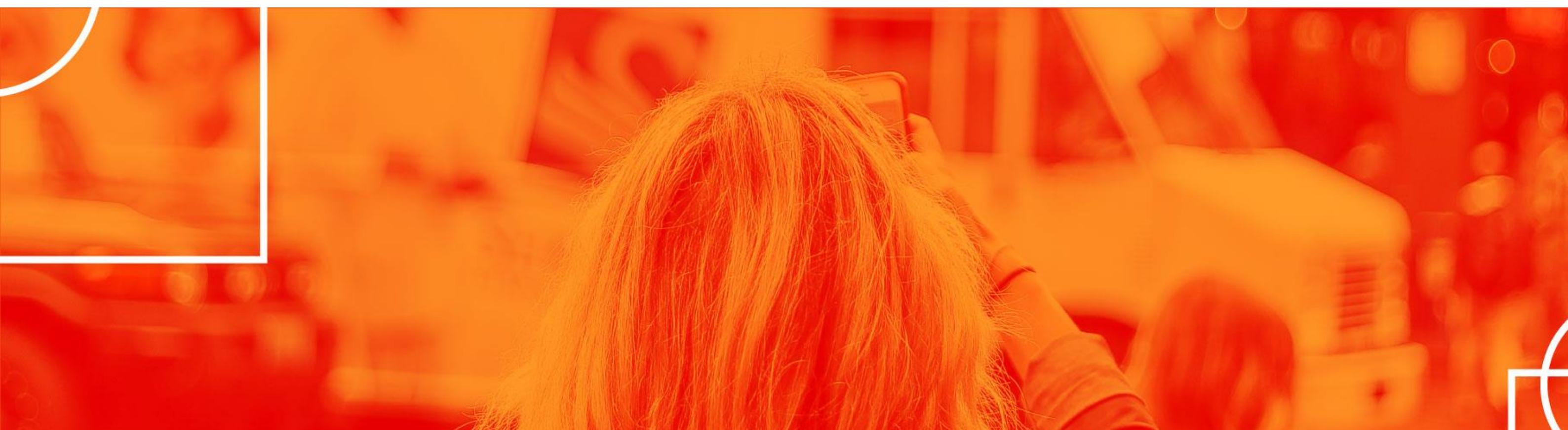

3 Education and Training

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3.1 Introduction

Whether it's learning a second language, catching up on schooling, or the school system in general, when it comes to addressing social and economic inequalities and enabling disadvantaged groups to participate in society, the education sector is seen as having a major responsibility in addressing these issues. For the particularly vulnerable group of new immigrants, especially refugees, learning the majority language of the host country and catching up on educational qualifications is seen as the measure of all things. In doing so, the skills already acquired in the country of origin are often disregarded, and little consideration is given to the already difficult living situation of refugees. In addition, the limits set by the education system and institutions are often overlooked.

This chapter examines what policies and practices are being applied/implemented in the area of education and training for newly arrived migrants, what support measures have been put in place, how the pre-school and school integration design has taken place, and consequently how social integration has been promoted. This outline is based on the results of literature research by use of the Migration Research Hub, a survey on key publications for the topic area between the project's partners and their own research.

Since different research foci vary depending on age and entry into the education system, the Education chapter will also be divided into two subsections:

(1) Pre-school Education
(2) School Education

A significant part of the research on education and training focuses on policies and structural frameworks and rights. A further focus is placed on the educational assessment and needs of migrants, followed by a discussion of further education aspects. One topic that has been increasingly addressed in recent years is the influence of pre-school and school education on social integration and inclusion in the host country. In this context, the negative consequences of non-access to education are also partly discussed.

3.2 Research on education and training area

In this review chapter, we want to focus on what is often identified as an influence on refugee children's school careers. Therefore, we analysed research that has addressed the following issues: access to education; specific settings (welcome, immersion, reception, or introductory classes); first, second language or multilingual education; additional support; and tutoring. This is divided within the two domains: (1) pre-school education and (2) school education.

(1) Regarding pre-school education and arrangements

Although young refugee children come from very different backgrounds, they usually have one thing in common: their refugee experience or their family's refugee experience, which is usually accompanied by a high level of stress and hardship. Especially those children who are affected by physical and emotional stress, often also by poverty, and who do not yet speak the majority language of the destination country, can often be severely negatively affected in their future educational and professional careers. Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs are thus given a high priority when it comes to mitigating the risk factors that refugee children face (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018).

With regard to ECEC for refugee children with a focus on this target group, there are both explicit international comparative studies (Bloch et al. 2015; Crul et al. 2017; Essomba 2017; Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018; Jahreie 2021) and studies (Skaremyr 2021; Fouskas and Sidiropoulos 2017) that address specific aspects of the issue at a national level. In this regard, most studies seek answers to the question of how disadvantage and social exclusion can be prevented or mitigated for vulnerable children (Fouskas and Sidiropoulos 2017; Peleman, Vandenbroeck, and Van Avermaet 2020; Van Laere and Vandenbroeck 2017; Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018). This usually involves the structural framework, such as: access to education below compulsory school age; acquisition of the majority language of the destination country and the promotion of first, second, or multilingualism; the quality of the services offered, especially the training of professionals; the general age of entry; the parent-institution relationship (Krüger and Thamin 2021; Thomauske 2021); and the information transfer to

