that international migration is increasingly becoming weaponised and used as a tool to undermine democracy and inclusive civic engagement by fostering the fear originating from the general accelerated pace of change and rising uncertainty of our times (Ritholtz, 2017)[188]. An indication of these developments is evident in the context of the Global Pact for Migration where the negative online campaigns played a significant role in generating backlash in several European countries, prompting some Governments to withdraw (McAuliffe, 2018).

The increasing inflow of immigrants and growing domestic diversity are among the issues that challenge the traditional notion of citizenship and put the shared values as well as the European Union project to the test (Golubeva, 2018)[189]. Recent evidence indicates polarised attitudes as 40 % of Europeans view immigration as more of a problem than an opportunity as well as more than half of the respondents in 10 EU countries[190] note that they want fewer immigrants in their countries (European Commission, 2018c[191]; Conor and Krogstad, 2018)[192]. These developments combined with increasing intolerance and radicalisation among adults and young people alike (Van Briel et al., 2016)[193] will continue to impact the well-being of migrant learners as it hinders the progress of creating more supportive and inclusive education systems.

Recent Eurobarometer studies show that since the increased number of refugees in 2015, Europeans consider immigration to be the most important issue in the EU, with more than a third of people expressing this view. This opinion was only briefly surpassed in 2017 after

187 McAuliffe, M. (2018) The link between migration and technology is not what you think. Agenda, 14 December. World Economic Forum, Geneva. Available at www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/12/socialmedia-is-casting-a-dark-shadow-over-migration/.

188 Ritholtz, B. (2017) The world is about to change even faster: Having trouble keeping up? The pace of innovation and disruption is accelerating. Bloomberg Opinion, 6 July. Available at www.bloomberg. com/opinion/articles/2017-07-06/the-world-is-about-to-change-even-faster.

189 Golubeva, I. (2018). 'The links between education and active citizenship/civic engagement', NESET Ad hoc report.

190 The 10 EU countries surveyed included Greece, Hungary, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Poland, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Spain.

191 European Commission, (2018) Integration of immigrants in the European Union. Special Eurobarometer 469. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/results-special-eurobarometer-integrationimmigrants-european-union_en.

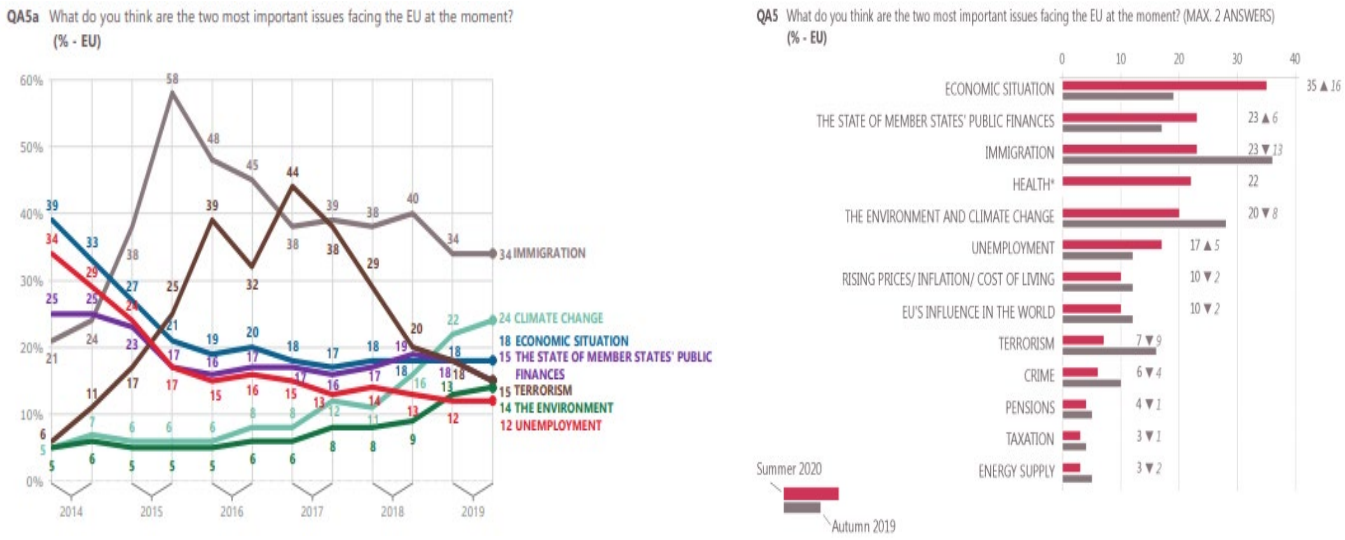
192 Connor, P. and J.M. Krogstad (2018) Many worldwide oppose more migration – both into and out of their countries. Pew Research Center, 10 December. Available at www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/10/manyworldwide-oppose-more-migration-both-into-and-out-of-their-countries/

193 Van Driel, B.; Darmody, M.; Kerzil, J. (2016). 'Education policies and practices to foster tolerance, respect for diversity and civic responsibility in children and young people in the EU', NESET II report, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union. https://doi.org:10.2766/46172.

the terrorist attacks in Europe[194]. This trend has only changed in 2020 as the COVID-19 crisis together with the resulting economic difficulties brought the questions of the economic situation (35 % of respondents) as well as the Member States' public finances (23 %) to the forefront.

Figure 8 Views on the most important issue in the EU (2014-2020)

Source: Eurobarometer (2019; 2020) surveys



Although the Eurobarometer indicates that the question of immigration tends to be seen as less important on the national level, it is clear that immigration-driven political rhetoric is present in many countries and has a great impact to the general political discourse as well as the potential developments towards inclusive education. The notion of rising divisive and xenophobic attitudes is supported by evidence provided by SIRIUS partners across Europe. These developments, often strengthened in the context of various crises, are reflected by an increasing popularity of populist and openly anti-immigrant political powers which then foster such political discourse further. This is the case in Bulgaria, where, according to experts, the openly political elite came to power through hate-speech and openly negative attitudes towards diversity[195]. To a lesser or bigger extent, similar developments were also noted by experts in other countries (See Box 26).

194 Eurobarometer 92, 2019.

195 Bistra Ivanova (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Bulgaria

Box 26 Political discourse towards immigration in Spain (Catalonia), Portugal, France and Bulgaria

In Spain (Catalonia), there is an increase in populism and the extreme-right wing as an emerging political form, and racism as discrimination and violation of the rights of foreigners. Both phenomena are growing, because the combination of economic crisis and the presence of an immigrant population generates more racist attitudes, additional space for xenophobic discourses and more discrimination. In such cases, local societies often try to find a scapegoat and immigrants often become such scapegoats. We can see this in the social setback we are experiencing with racism: from a society in which racism existed, but which had to be intangible, into a more explicit racism. Spanish political parties such as VOX use clearly racist political arguments in public space with complete impunity, and they violate constitutional democratic principles and the most basic human rights.

Portugal was receiving a lot of immigrant people in the last 10 years. With this, there was an increase of nationalist parties' seats in the parliament that express extremist ideas concerning immigrant people. This can affect, in the future, educational policy development in this field. Although such issues are present in some countries in Europe for quite time, Portugal has always resisted such populist narratives. These extremist trends can be prejudicial to the development of new political improvements to inclusive education, since the values of these political parties are not concerned with the integration of immigrants, or with the idea of inclusion more broadly.

In **France**, the political discourse and attitudes towards migration is also said to be worrying if last presidential elections, where a representative of extreme right-wing ideology took the second place, is considered. Developments such as Front National political movement and the present negative attitude may strongly affect NAMs in schools. Discussion revolving around the boundaries of separatism, communitarianism and Islam are said to present a very negative image of immigration in France, especially regarding Muslims.

In **Bulgaria**, for the first time since the beginning of the democratic transition an openly anti-democratic formations came into power in 2017 through the use of anti-Roma, anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic and homophobic rhetoric (Kachaunova, et al., 2017). The high-level political hate speech is one of the reasons for the negative public attitudes towards migration. According to an EU-wide Eurobarometer study in 2018, Bulgarians believed that the migrant population in the country was 11 % while, in fact, it was less than 2 %. Only 15 % of the respondents would accept a migrant as a colleague, doctor, neighbour or family member compared to the EU-average 57 %). These opinions are a result of the xenophobic anti-immigrant political discourse and the wide dissemination of fake news that has been intensifying in recent years (Krasteva, 2019). Despite mass protests in the summer of 2020, the government refused to resign and thus the difficult political situation presents limited possibilities for unpopular reforms, such as migrant and refugee integration. Local experts note therefore that the likelihood of positive developments in terms migrant education in the nearest future is low.

Source: Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020), Daniela Silva, Sofia Marques da Silva (2020), Nathalie Auger (2020) and Bistra Ivanova (2020)

The presented case of Bulgaria, in terms of disseminating the 'fake news' and creating a negative public discourse, presents another important aspect which has also been noticed by other country experts. Media portraits of immigrants and refugees and other often-negated social and groups are often almost extensively focused on crime and other negative news that generate prejudice and fear while narratives of cultural enrichment and similar positive views are overlooked. This is reflected in Box 27 which provides examples of media discourse of refugees being concentrated on the news of sexual and other assaults. Also, how refugee population can become almost interchangeably associated with illegal migration and the fact that significant part of population may have a negative prejudice despite not knowing or having met any refugees themselves.

Box 27 Media portrayal of immigration in Croatia, Finland and Lithuania

Since the first flow of migration through **Croatia** in 2015, the general attitudes shifted in the direction of the xenophobia, which is why refugees are now called almost exclusively illegal migrants, according to which general public express mostly fear and concern. In the regional media and on the Internet, expressions of racism and xenophobia against Serbs, LGBT persons and refugees are commonplace, as is abusive language when referring to Roma. Physical attacks against these groups as well as their property also occur. In terms of accepting diversities, Gallup's research from August 2017 included Croatia among the states whose citizens are least friendly to migrants and refugees.

Lithuanians are more likely to see the negative impact of refugees who arrive to Lithuania compared to other migrant groups. More than two-thirds of respondents agreed that refugees can increase crime rates in the country (66%) and cause social unrest (60%). Since 2015, the number of Lithuanians who think so increased by a fifth. One of the reasons behind it is related to the fact that more than a third of respondents said they had never encountered migrants in person, and more than half of them said that they learn about refugees from the media and often in the context of other countries.

The **Finnish** Ministry of the Interior's 2018-2019 International Migration report showed that based on a Meltwater media monitoring to track keywords in finding articles about immigration in the Finnish media, between July 2018 and June 2019, immigration and crime were discussed more often. For instance, the sexual offenses in Oulu were in the perpetrators were men who arrived in Finland as refugees or asylum seekers, some of whom had obtained Finnish citizenship. Other topics pertained to assaults on bus drivers, such as the Loimaa and Uurainen cases, that involved men who were denied asylum. It is understood, according to experts, that offenses involving immigrants tend to provoke strong reactions.

Source: Elli Pijaca (2020), Justinas Didika (2020), Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020)

The case of **Norway**, however, serves as a notable positive outlier in this context. The national survey contacted in 2019 shows that the trend from recent years' development continues, with increasingly immigrant - friendly attitudes (Statistics Norway, 2019). Experts indicate that there have been marginal changes from 2018 to 2019, but the long lines show that the society is becoming increasingly receptive to having immigrants in close relationships, and many agree that immigrants make a positive contribution both in the labour market and in cultural life[196]. Fewer and fewer believe that most immigrants are a source of insecurity in society or that they abuse social welfare schemes. At the same time as attitudes become more liberal, there is an increasing degree of contact with immigrants living in Norway in various arenas, whether it is at work, in the neighbourhood, among friends and acquaintances, in close family or otherwise. There are some differences in attitudes when looking at the respondents' background characteristics. Women generally have more immigrant - friendly attitudes than men, and younger people are more liberal than older people. Those who study or go to school are more immigrant-friendly than social security and pension recipients are. Those who associate with immigrants in various arenas also have more positive attitudes than people who have no contact with immigrants. There is also a distinction between city and country. Those who live in densely populated areas are more liberal than those who live in sparsely populated areas.

It is also seen that the views towards immigration differs depending on the specific migrant group in question. While immigrants from EU countries are seen in a more neutral or positive light, the opinion of asylum seekers and refugees, in many cases, is much worse. This is the case in **Estonia**, where over a half of the population (53 %) believe that the country would become a worse place to live if people from outside the European Union will settle here. The attitude towards the citizens of the European Union is much more neutral, the same figure reaching just 21%[197]. Similar tendencies are also seen in **the Netherlands** where experts note that the present largely negative characterisation and fear of the 'increasing influx of migrants' is first and foremost focused on the inflow of refugees and in particular refugees from the Middle East[198].