parents. What seems to be in the first place a side issue, but is no less relevant, is to shift the focus away from the children to the parents and the kindergarten staff, and their needs and perspectives (Van Laere and Vandenbroeck 2017; Erdemir 2021). Regarding newly arrived pre-school children topics that directly affect the children are mentioned: early language support[7] (Šebart, Hočevar, and Štefanc 2017), the effects of trauma on second language acquisition (Kaplan et al. 2016), how the new linguistic environment affects them (Skaremyr 2021) or the general impact of Early Childhood Education and Care on the well-being of the children and their families (Bove and Sharmahd 2020). Some research studies go into some depth with regard to early childhood language development and shed some light on the handling and requirement of monolingualism (educational language) and the resulting effects on children (Panagiotopoulou, Rosen, and Strzykala 2021; Mecheril and Quehl 2015; Hélot 2021). Dealing with bilingualism or multilingualism (Panagiotopoulou, Rosen, and Strzykala 2021; Kirsch 2021; Jahreie 2021), and how multilingualism is being practiced in the pre-school or school setting, is also the subject of research in this area. Regarding the learning needs of refugee children, a report draws attention to children's educational gaps due to war and the increasingly worsening situation in their countries (Drolia et al. 2020).

(2) Regarding school education and arrangements

As mentioned above, a significant part of the research on primary and secondary school education focuses on policies and structural frameworks and rights. Another aspect receives a lot of attention in research, namely the lack of a systematic approach to data collection on refugee children; accordingly, all analyses are based on an ad hoc approach by various EU-host countries (UNHCR et al. 2019; OECD 2018). Many studies focus on country comparisons (e.g., EU-member states) in terms of policies and structural framework conditions and rights (Penninx, Garcés-Mascareñas, and CIDOB – Barcelona Centre For International Affairs, Barcelona, Spain 2016, Essomba 2017). Others look at the educational pathways of refugee children, i.e., transitions from home to camps, reception centres, and eventual host country schools. Although access to education is a fundamental human right, access to education differs along the pathways from the source countries to the eventual host countries. Even in the final stage of arrival in a host country, different rules and rights apply depending on the legal status of asylum seeker: their subsidiary protection and convention status. The length of stay in the various places and the number of relocations, which impact on access to education, have an impact on mental health problems of refugee children (Nielsen et al. 2008; Siebert, Gabriele and Pollheimer-Pühringer 2020). This topic is addressed by various studies, in addition to the different ways host countries handle the often very heterogeneous needs of refugee children (Koehler 2017). The needs of refugee children centre around 3 themes: learning needs, social needs and emotional needs, as identified by Cerna (2019). In consequence, a holistic approach to education of refugee children is requested. Denmark identifies the needs for successful integration into school and life by offering mentoring/buddy systems, integration in local/municipal integration programmes, and a community school context to foster the creation of a social network of local and immigrant/refugee students (Requardt 2016).

[7] Here: in the majority language of the destination country.

Another emphasis of research lies on the educational challenges faced by refugee children flowing from the large organisational differences of education systems in the various EU-MS (Berglund 2017, Sunata and Abdulla 2020). As educational institutions tend to reproduce existing inequalities between social groups, the group of refugee children tends to be marginalised in systems that have an early tracking system, which does not take into account that the children have to catch up both in term of the language of the host country and the learning requirements. An OECD working paper focuses on three such countries, Germany, Greece, and the Netherlands, and informs about the adjustments undertaken to better cater for the needs of this vulnerable group of students (Koehler, Palaiologou, and Brussino 2022).

A further strain of research examines children's integration and education approaches, methodologies, and policies in Europe. One such OECD working paper provides a comprehensive overview of Dutch education approaches toward recently arrived children, their educational performance, and socio-emotional well-being (Bilgili 2019).

Another research area is dedicated to the educational assessment and needs of refugee children (Bircan and Sunata 2015). It is emphasised that basic needs and structural conditions (condition of schools and qualifications of teachers) partly do not correspond to quality standards and the needs of the children (Aydin and Kaya 2017).

Other studies highlight the importance of education in terms of structural and social integration (Çelik and Erdogan 2017) and address the crucial role that teachers can play in this process (Aydin, Gundogdu, and Akgul 2019). A specific topic makes reference to inadequate access to education in refugee accommodations (camps) and how social segregation leads to school segregation and affects social integration (Forschungsbereich beim Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration (SVR_Forschungsbereich) 2018). This issue is particularly evident in country studies on Greece and Turkey (Vergou 2019, Çelik and İçduygu 2019). A grounded theory study addresses the overrepresentation of immigrants in special education and the opacity of data in this area (Subasi Singh 2020).

An even less considered topic is the role of schools and education on children's health and well-being, and how equitable education can eliminate inequalities (Mock-Muñoz de Luna et al. 2020). Another research gap concerns the prior educational experiences of young refugees before flight (Cerna 2019).

3.3 Integration situation (inequalities) in education and training

(1) Regarding pre-school education and arrangements

Before we take a closer look at the situation of pre-school education for newcomers, we would like to highlight some of the most important facts about early childhood education and care in Europe. In Europe, most children start primary education at the age of 6. As shown in the Eurodicy report (European Commission, EACEA, and Eurydice 2019), there are 31 million children

under this age living in the European Union who were potential users of ECEC services in 2019. There are significant differences between European countries in terms of access and quality of ECEC. In particular, when it comes to the transition from the childcare to the pre-school phase, the division is blurred. In most Central and Southern European countries, children move from childcare to education-oriented pre-school education at around age 3. What most European countries have in common, is that the quality of childcare for children under the age of 3 lacks development. This is probably also due to the low qualification requirements for childcare staff (ibid).

Against this background, there is now the question of what access refugee children have to the pre-school sector. Refugee children are often referred to as a vulnerable group in many studies or are counted among the migrant group without addressing their specific situation (Vandekerckhove and Aarssen 2020; Bloch et al. 2015). As a result, the often difficult conditions for children affected by flight, the educational gaps that (can) result from war or flight, and the impact of trauma on learning do not receive further attention. According to these studies, refugee children generally seem to face more barriers than children of immigrants with other reasons for migration (Crul et al. 2017). And even within the group of refugee children, it should be noted that children from different countries of origin may differ just as much in terms of their pre-school experiences (ibid.). It is also pointed out that there are neither adequate educational services nor clear strategies in reception centres to ensure meaningful ECEC (Bloch et al. 2015). Regarding the management and implementation of multilingualism and the promotion of first language(s), linguistic diversity is highlighted as an asset across the EU, but implementation seems to be the main problem (Hélot 2021; Mary and Young 2021; Krüger and Thamin 2021; Thomauske 2021). As far as access to ECEC is concerned, there are different regulations in the European countries, since, for example, compulsory schooling starts at different ages and pre-school education is organised very differently. In some countries, such as Germany or Austria, parents whose asylum status has been officially recognised are treated equally to German or Austrian citizens, i.e., access to pre-school education is granted under the same conditions. Costs vary, although the last year of kindergarten is free in some German states and in Austria. In Sweden, children of pre-school age, regardless of their status, can attend open pre-school, which is free of charge (Crul et al. 2017; Dörfler and Blum 2014; European Commission and Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture 2021).

(2) Regarding school education and arrangements

Immigration to Europe has a fairly long history, at least in many western European countries – given the colonial past of many countries that are now part of the EU; but immigration gained momentum after WWII also in non-colonial countries of Western Europe, partly resulting from immigration programmes, and partly as a result of refugee intake. Integration of this heterogeneous group of migrants into the school system became a topical issue with the implementation of the OECD-PISA surveys from 2000 onwards. The data documented that foreign-born-students lagged behind native born children in academic performance, also when controlling for socio-economic status of parents. As a consequence, some countries embarked on educational reforms to promote the educational success of migrant youth (OECD 2015,

chapter 13) (OECD and European Union 2015); particularly Germany and Belgium were successful in these endeavours. Despite some progress, in 2012 on average 30% of foreign-born children across the EU lacked basic reading skills at the age of 15, compared to 14% of native-born children. Immigration countries could build on this experience with migrant children in the school system and possibly add additional special support measures.

The PISA-based studies do not differentiate between various types of migrants. It is only since the most recent inflow of refugees from 2014 onward that the integration of the specific group of refugee children in schools receives attention. The source countries of this inflow of refugee youth are many and varied, encompassing youth from the Middle East, Afghanistan, and various countries and regions in Africa and South America. Their successful integration in the school system has become a major political issue in the receiving countries of Europe, not least because of the large numbers concerned. This fact, in addition to the high probability of settlement in the host country, entices countries to address barriers to successful integration of refugee children in schools, largely due to their impact on their subsequent labour market and social integration potential. While refugee children share many of the challenges of migrant youth, for example, challenges of acculturation to a new environment, culture and language, discrimination because of their ethnic-cultural background, and a crisis of identity (Malewska-Peyre 1994; Schwartz et al. 2018; Hack-Polay et al. 2021). The scant literature on this issue suggests that refugee youth face additional obstacles. Bloch et al. (2015) point to the role of an insecure residence status, dispersal and loss of family members, and the trauma they experience, which can impact upon their psychological and social wellbeing and health. In consequence, "*rethinking refugee education*" in Europe is on the agenda (de Wal Pastoor 2016, 108) and argues:

> […] for a holistic, whole-school approach to refugee education, which includes education policy, school structures, classroom practice, curricula, pedagogy and teaching materials, as well as cultural awareness and refugee competence.

This proposal is the outcome of a research project (TURIN)[8] on refugee youth upon resettlement in Norway. The call for a holistic approach is taken up by Koehler et al. (2022) who look into the institutionalisation of promising practices to that avail in Germany, Greece and the Netherlands. The basic tenet is that for refugee students to succeed, individual (host country and mother tongue language proficiency and their physical and mental health), interpersonal (friendships with peers, family support, and social networks) and school-level factors (learning environment, school engagement, teacher-student interactions, and parental involvement in school) have to be addressed. Policies impact on these factors and can hinder or support refugee student integration.

In the Netherlands, LOWAN[9] (Tudjman et al. 2016) (Support for Newcomer Education) operates in primary and secondary formal education settings. It provides support, advice, and direction for teachers, municipalities and school boards as well as local and public authorities to organise

[8] (Lynnebakke, Pastoor, and Eide 2020)
[9] https://www.lowan.nl/

education for newcomers. But it is also running full-time classes outside mainstream schools, where students receive a tailored programme on mathematics, Dutch language, spelling, comprehensive reading, and social and emotional skills, before they can move into regular classes. Similar arrangements are found in other EU member states. Most EU countries have additional classes either in mainstream schools or outside, addressing learning needs of refugee children (Forschungsbereich beim Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration (SVR_Forschungsbereich) 2018). Nevertheless, very little is done to address social and emotional needs.

Another aspect is crucial for educational opportunities of refugee youth, namely the age at arrival as age limits in compulsory education systems often reduce chances for accessing mainstream education. In the case of the Netherlands, youth have the right and duty to attend school up to the age of 18. This is a challenge for many young refugees who have lost several years of education before and during their flight. This means that the time is often too short to obtain a certificate which opens up good employment opportunities later.