More negative attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers, however, should be contextualised more broadly in terms of cultural, historical and religious differences. A great example of this is **Lithuania** and **Poland** where the recent years increase of inflow of refugees from Ukraine is seen in a completely different and much more positive light, compared to

196 Fred Carlo Andersen (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Norway
197 Saar Poll (2020) in Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Estonia
198 Laurinde Koster, Romy van Leeuwen and Katja van der Schans (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for The Netherlands

asylum seekers and refugees coming from Middle East[199]. 'Ethnic hierarchy' as Fahey et al. (2019) has framed it, is also present in **Ireland** where the evidence shows more positive attitudes to White than to Muslim immigrants, the latter being seen most negatively in general together with the Irish Travellers. Additionally, just under half of adults born in Ireland believe some cultures to be superior to others while 45 % believe that some races are born harder working than others[200].

Experts from **Finland** also makes a comparison between the percentage of Finns who support the incoming of EU citizens to Finland for study purpose in contrast to those Finns who support rather the coming of persons to Finland for work purposes. Based on the poll, 80 % of the Finns interviewed were in favour of seeing more student immigration, meanwhile 75 % preferred more work-based immigration from the EU. Regarding immigrants from non-EU states, the poll indicated that 68% of respondents preferred immigrants from North America, 68% preferred immigrants from Asia. In general, 60 % respondents were less interested in seeing immigrants from the Middle East, 50 % were less keen on seeing immigrants from Africa, with many suggesting a reduction of immigrants from these areas[201].

3.2.2. Educational response to growing divisive attitudes

In this context, it should be stressed that education is the key building block for fostering intercultural dialogue and building inclusive and coherent societies. Evidence shows that in the EU, only 16 % of people feel that education is currently achieving this goal, while 95 % note that that education should help more young people to understand the importance to understand and adhere to common values[202]. It is known that civic education is linked to increased tolerance and trust and thus can help tackle the issues for inclusive education caused by increasingly divisive attitudes. The question therefore of whether and how can our education systems fully exploit its potential in, among other aspects, preventing radicalisation and fostering civic involvement will be increasingly relevant for years to come (OECD, 2019a).

This notion is confirmed by the priorities of the new Commission, namely 'A new push for European democracy' and 'Promoting our European way of life', which stipulate closely related needs of strengthening the civic engagement and involvement of Europeans in the decision-making process as well as protecting core European values such as the rule of law, equality, tolerance and social fairness (European

199 Justinas Didika (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Lithuania; lga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland
200 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
201 Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Finland
202 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document "proposal for a Council Recommendation on common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching" 2018, retrieved from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018SC0013&from=EN

Commission, 2019a[203]; European Commission, 2019b[204]). Education plays a pivotal role in fostering a European identity as well as in promoting common values and active citizenship which form some of the fundamental aspects of the European Education Area (Council of the European Union, 2018[205]). Promoting inclusive education, encouraging a European dimension of teaching by offering a diverse range of support to teachers and educational institutions are seen as core measures for strengthening social cohesion, fighting xenophobia, divisive nationalism, and the spread of disinformation (European Commission, 2020)[206].

In light of growing divisive attitudes, a new push for democracy in education will be important for the foreseeable future. Respect and tolerance for others can indeed be taught, nonetheless, some holistic measures throughout the educational systems are needed both in policy and practice that would also involve all connected parties including students, parents, schools, local communities and government bodies. The steps which policymakers and other stakeholders will need to continue to consider closely relate to the measures needed for responding to the socio-demographic trends. Some of the measures that will need to be increasingly thought through and addressed include (Golubeva, 2018):

- Developing and implementing culturally relevant curricula and culturally-responsive pedagogies.
- Avoiding segregation and promoting diversity in schools by ensuring that migrants, as well as other disadvantaged groups, are equitably represented across schools.
- Strengthening the preparation of the education workforce for tolerance, diversity and inclusion as well as attracting more representatives from minority communities to teaching professions.
- Promoting a whole-school approach and engaging with wider groups of stakeholders by building bridges between schools and communities as well as involving NGOs and youth organisations in education.
- Supporting empirical research and evaluations in a wider set of the EU Member States that would acknowledge and award good practices.
- Fostering the learning of mother tongue in schools and helping students to make connections between different languages

203 European Commission, 'Promoting our European way of life. Protecting our citizens and our values', *Priorities 2019-2024*.
204 European Commission, 'A new push for European democracy. Nurturing, protecting and strengthening our democracy', *Priorities 2019-2024*.
205 Council of the European Union, 'Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching (2018/C 195/01)', *Official Journal of the European Union*, C195, 1 May 2018.
206 European Commission, 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions', *Commission Work Programme 2020, A Union that strives for more*, COM (2020) 37 final, 29 January 2020.

by providing bilingual and multilingual education.

- Recognising the importance and fostering empathy and social-emotional learning by developing educative programmes in schools that aim to improve empathy among children.
- Promoting intergroup contact in schools that would create positive interactions between students from diverse backgrounds including engagement in pro-social behaviour such as tutoring other students, learning and applying conflict resolutions, or role-playing.

3.2.3. National educational policy response to growing diversity and raising divisive attitudes

The education policy measures that help to make use of opportunities of growing diversity as well as tackle the challenges of socio-inequality and increasing radicalisation are also reflected in national education strategies for inclusive education in SIRIUS partner countries. This is seen in the national educational strategies, where in most of the countries assessed, these challenges are foreseen to be addressed by fostering the learning of the language of instruction, developing more flexible structures for case-by-case support, improving competence of teachers working in multicultural settings and etc. (see **Errore. L'origine riferimento non è stata trovata.**28). A few experts, however, did not feel that the strategic educational policy agendas in their countries pay significant attention to the changes in this field. This is due to different reasons ranging from the already proven successful structural foundations which do not need significant changes to unfavourable political climate that hinders the expectations in the near future.

One of such examples is **Ireland**. According to the experts, the positive net migration has not posed substantial challenges in education and, so far, has been dealt with successfully[207]. Migrant-origin young people in Ireland are not more disadvantaged than other learners as they have access to all the supports than other groups that need additional support. At compulsory school level they have the same rights and opportunities as the native students. Merike notes, however, that issues may arise following their exit from formal schooling regarding their post-school pathways to higher education and labour market where there are also elements of discrimination and racism.

On the other hand, in **Slovenia** the prospects of responding to these challenges are somewhat grim. Country experts note that the increasing flow of immigrants is expected but having in mind the current government formed by parties with nationalist and populist tendencies, : the development of policies and projects in the field of integration of immigrants in education could be uncertain.[208]

207 Emer Smyth & Mary Alacoque Ryan (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Ireland
208 Alenka Gril, Janja Žmavc and Sabina Autor (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Slovenia

Experts in **Bulgaria** state similar notions as those present in Slovenia. A negative political climate towards migrants and refugees and general as well as the political crisis means limited possibilities with unpopular reforms such as those relating to migrant integration.[209] The expert therefore speculates that the policies and practices in terms of inclusive education, especially related to migrant learners, will not advance in the nearest future.

Cunningham (2020) notes that in the **UK**, the 'Hostile Environment' policy introduced in 2012 gradually becomes embedded in more aspects of practice, and as the local government seeks to differentiate its policy from the EU, there is a range of threats to migrant learners, such as increasing legal difficulties, especially apparent for asylum seekers (See Box 28). Experts underline that combined with the discrimination, these issues can compound the mental health of such learners, making them reluctant to engage in education as well as having wider consequences on inclusive education. Teachers feeling less motivated to prioritise linguistic and cultural diversity in their teaching serves as one of such examples.[210]

Box 28 National educational strategies for addressing growing diversity, socio-economic inequality and radicalisation

Croatia

The newly developed and funded **Program for learning Croatian language, history and culture** is now lasting 280 hours (until 2019 the funding was provided only for 70 hours). This new funding scheme also includes financing of translations and certifications of documents (certificates and diplomas) necessary for continuing education of asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection. Furthermore, it provides finances for continued education and/or involvement in vocational training of persons with the status of asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection. These activities are carried out within the project "Integration of asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection in Croatian society, education and preparation for their labour market entry".

For students/children/young people with the status of asylum seekers co-financing of textbooks and related supplementary school materials (atlases, workbooks and/or collections of assignments) is also provided and funded under the same Program. In addition, funding is provided to Croaticum - Center for Croatian as second and foreign language so it offers a free online course of the Croatian language level A-1 and A-2 with English interface.

209 Bistra Ivanova (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Bulgaria
210 Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for the UK

Estonia

The Estonian Strategic Development Agenda of Education 2021-2035 was completed by the Ministry of Research and Education in July 2020. After the development plan was completed by the More in July 2020, it was submitted to the Parliament for discussion. Due to several reasons (the Covid-19 pandemic and the change of government in February 2021), these discussions have been postponed and the development plan has not yet been formally approved and is still at a draft stage.

The key goal of the strategic agenda is formulated as Estonian people having the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for being successful in their personal lives, employment and in the wider society; and to support developing life in Estonia and global sustainable development. Although, the general outcomes indicators do not touch upon inclusive education or learners with migrant backgrounds specifically, the only measure that concerns migrant learners specifies creating and applying a comprehensive approach for case-by-case support of migrant learners. However, different experts with interests and expertise in inclusive education were included in the development of the agenda. It is believed therefore that the needs of migrant learners, even if not so much explicitly presented, are addressed in the agenda.

This is reflected in another strategic goal of the agenda - developing skilled and motivated teachers and heads of schools; diverse learning environment and student-centered learning. One of the specific activities listed as crucial for achieving this goal is developing and researching the methodology of teaching Estonian as second language and increasing teachers' readiness to work in a multilingual classroom. The agenda also mentions widening teaching of foreign languages and improving access to Estonian language learning through digital solutions. There is one indicator of this strategic goal which concerns migrant learners: Estonian language level of students whose language spoken at home is not Estonian (at the end of basic school).

Finland

The Ministry of Education and Culture launched its new education strategy in 2019. The strategy provides a vision for 2030 to build stronger skills and knowledge base for all. It will take creative, inquiry-based, and responsible action that renews society and creates equal opportunities for a meaningful life.

In this context, Government will draw up an education policy report for skills and learning in 2030. The report aims to increase the level of education and competence in Finland. Topics of

equality in education, and reduction of the differences in learning outcomes will be one of the primary targets. The objective is that the level of education and competence among the population will rise at all levels of education, differences in learning outcomes will decrease, and educational equality will increase children and young people will feel well education system offers for all equal opportunities for learning.

Germany

With the **National Action Plan on Integration**, the German government is translating into practice the pledge laid out in the coalition agreement, to focus the many and varied integration measures in the form of a nationwide strategy that both supports migrant and expects them to do their bit. The aim is to improve the life situations of people with a migrant background, enable them to participate equally and strengthen cohesion within society. The National Action Plan on Integration is divided into 5 phases:

- **Phase I – Before migration:** 'Managing expectations – providing guidance'
- **Phase II – Initial integration:** "Facilitating arrival – communicating values"
- **Phase III - Integration:** "Providing for participation – encouraging and requiring active involvement"
- **Phase IV – Growing together:** "Managing diversity – ensuring unity"
- **Phase V - Cohesion:** "Strengthening cohesion – shaping the future".

All phases include four or five topic-specific forums chaired by the federal ministers responsible. Together, they elaborate up to 24 core projects per phase, working with other federal ministries, state and local authorities and civil society partners. All in all, the participants thus develop around 120 specific measures to foster successful integration. The Cabinet adopted a federal government statement on Phases I-III. It included results and specific measures within these phases. The German government is working with 300 partners on the National Action Plan on Integration, including state and local authorities, the private sector, civil society and 75 migrants' organisations (The Federal Government, 2020b).

Greece

The plan to foster the inclusive learning for migrant learners, especially in dealing with the pressing situation with refugees and asylum seekers is to operate schools inside the camps or to have refugee and immigrant children attend school in the morning along with the local children after completing a preparatory class/stage on the afternoons on basic skills such as local language. Other measures include:

- Focusing on sensitising the parents of immigrant children about the importance of enrolling their children in school and keeping them in school.
- Focusing on raising public tolerance and acceptance of immigrant groups.
- Focusing on providing the necessary equipment, teaching material and trained teaching staff in schools for this purpose.