Dunlavy et al. (2020) and Jervelund, Signe Smith et al. (2020) provide some insight into the learning outcomes of refugee children in Nordic countries. While the average grades of the refugee children tended to be lower than those of their native-born peers, the lowest scores were among the refugee children who arrived between 15-17 years of age. The grades of refugee girls tended to be higher than those of boys, regardless of age. Girls from Afghanistan and Iran had the highest scores and boys from Somalia the lowest. But there are differences between the Nordic countries. Refugee children do better in school in Sweden than in Denmark or Norway. Dunlavy (2020) suggested that Sweden has a longer history of accepting refugee children in school and thus more experience in promoting learning outcomes and social integration of refugee children. The study also indicates that the refugee's country-of-origin matters, partly due to the economic development of the source country and the educational experiences there. Overall, age at arrival was more important for learning outcome differences than the country of origin.

The CAGE-Report states that the Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish education systems do not explicitly address the health and wellbeing of newly arrived immigrant and refugee pupils in national level immigrant education policies. This is seen as a short-sighted policy, as health inequalities may be exacerbated over a lifetime via experiences of marginalisation in the society (Jervelund, Signe Smith, Krasnik, Allan, and de Lasson, Anne-Kathrine Rosenkrantz 2020).

Another aspect impacting negatively on education and social integration of refugee children emerges due to increasing residential segregation and the associated segregation of schools. Not only is the general language level of the host country lower in segregated schools, but also the limited availability of experienced teachers, as they tend to abstain from working in schools with children from a "difficult background" (Berglund 2017).

A recent PISA study (2021) (Gouëdard 2021) comes to the conclusion that a 'growth mindset' matters for learning outcomes; disadvantaged and immigrant youth with such a mindset achieve

significantly better scores than students with a fixed mindset. According to mindset theory, children with a fixed mindset believe their talents are innate gifts; they tend to avoid challenges since they interpret large efforts and setbacks as a result of low ability. In contrast, students with a growth mindset consider learning outcomes as a result of effort; they tend to set their own learning goals and, develop learning strategies thereby developing confidence and enlarging their potential.

3.4 Framing interventions and policy objectives

(1) Regarding pre-school education and arrangements

In the field of pre-school education, there are only a few studies that deal exclusively with the situation of refugee children. And this is exactly where the fundamental problem is seen: mostly, refugees are referred to as a vulnerable group or as migrants, without their specific situation being addressed. With regard to refugee families with young children (0-4 years), it is also pointed out that these children mostly remain invisible in policy and practice (Vandekerckhove and Aarssen 2020). In reception centres, for example, there would be neither adequate pedagogical offers, nor clear strategies to ensure meaningful ECEC. Although children with a refugee background can certainly be counted among the children at risk, they are often not mentioned explicitly or are simply considered as a group of children with a migration background (Bloch et al. 2015, 41). However, the sometimes more difficult conditions for children affected by flight, the educational gaps that (may) occur during war or flight, and the impact of trauma on learning, are worth special consideration. As far as studies are concerned, it appears that refugee children usually face more barriers to educational attainment than children of immigrants (Crul et al. 2017, 2). And even within this group, it must be noted that children from different countries of origin can differ just as much in terms of their school experience (ibid).

In terms of pre-school education, the academic literature provides an overview of the treatment of migrant children before school age within Europe, although the focus is often set on the school age itself. Against this background, it is worth pointing out Crul et. al.'s (2017, 2) criticism that most studies do not distinguish between refugee children born in the country of migration and those who arrived during compulsory education. The latter is considered in this study as an "intermediate generation", whose learning may differ from the former. In general, according to Crul et. al. (ibid), studies pay too little attention to the development of school careers over a longer period of time, while usually giving a brief account of entry into the education system

Another focus addressed in the publications is dealing with multilingualism and promoting first language(s). Although the EU seems to be concerned with highlighting linguistic diversity as an asset and promoting inclusive language policies, the implementation of such multilingualism promoting policies seems difficult to manage (Mary and Young 2021, 112).

Additional emphasis is placed on universal access to childcare. The EU Quality Framework for ECEC emphasizes the importance of ensuring that early childhood education and care services are accessible and affordable for all families and their children (European Commission and

Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture 2021). Flexible hours would allow participation for children of working mothers, single parents, and those from minority or disadvantaged groups, among others. In this regard, area-wide high-quality and affordable services have the greatest impact on promoting equity and social inclusion.

Nevertheless, some reports could be found that specifically address the aforementioned target group (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018; Bove and Sharmahd 2020; Tobin 2020). ECEC is increasingly seen as a potential factor for improving equal opportunities in the long term for children at risk of social exclusion and/or from families with a migrant background (Peleman, Vandenbroeck, and Van Avermaet 2020).

The literature on pre-school education for migrants consistently highlights the importance of ECEC in improving the long-term equity of children at risk of social exclusion, but no solutions could be found on how to monitor this process in the long term (Fouskas and Sidiropoulos 2017; Guerin 2014). In particular, one research highlights that studies usually only briefly address entry into the education system (Crul et al. 2017, 2). Furthermore, it is emphasized that the lack of differentiation between refugee children and children of migrants without a refugee background overlooks the special situation of refugee families (Bloch et al. 2015; Vandekerckhove and Aarssen 2020). According to studies (Crul et al. 2017, 2), refugee children generally face greater obstacles than children of immigrants. Another difficulty is dealing with multilingualism, which is declared as an advantage by the EU, but in most cases is not (Mary and Young 2021). The lack of quality of the services offered in this sector, especially the training of professionals and the age of entry, play a particular role in this area (Krüger and Thamin 2021). Likewise, the provision of information to parents (Thomauske 2021; Van Laere and Vandenbroeck 2017), as well as the relationship of parents to the pre-school institutions themselves, is also addressed. One article (Tobin 2020) highlighted those practitioners are often caught in something of a bind when it comes to being culturally responsive to parents while following their educational beliefs and principles. The result of this study has shown that ECEC practitioners in the studied countries adhere to quality standards and best practices and also maintain a certain level of awareness of different cultures (for example, words from the children's languages of origin are used in the morning greeting, culturally relevant books are added to the book corner, etc.). However, when it comes to questions about the curriculum or pedagogy, pre-school teachers would not respond to parents' wishes. According to many parents, they would have liked content in the kindergarten that would make it easier for them to enter school (writing the child's name) (Tobin 2020, 15). Similarly, bicultural staff would play a critical but underappreciated role as cultural and linguistic facilitators. A finding from the same study is that professionals are not adequately prepared for the challenges of working with refugees and new immigrants with a different first language. Research has also found that refugee resettlement, integration agencies, and early childhood education programs suffer from capacity issues (see Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018)). There are almost no activities for children under school age in reception centres, and educational gaps during this period often go unnoticed even at the policy level. The separation between refugees and asylum seekers often creates a bureaucratic hurdle in organizing and managing childcare (Crul et al. 2017). Similarly, responsibility for ECEC services is mostly at the

subnational level and is not everywhere sufficiently available or capable of effectively serving diverse populations (Tobin 2020, 13).

(1) Regarding school education and arrangements

Problems that are voiced by various actors and interest groups in the context of education of refugee children have various dimensions: One is in the health sphere with a specific focus on experiences of trauma due to persecution, loss of family and friends, but also relative to the health hazards encountered in the country of origin as well as the countries of transition before arriving in the host country. Another aspect refers to the socio-economic position and access to education in the source country and the specific challenges relative to learning and social participation in the host country in consequence. A third aspect relates to the specific experiences of forced migration and the fears and anxieties as a result of that. Another strand of problem identification focuses on the situation in the host country, in particular the housing situation (segregation, deprived regions, etc.), and the neighbourhoods (ethnic enclaves with little contact with the host society), the insecure residence status (such as temporary and irregular), but also, discrimination and racism.

The policy response is indicative of the identification of the problem by the decision-making authorities. If the integration of children in schools is largely seen as a problem linked to the 'deficiencies' of the children, policies are going to focus on measures which help the children to 'catch up'. Whereas if children are seen as an opportunity in an ageing society with low fertility, one may favour strategies to identify the strengths and talents of the children, in particular to also focus on the preservation of the language of the country of origin, in addition to the host country language. The latter is also linked to the promotion of extra-curricular activities, often offered/organised by the schools, for example, in sports, arts, and drama. Among the countries opting for the first problem identification are Austria as well as Southern European countries, that is, in the main countries that do not identify themselves as immigration countries. The second approach tends to be favoured by some Nordic countries, in particular Sweden, and increasingly also Germany and the Netherlands. The second approach is framed as a human rights approach, which takes education as a public good and a human right that is to promote the well-being of all children and foster their social participation. Conversely, the first approach is often labelled as the neoliberal policy approach augmented by the human capital paradigm (Sedmak et al. 2021).

The OECD study on the integration of immigrant children (2015) (OECD 2015) shows that the share of immigrant students does not lead to a decline in the education standards in host communities. This result implies that immigrant children have valuable skills and competences and often a lot of motivation to succeed, also in circumstances that are difficult. Consequently, both policy approaches may have their success, but the identification of special talents may be more difficult in the neoliberal approach than in the human rights approach.

A Eurydice report (2019) (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2019) provides an overview of integration policies of refugee children in schools. They highlight the education systems that

have the most comprehensive policies toward this vulnerable group of students. These encompass the identification of student needs and their solutions, the support of teachers to adopt a whole-child approach, and the school environment in general. Among the countries which adopt this approach are Portugal and Spain in Southern Europe and Finland and Sweden in the North. While Germany, Austria, Italy, and the United Kingdom tend to focus on the competences in the host country language, France also focuses on core subject areas, in particular Mathematics.

3.5 Overview of commonly used instruments and tools in education and training

(1) Regarding pre-school education and arrangements

ECEC is increasingly seen as a potential factor for improving equal opportunities in the long term for children at risk of social exclusion and/or from families with a migrant background (Peleman, Vandenbroeck, and Van Avermaet 2020; Bujard et al. 2020). Against this backdrop, barriers such as bureaucratic hurdles, high costs, a lack of linguistically and culturally competent programs, and inflexible schedules nonetheless make refugee families less likely than native families to enrol their children in childcare (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018). The fact that refugee families "do not have the luxury of finding the perfect ECEC program" and have to compromise on their choices also contributes to the difficulties (Tobin 2020, 13).

From the literature collected, it is only possible to identify indirect measures and instruments used in the pre-school sector for children from refugee families because, as already mentioned, they are often not specifically addressed. Of course, this does not mean that there are no measures designed specifically for refugee children in the pre-school sector, but that these could not be found in the currently consulted research literature in English or that there is a lack of scientific monitoring of the measures. A comparison in the European context also proves to be difficult in the pre-school sector, as the age of entry into school varies within Europe and thus also the age of entry into care facilities (Vandekerckhove and Aarssen 2020; Bove and Sharmahd 2020; Tobin 2020; Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018). In May 2019, the Council of the EU adopted a Recommendation to improve early childhood education and care systems. The education ministries of the EU member states have also approved this Recommendation. However, the structure and content of national systems for ECEC measures remain the responsibility of national authorities. Guidance on the following key components are presented in this Recommendation ('Early Childhood Education and Care Initiatives | European Education Area' 2022):

- Access to early childhood education and care
- Training and working conditions of staff of early childhood education and care settings
- Definition of appropriate curricula
- Governance and funding

- Monitoring and evaluation of systems

In a comparative study (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018) examining the needs of children of asylum seekers, it quickly became clear that the challenges of serving young refugee and asylum seeker children were very similar in most countries in two respects:

(1) nationwide interventions to address the ECEC needs of this target group were very weak due to a lack of national accountability and support from local authorities responsible for providing ECEC services,

(2) although the importance of trauma-sensitive care is recognized by ECEC programs, this type of support cannot be provided due to a lack of resources.