Lithuania

Ministry officials do not underline the migrant group in particular but see positive holistic developments towards inclusiveness in the whole educational system More concrete measures are indicated in terms of developments for returnee migrants. The steps in this field concern language assessment, prior achievement recognition systems as well as further cooperation between local schools and Lithuanian communities, and informal schools abroad which will ensure better support for the returnee children.

These notions are reflected in the strategic inclusive education agenda for the upcoming 10 years:

1. Demography, Migration and Integration Policy Strategy (2018-2030)

Although the goals of the strategy explicitly targets only one migrant group - returnees – measures for inclusive education include:

- Enabling school-age children to choose extracurricular activities: whole-day schools, open educational centers, or other types of in-formal education.
- Introducing 'Culture passport' for students which will give every student some funds every calendar year to choose from the services offered by cultural and art institutions. This is seen as an especially important measure for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Improving the preparatory activities before the child arrives. Focusing on the returnees, this measure promises an increase of collaboration with Lithuanian schools abroad.
- Preparation of methodology for assessing the level of knowledge and skills of students who do not speak Lithuanian language.
- Organisation of educational and learning support in collaboration with parents and school community that includes development, testing and recommendations for education organisational models for migrant learners.
- Creating legal and financial opportunities for both the teacher and student assistants to participate in the educational process and to improve the qualification of teachers in the field of work with children returning from abroad.

2. National Progress Plan (2021-2030)

Out of 10 goals of the plan, three address the issues related to inclusive education:

- **Increasing the inclusion and effectiveness of education to meet the needs of the individual and society.**
  - A. Improving the quality of education at all levels and reducing disparities between the different groups, such as those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.
  - B. Fostering inclusion and accessibility of various levels of formal and non-formal education for people with special educational needs, disabilities, poverty, psychological and other difficulties. It also aims to eliminate discrimination, segregation, exclusion, create a safe environment, reduce bullying.
  - C. Lithuania, to create conditions for their proper integration of migrant learners in the pre-school education system, general schools as well as for participation in in-formal education;
  - D. To encourage returnees, as well as to attract newcomers from abroad, to create favorable conditions for these persons to enter vocational training institutions and higher education institutions.
- **Fostering social well-being and inclusion, strengthening health and improving the demographic situation in Lithuania:**
  - A. Increasing the social well-being and inclusion of vulnerable groups at risk of social exclusion.
  - B. Increasing social and civic activity in the society, participation in voluntary community activities - strengthening civil society organizations, improving the environment for non-governmental organizations, creating opportunities for public involvement and participation in solving issues relevant to society such as reducing social exclusion.
  - C. Encouraging returnees in fostering the communication, eliminating obstacles for a smooth return; creating conditions for returning Lithuanians and arriving foreigners to integrate smoothly into the society, first and foremost, by creating opportunities to learn the Lithuanian language.
- **Focusing more on ethnic minorities - strengthening national and civic identity, increasing cultural penetration and public creativity:**
  - A. Promoting the full integration of national minorities, openness and respect for minority languages as well as the distinctiveness and diversity of other cultures.

Spain (Catalonia)

The **Catalan education strategic agenda 2030, called 'The school of 2030'** addresses the 10 main challenges. There are no specific issues directly addressed to migrant population, because migration is present in all of them in a transversal way:

1. The reform of post-compulsory education. There are a significant number of students who choose for vocational training or high school, but there is still a rigidity of the system. This challenge needs an urgent resolution.
2. School timetable and calendar. School timetables — and calendars — are not set by prioritizing students' needs. The Ministry is obliged to study the results of the reform of school hours, to encourage students to be active during the most suitable time slots and at the same time to incorporate healthier eating habits. More school hours is not synonymous with better educational outcomes; and any decision on this aspect must take into account the environment of the centers, and therefore it must be made in accordance with the city councils.
3. Pre-service teacher training and professional development of teachers: The pre-service teacher training is one of the main deficits of the education system, and the processes of access to the teaching role is insufficient. These are issues that are not easy to solve, in which the interests of students are mixed with corporate interests, both teachers and future teachers and universities.
4. The curriculum. Talking about the curriculum is about how to approach emotional and sexual education or religious culture in an increasingly diverse society. Or if you have to keep dividing courses by age, which is probably the most convenient way to get organized but not the most beneficial for students.
5. Innovation. Any center that is committed to improvement is an innovative center. But innovation can only be so if it is linked to the idea of inclusion, because innovation without inclusion can become a form of elitism that the public system cannot afford.
6. De-centralized governance and the participation of municipalities. De-centralization must go far beyond early childhood education, primary education and some non-professional special education. Co-responsibility translates into what has been called community education to explain that education goes far beyond what happens in schools. We need to re-evaluate the educational role of the local administration.
7. School autonomy and democratic management of the centers. One of the strengths of the Catalan education system is the "diversity and plurality" of school educational projects. However, leadership must be shared and cooperative, teachers must participate, and if there is bad practice, strong action must be taken.

8. Families. We need to ensure that families in the most disadvantaged situations, those from recent emigrations or those with a weaker social and cultural capital, are active participants in their schools.
9. Free taxes in education. In Catalonia, the fact that families assume non expected additional expenses is a serious problem, as this has a segregating effect. The education system must move towards full gratuity, but consensus is needed.
10. Catalan language. The school is fully successful in linguistic terms, as all students who finish compulsory education are proficient in three languages: Catalan, Spanish and a third language (mostly English). However, the social use of Catalan is declining. The school can help to fill this gap.

Source: SIRIUS + Stakeholder survey 2020; Elli Pijaca (2020); Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020); Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020); Claudia Köhler (2020); Nektaria Palaiologou (2020); Justinas Didika (2020); Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020)

3.3. Climate change and sustainable development

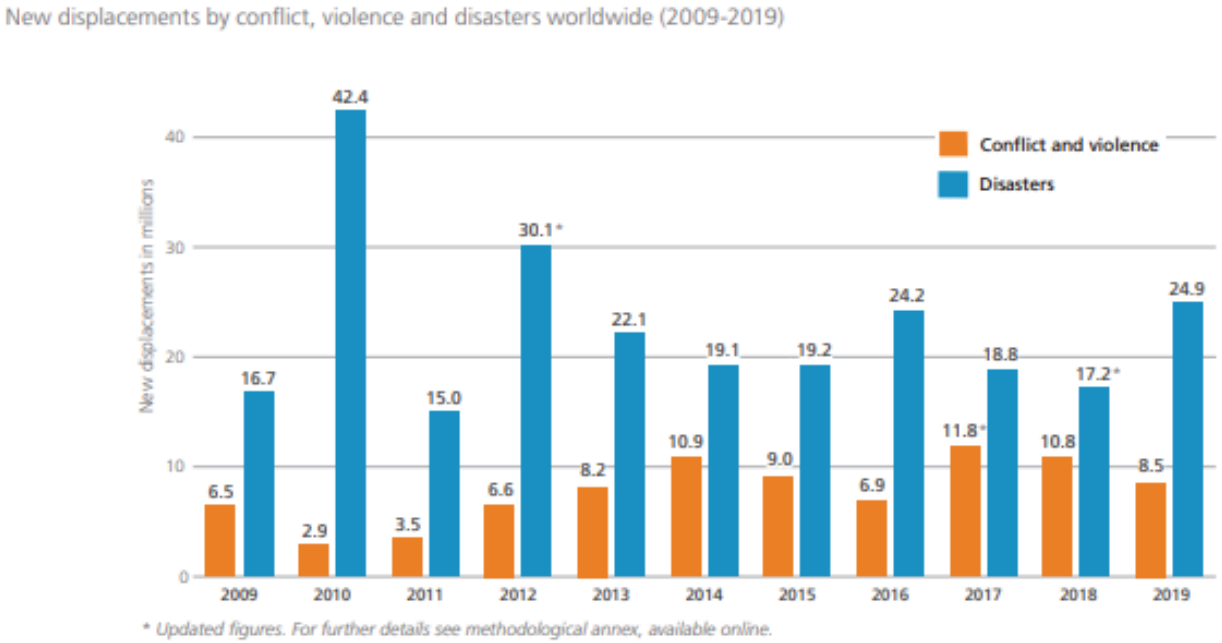
3.3.1. General developments and future outlook

Taking urgent action to address climate change and its impact is one of, if not the most important challenge of our times. It is increasingly supported by the key policy developments across the world, such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals[211], the European Green Deal and the Climate Pact[212]. As 2019 marked the second warmest year on record, and at the end of the warmest decade (2010-2019) ever recorded, it has become clear that climate change is affecting every country at a rate that has exceeded most scientific forecasts[213] [214]. The changing environment and its consequences will undoubtedly affect the approach to education in general, but also have a specific impact for migrant education.

Climate change is viewed as a factor that will have an escalating impact on the forces that increase the movement of people. Experts underline that, while not necessarily in themselves the causes, environmental degradation and natural disasters are key contributing migration push factors that increasingly interact with the drivers of refugee movements[215] [216]. The repercussions of changing environment in the

211 https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change/
212 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52019DC0640
213 https://www.unhcr.org/climate-change-and-disasters.html
214 https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059061
215 https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf
216 Luetz J.M. (2019) Climate Refugees: Why Measuring the Immeasurable Makes Sense Beyond Measure. In: Leal Filho W., Azul A., Brandli L., Özuyar P., Wall T. (eds) Climate Action. Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable

Figure 9. Internal displacements due to conflict, violence and disasters (2009-2019)



Source: IDMC Global Report on Internal Displacement (2020)

worlds are numerous: natural hazards, scarcity of natural resources, such as water, or crops and livestock struggling to survive in 'hotspots' where conditions become either too hot and dry or too cold and wet to natural. Although scholars, such as Upadhyay et al. (2015)[217], note a certain difficulty measuring, assessing and comparing the direct and indirect factors that shape related migration decisions, there is a general agreement that climate change-related human movement is growing in size. In turn, a possible, if not probable, influx of *climate refugees*[218] is expected[219]. The global and more comparable data for cross-border

Development Goals. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71063-1_81-1

217 Himani Upadhyay Ilan Kelman Lingaraj G J Arabinda Mishra Cheney Shreve Robert Stojanov , (2015),»Conceptualizing and contextualizing research and policy for links between climate change and migration», International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management, Vol. 7 Iss 3 pp. 394 - 417

218 The term 'climate refugees' is highly contested in the literature as some scholars use the term 'migrant' or 'climate migrant' as well as others. Explaining this, Zetter (2007) and Cournil (2011) note that different terms generate vastly different mental images and associations which seem to be, more often than not, indicative of the writers' normative preferences, institutional or ideological allegiances, or underlying agendas. On another note, UNCHR choose the more complicated formulation of 'persons displaced in the context of disasters and climate change' underlining that 'climate refugees' does not exist in international law and the displaced persons in question may not necessarily be in line with the definition of a refugee. See: Zetter R (2007) More labels, fewer refugees: remaking the refugee label in an era of globalization. J Refug Stud 20(2):172–192; Cournil C (2011) The protection of "environmental refugees" in international law. In: Piguet E, Pécoud A, de Guchteneire P (eds) Migration and climate change. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 359–386; https://www.unhcr.org/climate-change-and-disasters.html

219 Reeves H, Jouzel J (2010) Climate refugees. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Press, Cambridge, MA

movement in the context of climate change is limited[220]. However, figure 9 serves as a useful indicator which represents the scale of internal displacements due to disasters in comparison with displacements caused by conflict and violence. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's (IDMC) report (2020)[221] shows that in 2019 alone, disasters and related pre-emptive measures globally forced almost 25 million people to leave their homes.

People are adapting to changes, but many are and will be forcibly displaced from their homes as a result. Evidence shows that most forced displacement which is linked to natural disasters and the impact of climate change is internal, with those affected remaining within their national borders[222]. However, in some cases it is just a matter of time when people are forced to leave their countries as the dire situations and depleted natural resources are often interlinked with competition and conflict between communities which can compound the pre-existing vulnerabilities and spark violence[223]. As UNHCR study (2018)[224] notes, recent history presents us with *nexus dynamics*-instances of cross-border movements in situations where disasters or adverse effects of climate change has interacted with conflict and violence. Despite this reality, its recognition and preparedness in terms of both enduring relevance of international protection laws as well as general measures for successful integration and inclusion of the new migrant communities has been fairly limited.