For children of refugee families, who are often resettled several times within host countries and sometimes wait a long time for a decision on their asylum claims, temporary housing often poses an additional hurdle in the educational pathway, as it can disrupt their access to important support services. While EU law states that children have the right to education regardless of their legal status, children often remain for extended periods in reception centres where adequate educational services are not provided. For early childhood programs in particular, it is emphasized that there is often a lack of capacity to reach and care for children (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018). For example, one study (Fouskas and Sidiropoulos 2017) shows that so-called Reception Classes (RCs) and Reception Structures for the Education of Refugees were created by the state (Helenic Ministry of Education and the Institute for Educational Policy). These Reception Structures for the Education of Refugees (RSER) foresee those children will be placed in RCs through a diagnostic test depending on their age, previous knowledge (regardless of how long they have been educated in their country of origin), knowledge of Greek, and other individualities. The program includes the creation of timetables, a student card, the selection of textbooks, and the coordination of the training of the teachers. For children aged 4 to 7 years, kindergarten units will be established within the hospitality centres. The offer of RCs is rounded off by additional offers from international organizations (in this case, IOM) and NGOs, which are only allowed to offer corresponding measures after receiving a certificate from IPE (ibid.).

ECEC programs, which primarily aim to build a solid foundation for school readiness and thus pave the way for school success, are expected to have greater long-term benefits than the provision of costly interventions later on. Moreover, these programs can also reach parents and families, proving to be a promising tool for achieving integration goals (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018).

Against this background, it can be summarised that even in the examined literature on ECEC measures for the target group of new immigrants, there are hardly any references to newly implemented measures, instruments, and tools. Rather, it seems that for refugee children the already existing structures and offers were used. The exceptions in this literature review can be counted as Sweden and Germany, which have some specific measures and programmes at the

national or local level to implement ECEC services for the mentioned target group. In some countries where there were no formal measures, NGOs stepped in (ibid.).

The following contents were identified in the literature review:

(1) Measures to promote language acquisition.

The many languages spoken in classrooms across Europe have contributed to the need to recognise and promote linguistic diversity and to support children with their first language other than the majority language in the target country in their language acquisition (Mary and Young 2021). Although linguistic diversity and the promotion of inclusive language policies are stated in EU policy documents (Iskra 2021), the implementation of what could be called living multilingualism seems to fail because of the often monolingual ideologies of school systems. Mary and Young (2021) gave an example of this by following a pre-school teacher for a year and observing her approach to multilingualism and the break with the monolingual norm. Teachers' beliefs about languages have a major impact on how multilingualism is managed at home and in the classroom (ibid).

- *Sprach-Kitas* in Germany

In Germany, almost 400 million euros were invested between 2017 and 2020 to expand the *Sprach-Kitas* programme launched by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs and double the number of staff. The federal investments have also made it possible to expand the *Stepping Into Childcare* programme, which aims to strengthen the relationship between parents and the childcare facility, and inform parents about the childcare services offered in the country (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 16).

- Gothenburg Language Center[10]

System-wide leadership is also often needed to introduce new methods of qualifying childcare workers or to recruit new staff with language and cultural skills.

What is particularly noticeable in Sweden, is that there is a prevalence of high levels of coordination and support at the national level. For example, the Swedish education authority works closely with municipalities and offers special programmes aimed at newcomers. As far as pre-school is concerned, provision is made for children with a mother tongue other than Swedish to develop their cultural identity and knowledge of both languages. The Gothenburg Language Centre provides mother-tongue teaching and support for all schools in the city, which relieves the schools enormously with regard to these tasks (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 16–17).

(2) Measures to facilitate access to ECEC services.

[10] https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/enhetssida/sprakcentrum, 15.02.2022

Regarding access to ECEC, we find different arrangements within the European countries, as for example, compulsory schooling starts at different ages, or the pre-school education is very differently organised. In certain countries, such as Germany or Austria, parents whose asylum status has been officially recognized are treated equally to German or Austrian citizens, i.e., access to pre-school is granted under the same conditions. The costs vary, although the last year of kindergarten is free in some German states and in Austria. In Sweden, pre-school age children, regardless of their status, may attend open pre-school, which is free of charge (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 17).

For example, a study (Skaremyr 2021) from Sweden emphasizes that previous research on newly arrived children has mostly focused on the question of educational access and how to ensure optimal education, and therefore places the research focus on the children themselves and how they are able to participate in everyday life in pre-school in a new linguistic environment by using communicative means.

(3) Measures to improve the quality of ECEC services.

System-wide leadership is also often needed to introduce new methods of qualifying childcare workers or to recruit new staff with language and cultural skills (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 20).

(4) Measures to improve the quality of training for pre-school staff in childcare facilities.

Another promising and sustainable initiative seems to be the recruitment and training of multilingual staff - ideally from the refugee communities themselves. In this regard, the following measures can be mentioned:

- Stadtteilmütter (Bourough mothers)

Bourough mothers in the model Kitas programmes in Berlin take on a mediating role between newly arrived families and the institutions themselves. The special feature of the district mothers is that they are mostly refugees themselves (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 17).

- Sleutelpersonen (Key Leaders)

In the Netherlands, Key Leaders act as cultural mediators.

- Fast Track Initiative[11]

In order to attract skilled workers with language and cultural competencies, the integration of immigrants and refugees is also promoted in these professions (including childcare) via the Fast Track Initiative.

[11] https://www.government.se/articles/2015/12/fast-track---a-quicker-introduction-of-newly-arrived-immigrants/, 15.02.2022

(2) Regarding school education and arrangements

Refugee children arrive in Europe with a variety of previous educational and schooling experiences. Children in the same age group accordingly have different educational experiences. Therefore, and because most European education systems are characterised by complex structures and regulations, integrating these children and youth into an education system requires the provision of transparent information about the education system and educational opportunities (Koehler et al. 2018).

In Belgium (Flanders), for example, newly arrived families are able to get information about the education system from their local integration centre and NGOs. In addition, some schools organize "networking days" to facilitate contacts between students, parents, school principals, teachers, and after-school teachers (Koehler 2017). The city of Malmö (Sweden) offers around 3,000 newly immigrated students academic counselling in their own language, thus providing a more detailed overview of the education system. In Germany, for example, the Leipzig Educational Advisory Service offers monthly group and individual counselling sessions to inform about the German education system and the opportunities available, particularly regarding continuing education (EUROCITIES and Huddelston 2017). Another approach, primarily based on providing information, is also being adopted in Hamburg, where the education authority runs welcome classes in every reception centre for asylum seekers and refugees. The aim of these classes is the rapid learning of language skills and a general orientation with regard to school careers. This "education from day one" approach is intended to avoid losing time and also to prevent children from being held in limbo for an indefinite period of time (Korntheuer and Damm 2018; EUROCITIES and Huddelston 2017).

In addition to the measures that primarily concern the dissemination of information regarding national education systems and opportunities, measures were also implemented to facilitate the integration of children into school. One such measure is the so-called preparatory classes, which are implemented in various EU member countries (namely, France, Germany, Greece, and Sweden) for newly arrived students with little or no knowledge of the language of instruction (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2020).

In Austria, children who do not have sufficient knowledge of German are given the status of *extraordinary student* (außerordentlicher Schüler) and are not graded in other subjects, but receive mainly German lessons (Atanasoska and Proyer 2018). In 2015, the city of Vienna established *preparatory classes* and, in Upper Austria, *bridge classes*. These were separate classes located in public schools. They last for one year. However, results show that these classes are insufficient in Vienna and almost non-existent in some rural areas in Upper Austria. In 2018, Austria introduced a new model of language support in schools through so called *German classrooms*[12] (Proyer et al. 2021). Students with no or little knowledge of German are separated

[12] „Deutschförderklassen"

from their classmates in most subjects and taught in German. If they pass a test that certifies their language skills sufficient, they are fully integrated into the regular class.

A similar approach is also being pursued in France. In this regard, language classes are offered to pupils who were previously enrolled in school but do not speak French. Other preparatory classes are also offered to students who have never been to school before. The goal of these classes is the acquisition of the French language and the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, so that the students can move on to a regular class. These separate classes are integrated into the French state schools (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2020).

According to existing literature, Germany still faces a major challenge in integrating refugee children and youth into the school system. In 2015, approximately 1 million asylum seekers arrived in Germany and around 325,000 refugee children and youth have been accepted into the German school system. The literature points out, in particular, the additional financial requirements, which will amount to around 2.1 billion euros per year, in order to finance, among other things, around 20,000 additionally required teachers (Voges et al. 2016). Accordingly, Germany also implemented preparatory classes, which are applied differently in the respective federal states and are called *language learning classes*, *preliminary courses*, and *welcome classes* (Sprachlernklassen, Vorkurse, Willkommensklassen*)* (Baader, Freytag, and Wirth 2019). This form of separate schooling, which includes the models of separation, partially integrative and integrative variants, is intended to enable the fastest possible integration into the regular school system (Massumi et al. 2015; Ahrenholz, Fuchs, and Birnbaum 2016).

The existing literature further highlights that academic achievement, particularly in reading and writing, mathematics, and other core subjects, is the primary concern, but the holistic needs of students are not fully recognized. In this regard, the development of children and youth, including their academic development, cannot be fully realized without supporting their non-academic needs, resulting in holistic approaches being increasingly promoted and recommended by researchers in recent years (Hamilton 2013; Sean Slade and Griffith 2013; Krachman, LaRocca, and Gabrieli 2018).

Regarding this approach, the "Language Friendly School" in the Netherlands operates within the framework of formal primary and secondary education. The program started in 2019 and has since been implemented in ten schools in the Netherlands, one school in Spain, and one school in Canada. The school concept focuses on the increasing multilingualism in schools and societies due to migration flows. Therefore, in these schools, all languages spoken by students, parents, and other school stakeholders are seen as adding value. The practice applies a bottom-up approach to the entire school adapted by developing a language plan that involves all school members (that is, students, teachers, and other school staff) (Language Friendly School 2021). The existing literature also illustrates the benefits of multilingual learning, and that an appreciation of language and cultural background will promote success in all respects by increasing self-confidence and self-esteem (European Commission et al. 2017).

The *Praxiserprobung für geflüchtete Jugendliche* ("Practical Learning for Refugee Youth") started in 2018 and is implemented in seven secondary schools in Berlin/Germany. The target group are young refugees between 15 and 20 years of age, for whom the welcome classes as mentioned above or mainstream secondary schools are not promising. The main goal of the practice is the targeted preparation of students for the transition to vocational training. To achieve this goal, students are accompanied in school and in companies through practice-oriented learning (Koehler, Palaiologou, and Brussino 2022).