3.3.2. Educational response to climate change and sustainable development

These developments present the growing need for planning education laws and support of the host countries to successfully integrate the newcomers. This group of migrant learners will face the migration, and forced migration, in particular, related issues described in the section 3.1. Socio-demographic changes and challenges. Countries therefore will have to contribute additional resources to expand and enhance the quality of inclusiveness of national education systems to facilitate access to all levels of education. As the UN's report on the global compact on refugees notes (2018)[225], measures such as 'safe schools' and innovative methods will be needed to expand educational and training facilities, provide more individualised support and ensure teaching capacities to address the specific education needs and overcome the obstacles. In addition, host countries will have to develop more systematised ways of recognising the equivalency of academic, professional and vocational qualifications.

220 Retrieved from https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/environmental_migration
221 IDMC (2020) Global report on internal displacement. Retrieved from https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/2020-IDMC-GRID-executive-summary.pdf
222 https://www.unhcr.org/climate-change-and-disasters.html
223 https://www.unhcr.org/5c1ba88d4.pdf
224 https://www.unhcr.org/5c1ba88d4.pdf
225 https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

The underlined preparation, however, is only a fraction of the necessary educational responses dealing with the climate change. It is increasingly realised that education and appropriate skills development plays a significant role in the transition for achieving socially, economically and environmentally sustainable world. This is reflected in the UN's *Transforming our world: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015)[226] which underlines the importance of improving education for awareness-raising, human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation and impact reduction as well as, more broadly, integrating climate change measures into national policies and planning. These underlying ideas were supported in the Paris Agreement (2015)[227] as well by UNESCO (2016)[228] which further noted that education must play a significant role to mitigate the issue and reduce the vulnerability of people and communities faced with the consequences of changing environment. Scholars have also stipulated that climate crisis must turn into a priority educational topic, to an extent of putting it at the centre of curriculum or even implementing 'emergency curriculum' both nationally and internationally in order to increase knowledge and foster a substantial and quick response[229] [230] [231].

The 2015 Paris Agreement expected that, in less than 2 years most States, especially the most developed ones, would already have put foundations for ambitious programs in order to place climate change mitigation on the list of priority educational curricular objectives. As Meira (2019)[232] notes, however, this does not seem to be the case. Despite the expressed concerns, the educational responses to the climate change and sustainable development related issues have been fairly limited, often poorly structured and lacking underlying political, theoretical and methodological frame. Evidence in the EU indicates that there appears to be a gap between the concern for the environment and actual action and so the key policy developments increasingly emphasise the need to move beyond awareness raising and

226 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld
227 https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf
228 UNESCO (2016) Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all. UNESCO, París
229 Henderson J, Long D, Berger P, Russell C, Drewes A (2017) Expanding the foundation: climate change and opportunities for educational research. Educ Stud 53(4):412–425
230 Allen, LB., Crowley, K. (2017) Moving beyond scientific knowledge: leveraging participation, relevance, and interconnectedness for climate education. Int J Glob Warm 12(3/4):299–312
231 Whitehouse, H. (2017) Point and counterpoint: climate change education. Curr Perspect 37:63–65
232 Climate Change and Education Pablo Ángel Meira Cartea Research Group in Social Pedagogy and Environmental Education, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain (2019) Climate Action. Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Springer, Cham.

to build understanding about sustainability and ways to generate change through education[233][234]. McKewn and Hopkins (2010)[235] underline that the climate change education, specifically within the formal educational settings, has been mostly has so far paid the most attention to 'climate' in the field of natural and physical science, than to the 'change' – a concept that refers to more broader social and economic issues.

For this reason, the key recent EU policy developments underline that sustainability is a wide concept which is not only restricted to environmental issues, but should also be framed in broader economic and social terms[236]. Recent Commission Communication on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 links the landmark policy document with sustainable development. It underlines the need to support acquisition of appropriate skills through formal and non-formal learning settings to foster a holistic and inclusive approach to environmental sustainability that is communicated through all education sectors and levels. This notion is supported by the European Green Deal (2019)[237] as its initiatives, such as Biodiversity Strategy and Circular Economy Action Plan recognise the importance of education and training to prepare and benefit from the green transition through education.

The Education and Training Expert Panel advocates for school curricula and study programmes promoting acquisition of key sustainability skills including critical thinking and creativity, cognitive and emotional attitudes, such as responsibility and empathy, as well as interdisciplinary knowledge[238]. In schools throughout the EU, education of environment sustainability is often considered a specialised topic, fit for non-formal learning, extra-curricular projects and often only for higher grade students[239]. However, it is stressed that the nature of primary education, which is generally more flexible with its timelines, should allow

233 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document „Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025". Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/eea-swd-212-final_en.pdf

234 European Commission, Education and Training Expert Panel (2019) Summary of findings and of the discussions at the 2019 Forum on the Future of Learning, Final Report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

235 McKeown, R., Hopkins, C. (2010) Rethinking Climate Change Education. Green Teacher 89:17–2

236 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document „Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025"

237 Communication From the Commission to The European Parliament, The European Council, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions The European Green Deal (COM/2019/640 final)

238 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document „Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025"

239 European Commission, Eurydice (2017) Citizenship education at school in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg,

teachers to increase the approach to sustainable development. The curriculum programmes of secondary education should also integrate education for environmental sustainability and teach about its intersectional nature by including its aspects more broadly in geography, science, health education, entrepreneurship, civic and citizenship education subjects[240]

Education curricula must be aligned with the international as well as national strategies towards the green and sustainable transition to address and mitigate the consequences of climate change. It is clear that the pressing need to tackle the existing and emerging environmental threats has found its way to the central general policy discussions for some time. The more recent mentioned developments indicate an increasing understanding of the key role that education and training plays in this context not just by raising awareness but by having the potential to build more comprehensive knowledge of the issue and foster change. Considering this, climate and environmental sustainability issues will undoubtedly have a profound effect in the foreseeable future across the education systems, especially in the EU.

3.4. Digitalisation and technological advancement

3.4.1. The advancement of digitalisation in education

The advancement of digital technologies is transforming the world at an unprecedented pace, reshaping how people live, work and study. This transformation affects many different parts of our lives as digital technologies are increasingly integrated in all sectors of the economy as well as impact our society by contributing to such emerging novelties as Artificial Intelligence. As noted in the recently adopted Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027, connected devices and intelligent systems support us in terms of access and exchange of information, collaboration and communication, modes of work, in terms of business operations and finally yet critically, learning opportunities (European Commission, 2020[241]). The increasing importance of digitalisation in education and training becomes evident when looked at the aim of the European Education Area, which forms the grounds for the educational policy context development in the EU. In the very first package of measures digital competence was deemed as one of the key competences for lifelong learning which involves confident, critical and responsible use of, as well as engagement with, digital

240 Commission Staff Working Document on the European Education Area by 2025. https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/eea-swd-212-final_en.pdf

241 Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Digital Education action Plan 2021-2027 Resetting education and training for the digital age {COM(2020) 624 final}

technologies for learning and participation in society (European Commission, 2019[242]).

The aim of learners who are able to use such technologies to support their active citizenship and social inclusion, collaboration and creativity towards social and commercial goals is further stipulated in both current and newly adopted Digital Education Action Plan (European Commission, 2018a[243]; European Commission, 2020). The latter of the two together with the 'A Europe fit for the digital age' priority of the new Commission, also connects these advancements with the goal of climate-neutral Europe. The promoted idea behind these connections is that education and training policies, and investments towards inclusive green and digital transitions hold the key to Europe's future resilience and prosperity (European Commission, 2020b[244]; European Commission, 2020c[245]). Digital technologies therefore are underlined as 'powerful enablers for the green economic transition, including for moving to a circular economy and decarbonising energy, transport, construction, agriculture and all other industries' (European Commission, 2020).

An accurate indication of the ever-growing importance of this trend in education and training can also be noted in the sequence of OECD studies on trends shaping education. After including a separate section on different aspects of digital developments in each of its previous reports since 2008, the last OECD study in 2019 underlined it as a prerequisite in the context of all other trends (OECD, 2019a). It is thus clear and has become even more evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, that digitalisation has a huge role in both adding its share and responding to the growing complexity and fast-changing world to which educational systems need to respond to.

In recent years digital technologies have indeed been increasingly integrated into classroom practices, including smartphones, game-based learning, online learning systems, virtual worlds, online peer and self-assessment tools (European Commission, 2018b[246]; Baker et al., 2016[247]). Despite this, researchers for some

242 https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/297a33c8-a1f3-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1 (Key Competences for lifelong learning)

243 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, on the Digital Education Action Plan; https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A22%3AFIN

244 A Europe fit for the digital age: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age_en Empowering people with a new generation of technologies.

245 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 {SWD(2020) 212 final: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/eea-communication-sept2020_en.pdf

246 European Commission (2018a). *Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Key Competences for LifeLong Learning*. Commission Staff Working Document. Accompanying the document SWD (2018) 14 final). Brussels: European Commission.

247 Baker, R. S., Clarke-Midura, J. & Ocumpaugh, J. (2016). Towards General Models of Effective Science Inquiry in

time already noted the relatively low uptake of technologies in education and its slow reaction to the digitalisation trends highlighting that the learning environment, the digital capacities of teachers and learners as well as the quality of education have not kept the same pace (PPMI, 2019[248]; OECD, 2014[249]). The Covid-19 pandemic has taken the importance of this question to another level as educational systems world-wide faced sudden and large scale shift to online or blended learning and thus were forced to use a variety of digital solutions to address the difficulties.

These developments are essential as digitalisation and technological development addresses the need for more inclusive education. Skilfully, equitably and effectively deployed digital means may add great benefits to the aim of high quality and inclusive education for all learners. This can lead learners to being able to use digital technologies to support their active citizenship and social inclusion and collaboration with others (European Commission, 2020; Council of the European Union, 2018[250]; Ursula von der Leyen, 2019[251]). The Digital Education Action Plan (2020) stipulates that this can be achieved by providing more flexible and student-centered learning as effective use of digital means helps learners and practitioners access, create and share educational content. Digital technology in education can also provide more flexibility in terms of physical location and timetable, and thus, online or blended learning can happen at a time, place and pace suited to the need of the individual learner.

Council of Europe's conceptual model (2016)[252] highlights that acquisition of competencies for learning and active participation in digital society also adds to the democratic culture development by, among other aspects, fostering access and inclusion, learning and creativity, ethics, empathy and active citizenship. Research further indicates that increasingly diverse options regarding the modes of instruction will ease access to education at all levels. Educational attainment will thus continue to rise, especially at the upper and tertiary levels. Further technological developments are also foreseen to improve the quality of education because of the digital monitoring of student

Virtual Performance Assessments. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 32(3), 267–280.

248 PPMI (2019). Prospective Report on the Future of Assessment in Primary and Secondary Education, Unpublished report.

249 https://oecdedutoday.com/infinite-connections-the-digital-divide/

250 Council of the European Union. (2018). Council recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (text with EEA relevance). *(Official Journal of the European Union 2018/C 189/01)*, 1-13.

251 A Union that strives for more: My agenda for Europe

252 Digital Citizenship Education Project; https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/digital-citizenship-education-project; 2016.

progress and evaluation (Roser and Nagdy 2020[253]; Psacharopoulos, 2020[254]).

In the context of inclusive education, digital development is also often noted regarding the provision of opportunities for teaching digital and media literacy, which can mitigate other emerging issues such as the spread of disinformation and fake news on social media. McAuliffe (2018) stipulates that teaching digital literacy is crucial as we are increasingly witnessing the use of social media for dividing and polarising the society by deploying 'tribal tactics' online depicting migration-related issues in a misleading and negative light. Critical thinking and understanding thus becomes a crucial area in which students need to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to become informed and responsible citizens (Eurydice, 2017[255]). Competencies that lay the path to this aim include multiperspectivity, reasoning and analytical skills, data interpretation, knowledge discovery and use of services, understanding and questioning the present world (Council of the European Union, 2016[256]). Therefore, it is clear that the uptake of technological innovations and digital competencies helps to tackle such issues and underpin the benefits and opportunities that migration and increasingly multicultural societies brings (IOM, 2019).

3.4.2. Digitalisation and technological advancement challenges to inclusive education

The advancement of digital technologies to foster learning is evident and increasingly underlined in the educational policy context. Nonetheless, these developments pose its own challenges in ensuring equal access the new opportunities as learners from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have the means to acquire such skills at home. Furthermore, both learners and educators alike also need to acquire sufficient digital competencies to ensure that ICT contributes effectively to the learning process. Looking at the OECD members in this context, PISA study in 2018 indicates that many low-income homes have no access to appropriate resources for distance learning (OECD, 2019x[257]). In addition to having access to appropriate digital means, learners also need to be in a home environment that is suitable for distance learning. These two aspects, however,

253 Roser, M. and Mohamed Nagdy, (2020). «Projections of Future Education». OurWorldInData.org. https://ourworldindata.org/projections-of-future-education. Tauschebildung, 2020. "Tausche Bildung für Wohnen – Wirkungsmodell". (https://tauschebildung.org/wirkung.html).

254 European Expert Network on Economics of Education (EENEE) EENEE Ad-hoc Question nº1-2020 Prepared for the European Commission George Psacharopoulos March 2020 State of Research of Foresight Studies in Education and Training

255 European Commission/EACEA/ EURYDICE, (2017), Citizenship Education at School in Europe. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

256 Council of the European Union, (2016), Developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training. Council conclusions (30 May 2016). Outcome of proceedings, Brussels, 1 June 2016

257 PISA 2018 (Volume II) where all students can succeed: https://media.hotnews.ro/media_server1/document-2019-12-3-23529126-0-pisa-volii-visa1-2.pdf

prove not to be the case for many low-income households as only 69 % of disadvantaged students, on average across OECD countries, reported having a quiet place to study at home and a computer that they can use for schoolwork (OECD, 2019x; Joint Research Centre, 2020[258]). Eurostat figures from 2019 also indicated that access to broadband internet varies significantly across the EU, ranging from 94 % in the highest-income quartile to 74 % in the lowest (European Commission[259], 2020).

Research shows, however, that the challenge to overcome the digital divides goes beyond the mere access to technology. Compared with the children who come from higher-income families, learners from low-income households are also more likely to attend schools in disadvantaged, rural or deprived areas where schools are especially likely to lack the appropriate digital capacity and ICT infrastructure (OECD, 2019x). This results in disadvantaged learners being less exposed to digital technologies and its applications either in home or school and thus lacking sufficient skills to fully benefit from it (Umar and Jalil, 2012[260]). Another issue that became even more evident in the context of the shift to distance learning, lies in insufficient teachers' ICT competences which limits the ability to fully take advantage of digital and e-learning technologies. The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) in 2018[261] supports this notion showing that only 39 % of teachers in the EU felt well or very well prepared for using digital means in thei daily work, with significant differences between Member States.

As shown by Wei et al. (2011)[262], these and other connected challenges that contribute to the digital divide can be categorised to three different levels that are linked with each other:

1. **Digital access divide** - refers to the inequality of access to the information technology, such as access to computers in home in schools, typically referred to as the 'narrow sense' of the digital divide (Friedman as cited in Wei et al., 2011).

2. **Digital capability divide** - refers to the differences in ability to use the technology. It includes the skill to find and assess information as well as other aspects of computer self-efficacy. It arises due to the

258 Joint Research Centre (2020). The likely impact of COVID-19 on education: Reflections based on the existing literature and recent international datasets. Luxembourg: Publication of the European Union

259 Brussels, 30.9.2020 SWD(2020) 209 final COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT on digital education action plan: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/deap-swd-sept2020_en.pdf

260 Umar, I.N., and Jalil, N.A. (2012) ICT skills, practices and barriers of its use among secondary school students. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 46: 5672-5676.

261 OECD (2019), TALIS 2018 Results (Volume I): Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners. Paris: OECD Publishing.

262 Wei, K.-K., Teo, H.-H., Chan, H. C., & Tan, B. C. Y. (2011). *Conceptualizing and Testing a Social Cognitive Model of the Digital Divide. Information Systems Research, 22(1), 170–187.* doi:10.1287/isre.1090.0273

first-level digital divide and other contextual factors (Dewan and Riggins, 2005[263]).

3. **Digital outcome divide** – refers to differences in learning outcomes and productivity in exploiting the digital technology and arises from the digital capability divide and other contextual factors (Wei et al., 2011).

3.4.4. Educational policy development to address the challenges

It is evident that, unless steered with a purpose, the increasing advance of digital technology may widen the existing inequalities and exacerbate social fragmentation (OECD, 2018b[264]). This notion has been particularly visible in the context of Covid-19 pandemic with the sudden need to switch to online or blended methods of teaching and learning. The rapid developments which basically led to the closure of the world in just weeks, has a strain on everyone's lives but it particularly affects the vulnerable groups. At such crisis, the assumption that technological developments may ensure access to quality education for all, while being 'borderless, gender-blind, race-blind, class-blind and bank-account blind' is challenged (Watters, 2015[265]). Evidence shows that the delivery of educational provision remotely ensured some degree of continuity of learning, low motivation levels, absenteeism, disengagement and stress were not uncommon in particular to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who lack reliable internet access, suitable devices and sufficient capabilities for remote education (UNESCO, 2020a[266]; Doyle, 2020[267]). Reduction in instructional time can negatively impact educational outcomes. This adds to the increase of inequalities as the additional pedagogical and psychological support that is needed to fill in the gaps and provide stimulating activities is more accessible to economically advantaged families (UNESCO, 2020b[268]). The Covid-19 context and inclusive education issues that it surfaced are further discussed in the section of Covid-19 in this report.

To make education systems fit for the digital age and help insure high-quality, inclusive and accessible education for all, the new Digital Education Action Plan (2020) addresses two strategic priorities:

263 Dewan, S., & Riggins, F. J. (2005). The digital divide: Current and future research directions. *Journal of the Association for information systems*, *6*(12), 298-337.
264 OECD (2018) – The future of education and skills. Education 2030.
265 Watters, A. (2015), 'ED-Tech's Inequalities', HackEducation, Retrieved at: http://hackeducation.com/2015/04/08/inequalities.
266 UNESCO (2020). Webinars on COVID-19 education response: https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/webinars
267 Doyle O. (2020). COVID-19. Exacerbating Educational Inequalities? PUBLIC POLICY.IE
268 UNESCO (2020). 290 million students out of school due to COVID-19: UNESCO releases first global numbers and mobilizes response https://en.unesco.org/news/290-million-students-out-school-due-covid-19-unesco-releases-first-global-numbers-and-mobilizes

Figure 10 Strategic priorities of the new Digital Education Action Plan

Fostering the development of high-performing digital education ecosystem	Enhancing digital skills and competences
• Initiating strategic dialogue with EU Member States to prepare Council Recommendations on the enabling factors for successful digital transformation by 2022. • Development of Council Recommendations of EU-wide common understanding of how to make distance, online and blended learning effective, inclusive and engaging by 2021. • Developing a European Digital Education Content Framework that will build on European diversity and launching a feasibility study on a possible European exchange platform to share certified online resources and platforms. • Making the most of EU support with regard to internet access the purchase of digital equipment and e-learning platforms. • Supporting digital transformations at all levels of education and training through Erasmus projects. Also, supporting teachers' digital competence through Erasmus Teacher Academies and self-reflection on effective learning by fostering the use of innovative educational technologies (SELFIE). • Developing ethical guidelines on AI and data usage in teaching and learning and supporting Horizon Europe research in this area.	• Working with all relevant stakeholders connected to the issue and developing common guidelines for teachers and educational staff to foster digital literacy and tackle disinformation. • Including AI and data-related skills in European Digital Competence Framework. • Creating European Digital Skills Certificate (EDSC) that is accepted and recognised by governments and employers throughout Europe. • Proposing a Council Recommendation the provision of digital skills in education and training. • Encouraging participation in the International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) and introducing an EU target for student digital competence of under 15 % by 2030 for 13-14 year old students underperforming in computer and information literacy. • Developing targeted advanced digital skills through steps such as extending Digital Opportunity traineeships. • Encouraging women's participation in STEM with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and supporting EU STEM Coalition.

Source: Digital Education Action Plan (2020)

3.5. Health uncertainty: COVID-19 crisis

The Covid-19 pandemic has generated tremendous unrest worldwide, shaking economies and entire nations. Besides the significant impact on health, social systems and the economy, this pandemic has massively affected education. In the attempt to stop the spreading of the disease, schools were closed in most countries of the world, in some cases with no estimation regarding the reopening date. According to some estimates, during the peak of the pandemic, more than 90% of pupils were affected by school closures[269]. Previous examples of even brief school closures indicate that such events have a highly negative impact on children. For instance, long summer breaks can lead young children to losing between 20% and 50% of the skills gained over the school year[270]. Closure of schools due to the pandemic did not (always) mean that education would stop altogether. In most cases, educational institutions were encouraged to switch to distance learning. Unfortunately, the lack of digital capacity to engage in this new educational reality, amongst other factors, has hindered the participation of many children in distance learning, putting in jeopardy their very right to education.

3.5.1. Challenges for inclusive education in the context of the pandemic

As observed by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 'the impact of switching from regular to home schooling depends on a variety of factors, including the socio-economic background of children's families'[271]. In this sense, years of progress in equality of access to education were seriously threatened by the Covid-19 pandemic when some children, even from high-income countries, were unable to participate in distance learning and saw their educational trajectories suspended until further notice. According to the same agency, it is schools and children from disadvantaged backgrounds who often lack computers, other IT tools or internet access to participate in online learning[272]. Similarly, the OECD has observed that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic 'will be harder in the most vulnerable populations within countries, and in the countries with the weakest health infrastructures'[273]. Considering that, at the global level, around '52 per cent of migrant

269 United Nations (2020) Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf

270 According to article: 'Closing schools for covid-19 does lifelong harm and widens inequality', the Economist, 2020.

271 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2020, Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU — Fundamental Rights Implications.

272 Idem above.

273 Reimers, F. M., & Schleicher, A. (2020). A framework to guide an education response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020. OECD.

children and over 90 per cent of displaced children live in low- and middle-income countries'[274], the negative impact of Covid-19 on these children is quite considerable. A similar notion is supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which findings indicate that the ability to respond to school closures is dramatically linked with the level of development as 86 % of pupils in primary education have been effectively out of school in countries with low human development, whereas the figure reaches only 20 % in countries with very high human development levels[275].

Consequently, the Covid-19 pandemic seems to be deepening existing inequalities and concerns over the potential long-lasting effects of this crisis have been raised by numerous organisations. For instance, a study conducted by the Education Endowment Foundation has suggested that the progress made during several years in England on the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their better-off peers has been erased in just a few months as a result of the pandemic[276]. Similarly, UNICEF representatives have noticed that, worldwide, more children were in school than ever before when the pandemic hit, whilst estimates from Save the Children indicate that, after the pandemic, nearly 10m children in 40 countries might never return to formal education[277]. Indeed, not mandatorily the health implications of the pandemic, but its indirect repercussions causing massive socioeconomic challenges will affect many vulnerable children all over the world[278]. A concrete example of how the effects of the pandemic affect continuity and access to education for disadvantaged children is provided in the excerpt below:

Suhani, who is nine years old, wakes each day before dawn. She collects flowers to weave into necklaces which she flogs to drivers stuck in Dhaka's endless traffic jams. Until recently Suhani and her sister spent their days in a crowded classroom in Nimtoli, a slum in Bangladesh's capital. When the country locked down to stop the spread of covid-19 their mother, a single parent, lost her job as a maid. She has been out of work since. Schools remain

274 You, D., Lindt, N., Allen, R., Hansen, C., Beise, J., & Blume, S. (2020). Migrant and displaced children in the age of COVID-19: How the pandemic is impacting them and what can we do to help. *Migration Policy Practice*, Vol. X, Number 2.

275 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). COVID-19 and human development: Assessing the crisis, envisioning the recovery. 2020 Human Development Perspectives, 2020, New York: UNDP, available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/hdp-covid.

276 Education Endowment Foundation (2020) Impact of school closures on the attainment gap: Rapid Evidence Assessment, London: Education Endowment Foundation

277 Save the Children (2020) Save our Education. Retrieved from https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/17871/pdf/save_our_education_0.pdf

278 You, D., Lindt, N., Allen, R., Hansen, C., Beise, J., & Blume, S. (2020). Migrant and displaced children in the age of COVID-19: How the pandemic is impacting them and what can we do to help. *Migration Policy Practice*, Vol. X, Number 2.

closed. Even if they were open, Suhani could not go. She is the breadwinner now.[279]

Certainly, the consequences of the pandemic will fall even heavier on the shoulders of children and youth with a migrant background, who often live in socio-economic deprivation. According to You et al., 'migrant and displaced children will be disproportionally affected and suffer long after the public health crisis ends'[280]. In addition, incidents of intolerance, hate crimes and racial discrimination (including access to health services and education) have been on the rise in the EU since the beginning of the pandemic, especially directed at people of Chinese and Asian origin[281]. A similar notion was expressed by SIRIUS experts in Spain (Catalonia) who observed that the context of crisis fosters the spread of xenophobic and discriminative discourses, often because of the need of finding a scapegoat for the pressing issues[282].

Box 29 Spread of discriminative discourse in the context of COVID-19 crisis in Spain (Catalonia)

In July 2020, some casualty workers coming from abroad arrived in Western Catalonia to work in the agriculture sector. They lived in very poor and unhealthy conditions so that they easily got infected by COVID-19. As a consequence, a COVID-19 outbreak started up in the region, and since then local population accuse the immigrants to bring the disease in there.

The presence of an immigrant population, in the context of health and economic crisis, generates more racist attitudes, more space for xenophobic discourses and more discrimination, due to the need of the local groups to find a scapegoat. We can see this in the social setback we are experiencing with racism: from a society in which discrimination existed, but which was less tangible, into a more explicit form of racism.

Source: Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020)

Even though scientists have been warning about the likelihood of the emergence of a global pandemic, most countries seem to have been caught unarmed, with no crisis management plan in place, and relying primarily on ad-hoc decisions. According to Petrie et al., 'every country in the world, all the schools, teachers and especially parents have been extremely

279 Retrieved from article: 'School closures in poor countries could be devastating', the Economist, 2020.

280 You, D., Lindt, N., Allen, R., Hansen, C., Beise, J., & Blume, S. (2020). Migrant and displaced children in the age of COVID-19: How the pandemic is impacting them and what can we do to help. *Migration Policy Practice*, Vol. X, Number 2.

281 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2020, Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU — Fundamental Rights Implications.

282 Miquel Àngel Essomba (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Catalonia

unprepared, creating tools on the go'[283]. This view was supported by most of the SIRIUS partners as well as teachers and other related stakeholders who were surveyed in the context of this study. A notable examples are presented by two secondary school teachers in Austria and Portugal.

Box 30 Views of secondary schools teachers in Austria and Portugal on the preparedness of their schools

Our school **in Austria** was not very well prepared for switching to online learning. Most colleagues 'invented' their own ways of communicating with their pupils and families. There was no coordination and different platforms and communication channels were used to the dismay of parents who had a hard time to find out where to find which information. Very few of us had used ICT before and knew how to teach online, most tried to do the same things they did in class but quickly found out that this doesn't work.

To overcome such challenges in the future, the structure should be prepared in advance. In our school **in Portugal**, we just 'took the boat' with no instructions whatsoever. Shifting to digital means of teaching came only after some time as some teachers were not sufficiently prepared.

Source: SIRIUS stakeholder survey (2020); Educational inclusion in times of crisis: schools and Covid-19

Despite the lack of preparedness, the immediate, most predominant and perhaps the only viable solution to school closures was to rely on digital tools and move classes online. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights noticed that almost all EU countries relied on distance learning as a means to give continuity to education. However, although many governments prepared different sets of guidelines and recommendations for educational institutions, teachers as well as parents, just a few managed to do so in time not to delay the process and allowing the smoother transition[284].

In this sense, the way the educational process continued online often differed significantly between institution to institution, depending on the available resources of each school and the digital literacy and knowledge (or its absence) of individual teachers. For this reason, concerns about the quality or universality of such an educational provision have been emerging in several countries.

283 Petrie, C., Aladin, K., Ranjan, P., Javangwe, R., Gilliland, D., Tuominen, S., & Lasse, L. (2020), 'Spotlight: Quality education for all during Covid-19 crisis'.

284 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2020, Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU — Fundamental Rights Implications.

3.5.2. Ensuring access to material tools and providing other support for well-being

The most noticeable factor of educational exclusion in this context is linked to digital tools, be it about computers and other devices (which, when existing, are often shared between different members of the family in poorer households), be it about access to (high-speed) internet. Data shows that one in four children from the poorest quarter of American children does not have access to a computer at home[285]. In the EU (27), according to Eurostat data[286], 10% of households did not have access to the internet in 2019. This was also stipulated by SIRIUS partners as an issue which particularly affects pupils from socially disadvantaged groups. Vulnerable families, such as ethnic minorities and migrants, especially those with more children, faced lack of hardware, stable or at least any internet connection as well as unappropriated living conditions[287].

To tackle accessibility issues in countries across Europe, schools, universities, NGOs, voluntary organisations alone or together with ministries of education bought new digital hardware as well as provided other material support. This was noted for example in Finland, where the local Institute for Human Rights together with National Board on Education issued computers to schools and continues to monitor the situation to determine what additional support can be provided[288]. In some cases, as indicated by the experts from Croatia, the governmental bodies formed partnerships with local telecommunication businesses as well as other partners such as UNICEF to provide free access broadband internet and SIM cards for low-SES families[289]. Additionally, many SIRIUS experts noted a valuable contribution from NGOs and voluntary organisations to help mitigate the educational gaps for socially disadvantaged children and migrant learners in terms of lack of sufficient access to material tools as well as general mental and physical well-being. One particular example of support to Albanian families in London is the Shrpesa Programme:

285 According to article: 'Closing schools for covid-19 does lifelong harm and widens inequality', the Economist, 2020.
286 Eurostat. (2020). Level of internet access – households. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&pcode=tin00134&language=en
287 Elli Pijaca (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Croatia; Bistra Ivanova (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Bulgaria; Olga Wasilewska, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz & Izabela Przybysz (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Poland; Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for the UK.
288 Ayonghe Akonwi, Nafisa Yeasmin (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Finland
289 Elli Pijaca (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Croatia

Box 31 Shrpesa Programme in London, UK

Voluntary organisations in United Kingdom have made significant contributions to helping alleviate the educational gaps experienced by people in the areas where they were active. A notable example is the Shpresa Programme which supports Albanian families in London in:

- sourcing unused computers from around England for young people who needed them;
- recruiting mentors for 60 unaccompanied young people, who have phoned them every day during lockdown;
- organising a storytelling scheme matching storytelling volunteers with 40 families with younger children, to help keep their English and communication skills developing;
- providing art equipment to families;
- organising daily online youth groups and arts projects;
- providing intensive support to women and children experiencing domestic violence during this time.

Source: Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020)

Most migrant young people are not, however, lucky enough to be in contact with such a dynamic organisation. In addition to issues of access, it is important to consider the quality of the educational provision, particularly in an overall context of unpreparedness and ad-hoc institutional reactions, as mentioned above. An evidence assessment conducted by the Education Endowment Foundation[290] indicates that, in such times of crisis, even more important than how education is delivered is the pedagogical quality of remote learning. Certainly, privileged children tend to receive more support than their disadvantaged peers, which can compensate, to a certain extent, for the potential flaws of distance learning. According to the same Foundation[291], 'it is unlikely that providing pupils with access to resources without support will improve learning'. This notion is supported by Teklemariam who emphasises that lack of access to technology is only part of the problem with online learning for many migrant young people[292]. Unfamiliarity with applying digital tools makes it very difficult for many students to learn at their normal pace, particularly those whose English is at an early stage of development, and the mental health problems experienced by many migrant young people during lockdown have compounded the challenges of this. This view is echoed by Universities UK (2017)[293],

290 Education Endowment Foundation (2020) Remote Learning, Rapid Evidence Assessment, London: Education Endowment Foundation.
291 Education Endowment Foundation (2020) Impact of school closures on the attainment gap: Rapid Evidence Assessment, London: Education Endowment Foundation
292 Catherine Heinemeyer & Michalis Kakos (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for the UK.
293 www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/International/higher-education-and-displaced-people-final.pdf

who show that online learning works best in the region when blended with active psychosocial support nearby.

3.5.3. Parental support

In this context, it is important to mention that parental engagement, often associated with improved academic outcomes at all ages[294], plays a crucial role which in the context of COVID-19 became even more pivotal. Due to differences in social capital, parents of vulnerable children tend to be less involved in their children's education. In the case of migrant children, parental involvement can become a particularly difficult issue, given that many parents are not familiar with the host country's educational system and often lack basic skills in the local language. In many cases, the issue of parental involvement is overlooked. This notion is supported by the findings of experts from Slovenia who underline that in the initial guidelines and recommendations for distance learning, parental help, specifically for children under 10 years of age, was presupposed rather than checked, discussed or assisted by schools or wider school community[295].

Connected to this issue, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights[296] notes that, in some EU countries teachers have specifically underlined the difficulty in reaching migrant or refugee families. The SIRIUS survey Educational inclusion in times of crisis: schools and Covid-19 (2020) also showed the same trend of losing contact with many of their students. In this sense, one of the key highlighted reasons for this was that many children became disinterested in learning and had no or insufficient parental support to address the issue. On the other hand, however, some respondents indicated a completely different perspective of issues in terms of parents being inadequately engaged or even discouraging their children participation in online lessons. Such an example was provided by a one secondary school teacher in Croatia:

Box 32 Lack of appropriate parental support noted by teacher in Croatia

Some students were reluctant and disinterested in participating in distance learning and even received parental support for it. I fell, therefore, that it is extremely important for parents to be better educated about the benefits of learning to be able to realise the need of acquiring knowledge for their children's future.

Source: SIRIUS stakeholder survey (2020) survey: Educational inclusion in times of crisis: schools and Covid-19

294 Education Endowment Foundation (2020). Teaching and Learning Toolkit.
295 Alenka Gril, Janja Žmavc and Sabina Autor (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Slovenia
296 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2020, Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU — Fundamental Rights Implications.

3.5.4. Language barrier for migrant learners in online learning

Considering that 'migrant and displaced children are among the most vulnerable populations on the globe'[297], the negative consequences of the pandemic on their educational and overall life trajectories cannot be ignored. As observed by You et al.[298], migrant and displaced children already face multiple obstacles in accessing education, ranging from enrolment issues to lack of available instruction or language barriers. Despite that, a number of SIRIUS experts throughout Europe note that in the context of the pandemic, at least at the beginning stages, no particular policy attention was given to learners with migrant backgrounds.

An interesting example considering the language barrier for migrant learners is Estonia. Experts here believe that the schools were so overwhelmed by the sudden need to switch to distance methods of learning that in the beginning, they left migrant learners with little or no attention[299]. For many migrant learners, especially NAMS, school was the only place where they could communicate in Estonian, so, in many cases, distance learning for them was limited to simply interacting in Estonian rather than learning specific subjects. In addition, as a last resort measure, some parents were advised to explain the subjects to their children in their mother tongue, which is, in fact, the exact opposite advice that the local department of multilingual education gives in normal circumstances.

3.5.5. Teacher preparedness and support

Another important issue which surfaced in the context of the pandemic is teacher preparation. It was quickly realised that the smooth transition to distance learning requires sufficient teacher preparation in terms of their digital competences which many educators lack. The Commissions stakeholder consultation findings, presented in the new Digital Education Action plan (2020)[300], rated teachers' digital skills and competences as the most important aspect of digital education. As indicated in the previous section, the new plan for digital education in EU underlines teachers as key agents in both strategic priorities of creating the high-performing digital education ecosystem and enhancing digital skills and competences.

At the same time, however, experts stress that finger-pointing to the lack of necessary competences for online learning to one specific

297 You, D., Lindt, N., Allen, R., Hansen, C., Beise, J., & Blume, S. (2020). Migrant and displaced children in the age of COVID-19: How the pandemic is impacting them and what can we do to help. *Migration Policy Practice*, Vol. X, Number 2.
298 Idem above.
299 Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020) SIRIUS Watch country fiche for Estonia
300 European Commission. Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/deap-communication-sept2020_en.pdf

group should be avoided[301]. To be able to think about the successful adaptability of online learning in future, it is necessary to acknowledge how difficult the sudden transition to distance and blended learning methods is for teachers, who need significantly more time and effort to be able to adjust their ways of teaching, come up with new methods, while also maintaining their personal lives. It therefore important not to merely blame teachers for having insufficient digital skills but rather to encourage and foster their motivation, providing both mental and material support in the meantime. Below, there are two indicative examples from France and Slovenia that show the difficulties faced by teachers in the context of the switch to online learning.

Box 33 Difficulties for teachers in the context of the pandemic in France and Slovenia

Secondary school teacher in France

The experience of shifting to online learning individual and not collective. Each teacher did what he could with the means at hand, taking into account his family life. Personally, with two children (6 years old and 8 years old) my days were very busy because I had to take care of them as a priority, so I worked weekends and late evenings to work with my students and answer their questions.

In Slovenia, teachers who were responsible for teaching migrant students reported personal approach in teaching that allow greater focus on emotional state of children and their parents in everyday communication and providing the moral support to the families. Therefore, the learning subject contents were less important in teacher-pupil relation than staying in touch and emotionally support them. These teachers were available to the migrant students for 24h per day, mostly working at the afternoon and evening, but also weekends.

Source: SIRIUS stakeholder survey (2020) survey: Educational inclusion in times of crisis: schools and Covid-19; Eve Mägi & Meeli Murasov (2020)

3.5.6. Challenges for refugee and undocumented children in the context of the COVID-19

In the case of refugee children, a particularly vulnerable segment of the migrant population, UNESCO[302] observes that even before Covid-19, they were twice as likely to be out of school than other children. Undoubtedly, their prospects of being provided (quality) education is decreasing even further due to the global pandemic, namely in the context of refugee camps where the already insufficient educational provision may get suspended altogether. In fact, reports from Bulgaria and Greece indicate that education and group activities were suspended in some refugee

301 SIRIUS workshop on inclusive digital education. Lithuanian discussion.
302 UNESCO article entitled 'COVID-19: What you need to know about refugees' education' (07/07/2020).

centres[303]. Many refugee camps lack access to basic services such as clean water or sanitation, let alone digital devices and internet access (accounts indicate[304] that in some parts of the Moria camp, 1300 people use the same water tap and have no soap). Some countries, as for instance Croatia, have found ways to mitigate the effects of such insufficiencies by ensuring that children in reception centres can follow school programmes broadcast on television[305].

Undocumented migrants are another segment of the migrant population who tend to struggle even more in the context of Covid-19. Fear of being caught and deported may preclude many from seeking help, which in the context of a global pandemic can have disastrous effects, especially in terms of personal and public health. In addition, due to the risks posed by Covid-19, many public child protection services have halted, pushing unaccompanied migrant children to homelessness, or forcing them to live in unsanitary and overcrowded spaces[306]. Aware of the multiple facets of inequality, some European countries have taken exceptional measures to mitigate the effects of the pandemic among the most vulnerable groups, such as: granting temporary residency permits to migrants and asylum seekers with pending applications, which grants them access to social services and the national health care system (Portugal); introducing an accessible unemployment payment scheme, regardless of legal status (Ireland); or transferring vulnerable migrants to individual accommodation or other facilities to better protect their health (Belgium)[307].

Considering these developments and challenges which surfaced in the context of the pandemic, it is clear that education systems throughout the world faced significant obstacles. In this context, pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds were hit particularly hard as sudden shift to distance learning in many cases widened the existing educational inequalities. Even though examples of good practices can be found in several EU countries and beyond, the European Trade Union Committee for Education notices that 'the protection of at-risk populations requires the full attention of governments to coordinate and generate a collective response'[308]. In the context of the current fast changing world, it is crucially important to learn from the COVID-19 crisis, especially in terms of educational inclusion, to be able to mitigate the effects caused by such unforeseen crises in the future as well as to create more resilient educational systems.

303 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2020, Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU — Fundamental Rights Implications.
304 Idem above.
305 Idem above.
306 You, D., Lindt, N., Allen, R., Hansen, C., Beise, J., & Blume, S. (2020). Migrant and displaced children in the age of COVID-19: How the pandemic is impacting them and what can we do to help. *Migration Policy Practice*, Vol. X, Number 2.
307 Idem above.
308 ETUCE (2020). 'ETUCE Statement on tackling the COVID-19 crisis'.

3.6 Other related trends and emerging challenges

3.6.1. Adapting to the developments of the labour market

Socioeconomic changes and technological development transform the world of work at unprecedented pace and create the need for new skills that are increasingly difficult to foresee[309][310]. New technologies open a lot of new opportunities and fields, but at the same time, many jobs will significantly change in their nature or cease to exist. In this sense, McKinsey Global Institute forecasts four key ways how further technological advancements and artificial intelligence (AI) as well as other developments will affect the labour market[311] :

1. Around 50 % of activities (not jobs) in peoples' work across all sectors might become automated in the near future.
2. Approximately 15 % of the global workforce will lose their current jobs due to automation and AI developments by 2030.
3. At the same time, by 2030, the global workforce will increase by 21-32 % due to increased demand from work fostered by raising economies, increased spending on healthcare, and increasing investment in infrastructure, energy and technology.
4. AI and automation will change the nature of most jobs as technology will take over some parts, but others will continue to be implemented by humans.

The increasing pace of digitalisation and automation, together with the sustainability imperative, discussed in **Section 3.3.**, will continue to reshape labour market needs in all sectors[312]. Because of the changes, the skills that we consider valuable today may not meet the needs of tomorrow and thus, it is crucial to help students acquire have a wide range of skills, attitudes and values which would help to adapt to different circumstances that are not yet known.[313] Experts note that more emphasis should be given to fostering higher cognitive skills, social and emotional, as well as technological skills[314]. Others additionally underline that curiosity, leadership, persistence and resilience, often called 'soft' skills in the

309 Commission Staff Working Document on achieving the European Education Area 2015. https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/eea-swd-212-final_en.pdf

310 European Education and Training Expert Panel (2019c). *Issue paper – Technological change and the future of work*. Advanced draft for the Forum on the Future of Learning.

311 Manyika, J. & Sneader, K. (2018). *AI, automation, and the future of work: Ten things to solve for*. Executive Briefing, McKinsey Global Institute. https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/ai-automation-and-the-future-of-work-ten-things-to-solve-for#part2

312 ILO (2019). *Work for a Better Future – Global Commission on the Future of Work*. Geneva: International Labour Office.

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314 Manyika, J. & Sneader, K. (2018). *AI, automation, and the future of work: Ten things to solve for*. Executive Briefing, McKinsey Global Institute. https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/ai-automation-and-the-future-of-work-ten-things-to-solve-for#part2

present, will become increasingly important in the context of the 4th industrial revolution as these and other transversal skills will be essential to keep pace with technological progress[315].

Another indicative development and closely related trend in the labour market is the fact that people tend to stay much shorter in their jobs. Just in the space of one generation, the average worker in Europe changes jobs or professions more than 10 times than an average person from generation before[316]. The high number of transitions in one's career, as well as the continuous increase of the retirement age, poses the need for greater involvement in lifelong learning.

The up- and reskilling required for successful transitions in the labour market will be of particular importance for those coming from vulnerable backgrounds. This issue was and still is clearly exposed in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. Estimates in spring across the EU showed that around 22 % of total EU-27 labour force, mostly in medium to lower-skilled service provision, are faced with a significant risk of disruption[317]. Experts were quick to realise that while the pandemic affected everyone, the impact on the vulnerable workforce groups, including women, lower-educated and non-natives, was particularly disproportionate. The gap between low- and high-skilled workers' employment rates is high and the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated these inequalities as high-qualified workforce are more likely to work in sectors less affected by the pandemic[318]. Future outlook seems no less gloomy for the low-skilled workers as Cedefop foresight suggests that the overwhelming share of job openings in the foreseeable future will require at least medium or high-level qualifications[319].

3.6.2. Building resilience through education

The COVID-19 crisis put a number of professions under significant risks in terms of disruption. For others, sudden changes meant quick adaptation and/or highly increased workload. This especially applies to health and care sector workers, but also frontline workers in social, sanitation, transport and

315 Snow, G. (2019). 'Arts teaching could become more important than maths in tech-based future' – education expert. *The Stage*. https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2019/arts-teaching-become-important-maths-tech-based-future-education-expert/?fbclid=IwAR0Mt1N-WsjFaweDy_mNvA5LIKZsp17spBsW1ZBDPqFVgDZpUv1hFjYe018

316 European Commission, 10 trends shaping the future of work in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2019

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319 Medium to high-level qualification job openings are foreseen to amount to 89 % over the period of 2016-2030. Pouliakas K., Branka J., 'EU jobs at highest risk of COVID-19 social distancing: is the pandemic exacerbating the labour market divide?' Working paper series No1: Cedefop, May 2020. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6201_en.pdf

retail services as well as teachers and trainers. This experience shows that to ensure effective access health, social and educational services, it is crucial to foster the resilience of these strategic sectors, having enough appropriately skilled workers., Responding to this crisis in particular but also having in mind the wider trends described in this chapter, the need to improve resilience to changes is of paramount importance. As Commission's new Skills Agenda (2020) indicates, improving resilience for an individual reduces one's dependency on the market conditions and increases the potential to successfully navigate through transitions in professional life[320].

Transitions in the labour markets as well as competence-oriented shift in education will reinforce each other as both involve call for a broader set of skills, competences – translated into specific learning outcomes – to be assessed (e.g. non-cognitive skills, ability to apply knowledge, learning to learn)[321]. In school education, in particular, the challenge of being resilient to changes and quickly adapting by finding new tools and approaches for addressing required competences lies in not only the development of students' capacity but stakeholders' at all levels (teachers, schools and actors at system level) [322].

On the other hand, the new European Skills Agenda (2020) notes that as skills become obsolete more quickly the twin transitions towards green and digital Europe will require learning lifelong learning for all to become a reality[323]. Education at a young age is fundamental, but it is only the beginning step of ensuring life full of learning. Encouraging continuous adult participation in learning will be increasingly important to provide people with specific transferable skills which will enable them to move within the job market more easily, while also ensuring that the additional measures are inclusive[324]. The aspect of social fairness and inclusiveness in this regard is particularly underlined as evidence shows that participation of low-skilled adults in learning tends to be significantly lower compared to adults with medium and high skills[325]. Underlining this situation, the recent Commission's communication on achieving

320 European Skills Agenda. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en

321 European Commission (2018a). *Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Key Competences for LifeLong Learning*. Commission Staff Working Document. Accompanying the document SWD (2018) 14 final). Brussels: European Commission.

322 PPMI (2019), Literature review and trends impact/drivers analysis, Prospective Report on the Future of Assessment in Primary and Secondary Education

323 European Skills Agenda. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en

324 Council conclusions of 8 June 2020 on reskilling and upskilling as a basis for increasing sustainability and employability, in the context of supporting economic recovery and social cohesion

325 Data provided in European Skills Agenda indicates that 18 % (data from 2016) of low-skilled adults participate in learning. OECD Survey of Adult Skills (2019) indicated that 20 % of low-skilled adults participate in job-related learning whereas for medium and high skilled workers the percentage reaches 37 % and 58 % respectively.https://op.europa.eu/lt/publication-detail/-/publication/3951d3a7-2177-11ea-95ab-01aa75ed71a1/language-en; http://www.

the EEA by 2025 specifies that the vulnerable labour market positions of low as well as some medium-skilled workers are in particular need of effective up- and reskilling to be able to adjust to successful transitions and find quality jobs in the increasingly green and digital economy[326].

Due to these reasons, a significant increase of low-qualified and unemployed adults participating in learning found its way among the key objectives of the European Skills Agenda[327]:

Box 34 European Skills Agenda objectives

Indicator	Current level (in %) (latest year available)	Objective for 2025 (in %)
Participation of adults aged 25-64 in learning during the last 12 months	38 % (2016)	50 %
Participation of low-qualified adults 25-64 in learning during the last 12 months	18 % (2016)	30 %
Share of unemployed adults aged 25-64 with a recent learning experience	11 % (2019)	20 %
Share of adults aged 16-74 having at least basic digital skills	56 % (2019)	70 %

Source: European Skills Agenda (2020)

It is, therefore, clear that the development of 'soft' transversal competences in the foreseeable future will become a key focus across the education systems. These trends will have a strong impact on the formulation of educational goals that will foster the ability to learn new competences and maintain resilience towards the foreseen and unforeseen changes in one's life. Recent developments in the EU policy note that the paradigm shift in skills needed to ensure the transition towards digital and green Europe requires a significant focus on lifelong learning. At the same time, it is increasingly evident, in part due to the COVID-19 crisis, that the transition can only be successful if it is cohesive and no one if left behind.

oecd.org/employment/emp/engaging-low-skilled-adults-2019.pdf

326 Commission Staff Working Document on the European Education Area by 2025. https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/eea-swd-212-final_en.pdf

327 European Skills Agenda, accessible via https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en

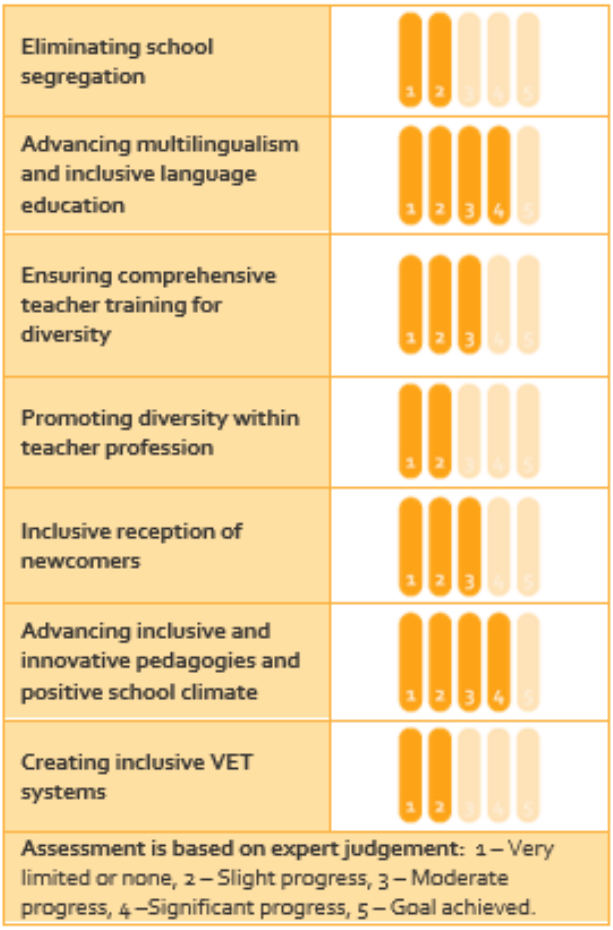
CHAPTER 4: Towards SIRIUS Inclusive Agenda 2030

In the upcoming decade, the share of migrants and non-native children in European classrooms is likely to increase further, due to the growing mobility of the world population and the declining birth rates in Europe. This provides undeniable evidence that the work of SIRIUS and its Clear Agenda remain of great importance for the next years. However, based on the progress (and lack thereof) made over the past six years and new challenges arising in the meantime the developments and trends expected for the upcoming period, the original Clear Agenda could be revised to match the challenges that lie ahead.

This report has highlighted that the progress made towards the implementation of the Clear Agenda for Migrant Education has been mostly uneven, both among countries in Europe and across seven thematic dimensions highlighted by the Agenda. One of the main challenges to quality and inclusive education for migrant children remains the lack of a holistic and interconnected approach to inclusive education, which considers how elements such as inclusive pedagogies, teacher training, linguistically and culturally sensitive school climate, etc., should be linked together to facilitate inclusion. Isolated fragmented initiatives are not likely to achieve sustainable impact if other aspects of education are not included as well.

Persisting challenges

Figure 11. Progress towards implementation of the Clear Agenda (2014)



School segregation remains a challenge in practically all countries in Europe, as it is often linked to residential and societal segregation. Policies combating segregation remain ineffective due to the lack of comprehensive strategies addressing residential segregation. This affects the reception and integration of

newcomers, who, despite direct enrolment in mainstream education, in practice often get enrolled in migrant-dominated schools. Newcomers as well as longer-term residents lack regular and equal engagement with their native peers and therefore miss out on experiencing host country's socio-cultural practices and developing diverse social networks. The same applies to VET systems which -in many countries- are overrepresented with children from vulnerable and/or migrant backgrounds. To some extent, the current design of the VET systems and tracking systems in general contribute to enhanced segregation and marginalisation of socially disadvantaged population.

All European countries recognise the importance of multilingualism of both native and migrant children. Mother-tongue education for migrant children has become increasingly common, though not yet universally present or guaranteed. Foreign language teaching and multilingualism remains predominantly focused on the main European and global languages, such as English and French. Languages of countries of origin of migrants (such as Arabic or Farsi) are less often offered by schools. Content and Language Integrated Learning is far less common across Europe, particularly in the native languages of migrant children. The lack of migrant languages taught or used in CLIL is caused by a lack of priority among governments but could also be connected to the lack of teachers with a migrant background who could provide CLIL in their native language. This is a resource and an opportunity that has not been explored extensively yet.

Overall, while many studies have been conducted on the role of teachers in facilitating diversity in the classroom, and despite the high demand from teachers themselves, countries across Europe have yet to develop consistent programmes for the integration of multicultural and multilingual pedagogies in teacher training. Trainings on managing diversity are still predominantly provided on an institutional basis or by NGOs as in-service training. However, various schools across Europe introduce mentoring programmes or academic assistants to support migrant children with both school-related matters and with overall integration. While the growing presence of such support personnel is commendable and certainly important, it does not account for the lack of preparedness of teaching staff to create inclusive classrooms and implement inclusive pedagogical approaches.

However, neither of these achievements or persisting gaps should be seen in isolation. The thematic dimensions are largely interlinked, and that progress made towards one dimension influences progress in other dimensions. Similarly, a lack of progress in one dimension prevents the achievement of others. An important barrier for quality and inclusive migrant education is therefore the lack of holistic strategies in national policies across Europe that address multiple aspects of inclusive education more generally. Research among the

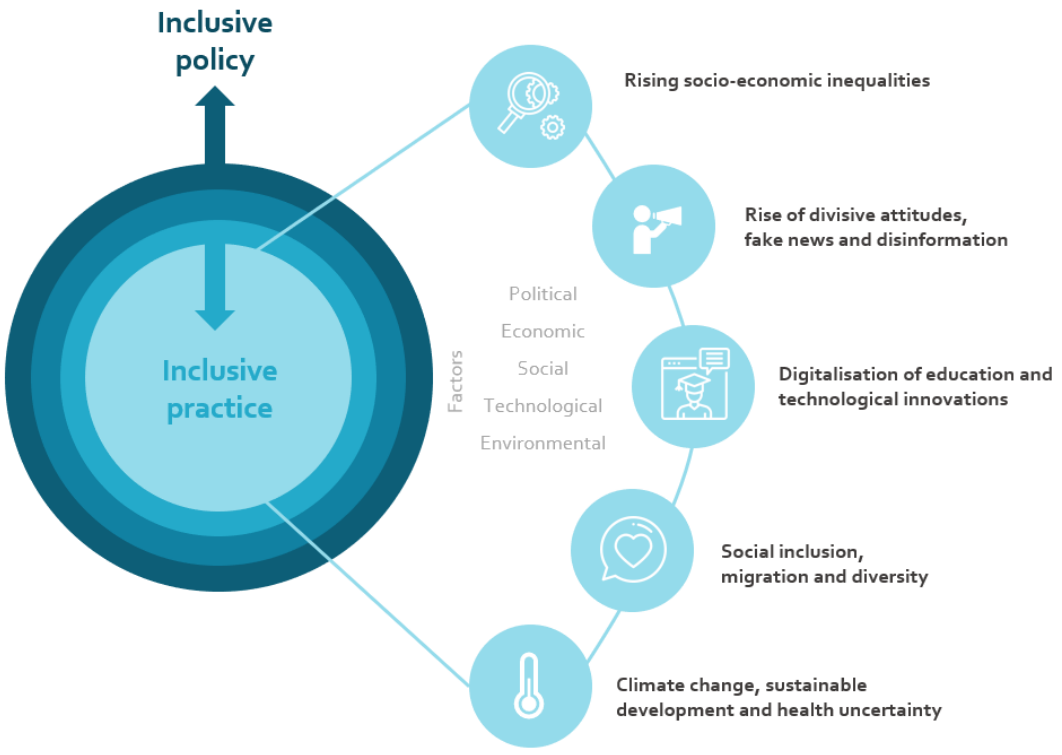
SIRIUS partner countries demonstrated that various new strategies and policies have been drafted in recent years to enhance inclusive education, but few of them focus on holistic approaches covering multiple dimensions of education provisions and stages of integration process. Therefore, achievements and progress made towards the SIRIUS Clear Agenda have certainly been important but remain fragmented.

Persisting challenges to be addressed by the SIRIUS Inclusive Agenda 2030

- Investing in teachers and other education professionals (including support personnel) (ITE and continuous professional development)
- Inclusive school climate – cultural and linguistic sensitivity, sense of belonging, innovative pedagogies, schools as social and civic spaces
- Continuity of learning, smooth transitions horizontally and vertically, flexibility of learning pathways
- Recognition of skills and qualifications, schools as learning communities (education beyond school walls), synergies of formal and non-formal learning
- Addressing school segregation

Emerging challenges

Figure 12. Emerging trends and drivers affecting inclusive education



While many of the gaps highlighted by the Clear Agenda in 2014 persist, though the progress in closing them in some countries must be acknowledged, there are a few emerging challenges in the light of broader societal, economic and political trends, that will have an effect on achieving the goal of ensuring high quality and inclusive education for all in the future. Addressing them must be integrated in the overall package of measures foreseen by the EU in its vision for European Education Area.

One of the most inert of the trends affecting migrant learners is socio-demographic change, reflecting both increasingly diverse classrooms and deepening of economic inequalities. Diversity is an asset that, if well handled, can positively contribute to the growth of every individual and contribute to the creation of a better and more inclusive learning environment. Building an inclusive education structure, however, will require continuous development in addressing the most immediate issues and seeing longer-term, systemic issues in terms of migration processes, participation in education and political and socio-economic context.

A closely related issue is the rise of divisive attitudes in Europe. The migration-related matters in recent years have become increasingly contentious throughout the political agenda in Europe. International migration is often weaponised and used as a tool for fostering fear, often for political gain, which undermines democracy and hinders inclusive civic engagement. Education, which is one the critical building blocks for intercultural dialogue and inclusive societies, is not achieving this aim and can do more to foster the development and understanding of key European values of the rule of law, tolerance, equality and social fairness.

The paramount importance of inclusive education becomes particularly evident in the context of the twin - green and digital – transition of Europe that is the centre focus of the policy agenda for the foreseeable future. One of its aspects, the climate change will affect current education systems significantly and in different ways. The most obvious change is the escalation of impact on the forced mobility of people. While not necessarily the causes in themselves, environmental degradation and natural hazards are key contributing push factors for forced migration which means that educational settings will need to be adjusted accordingly to ensure high-quality education for all. On the other hand, to be able to respond to environmental challenges, education will need to shift from being reactive to becoming increasingly proactive in fostering the acquisition of key sustainable skills and sustainability mindset, such as critical thinking, creativity, systems and future thinking, as well as collaboration and empathy.

Equally important for inclusive education will be the adjustment to the digital and technological advancements. Digital technology development is an enabling factor for green economic transition and movement towards a circular economy. Acquisition of digital competences for learning and active participation in digital

society may also foster inclusion, learning and creativity, ethics, empathy and active citizenship. The COVID-19 crisis, however, showed that the twin transition and digital advancements in particular, can only be successful if it is inclusive and no one is left behind. For this reason, one of the key goals of inclusive education systems will be to minimise the digital divide, which is composed of several interrelated dimensions, including access, capability and outcomes that learners can achieve.

The need for addressing the digital and, in general, educational attainment divide became even more apparent in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The sudden shift to online learning was not successful or, in some cases, even possible for many learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. Therefore, a lot of progress made to mitigate the educational gap was lost just in the matter of months. The negative consequences of the pandemic have been and are certainly felt disproportionally by learners from vulnerable backgrounds, including migrants. Children from more privileged families tend to receive more support than their disadvantaged peers, which made the shift to distance learning easier. It became clear that while essential as the very first step, providing access to digital technology is only one of the necessary measures for inclusive education. Many other contextual issues, including lack of learning space at home, unfamiliarity and lack of appropriate skills in applying the digital tools, inability to keep up, lack of parental engagement, and disappearance of schools as a social space, as well as increased need for psychosocial support, to name a few, also need to be addressed.

It is, therefore, evident that to be able to respond crisis in the future education systems need to become more resilient. Resilience is also the key factor in the context of digital and green transitions in Europe. The fast-changing world of today is becoming less predictable and so, together with the technical competences, more emphasis in education should be given to fostering interdisciplinary, transversal as well as cognitive and socio-emotional skills to keep pace with the changes. Simultaneously, skills become obsolete more quickly in the labour market, so fostering lifelong learning will become crucial, especially for low-qualified professionals, among who there are many people with migrant backgrounds.

Emerging challenges to be addressed by the SIRIUS Inclusive Agenda 2030

- Intersecting inequalities – migration and gender, migration and sustainability
- The need for developing sustainability mindset, sustainability and global citizenship
- Digitalisation of education – schools and home as safe digital learning and social spaces
- Education as a social responsibility of different actors (e.g., partnerships between public education providers and EdTech sector for inclusion)
- Resilience and investment in families

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