3.6 Effectiveness and Outcomes of instruments and tools in education and training

(1) Regarding pre-school education and arrangements

Three of the most promising measures presented in the report "Responding to the ECEC Needs of Children of Refugees and Asylum Seekers" (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018):

- ***Systematic Support:***

- Expansion of childcare spaces, language support, tailored training for educational professionals, and mentoring programs for parents.

A study in Belgium, for example, has shown that although pre-school attendance is always supposed to have a long-term positive impact on social participation and to diminish inequalities in the education of vulnerable children, pre-schools can also be part of the problem, rather than the solution. This is at least the case when the quality of services provided is not adequate. The key to solving this problem is seen, on the one hand, in an ECEC system that goes beyond individual competencies and, on the other hand, in the training of pre-school staff (Peleman, Vandenbroeck, and Van Avermaet 2020, 19).

With respect to ECEC services for refugee and asylum-seeking families, the following were identified as needing more attention: expanded service delivery, language support, and customized workforce training and parenting programs. In this context, for example, the programme "Sprach-Kitas" (Language day-care centres) was launched by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, aimed at day-care facilities that have a special need for language support due to an above-average number of newly arrived migrant children (Brandt 2017). With the goals of promoting language education integrated into everyday life, inclusion-oriented education and cooperation with families, this program starts with the families themselves, as well as with the childcare facilities. *Borough mothers* (Stadtteilmütter), a Berlin's Modell-Kitas program, help to connect newly arrived families and local service providers. A similar program exists in the Netherlands called Sleutelpersonen (Key Leaders) (Lilas Fahham, Beckers, and Muller-Dugic 2020), where cultural mediators work in refugee communities to provide education and facilitate access to services. Another strategy in Sweden is worth mentioning because it takes a very different approach: The Fast Track Initiative. In order to attract skilled workers with

language and cultural competencies, the integration of immigrants and refugees is also promoted in these professions (including childcare).

- ***Prevent segregation to strengthen social cohesion: Care for young refugee children together with native children in mixed classes.***

In Sweden, policymakers see the segregation of newly arrived children in separate classes as a disadvantage to their integration, so newcomers should also benefit from mixed classes. Preventing segregation of newly arrived families is seen as a top priority for the country (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018).

- ***Cooperative partnerships (including interagency) to foster collaboration and cooperation to promote ECEC initiatives.***

Promoting collaboration and cooperation to foster ECEC initiatives is also seen as promising. In Belgium, for example, *Kind en Gezin* (Child and Family), the public ECEC agency for Belgium's Flemish community, has established family centres uniting all services for families with children (Huizen van het Kind) (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 18).

(2) Regarding school education and arrangements

The main problems related to preparatory classes, mentioned in the previous chapter, and language courses are the limited duration and the insufficient number of preparatory classes. In Germany and France, experts note that the duration of preparatory classes is not long enough to build sufficient language skills and that students generally need more time and support to learn German or French (Massumi et al. 2015; Baader, Freytag, and Wirth 2019; Voges et al. 2016; Ahrenholz, Fuchs, and Birnbaum 2016, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2020).

Similarly, experts in Austria emphasize that the biggest challenge is that only half of the students reach the level of German required to attend a mainstream school/class. Furthermore, Füllekruss and Dirim (2019) conclude with regard to the German classrooms in Austria that through these classes the ideology of the nation-state is reproduced education system by rejecting multilingualism and maintaining only German-language proficiency. In addition, the segregation of these classes could lead to multiple forms of *Othering*, exclusion, and disadvantage of students with refugee or migration backgrounds. According to the authors, this mechanism is also reinforced by the fact that regular classes in Austria are not very integrative in terms of German language support.

In comparison to the mainstream approaches, holistic education is not yet established in the mainstream European education systems. At the same time, educators and academics have recognized the potential of this approach, which can enable the integration of refugees and newcomers into education and society. At the same time, the existing literature highlights the successful implementation of holistic concepts.

Since the beginning of the Language Friendly School programme, multiple schools around the globe have joined the network. The first evaluation of the program shows that many different teaching concepts have been established and implemented in order to create an inclusive environment. Another success factor mentioned is the cooperation of parents and the communities, which contribute to the children's learning success through the multilingual approach (Language Friendly School 2021), which is also underlined by numerous studies (European Commission et al. 2017; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2020). The outcome of the Practical Learning for the Refugee Youth program was that young refugees were given the opportunity to test their own skills in real-life situations and to see which skills are compatible with the German labour market. Furthermore, most of the educators were in contact with refugees for the first time, which in turn gave young refugees the opportunity to expand their technical knowledge in German. Moreover, it could be observed that the self-esteem of the participants increased, which made future goals and life in Germany more attractive to them (Koehler, Palaiologou, and Brussino 2022).

3.7 Conclusion

(1) Regarding pre-school education and arrangements

Based on the practices outlined and found in the literature, the following general picture can now be drawn: thoughtful approaches to supporting children from new immigrant families can be found in both governmental and non-governmental initiatives. However, the literature review also draws attention to the fact that in many areas there is a lack of accountability towards the target group addressed. In most cases, access to ECEC services already varies within a country (cf. Germany, Austria Sweden, and Denmark) (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, Crul et al. 2017), which makes it all the more difficult for newly immigrated families to find appropriate services for their children. Due to the special needs of families who also often (have to) move within a country, the aforementioned varying conditions within a country pose a major hurdle in terms of moving from one educational institution to the next smoothly.

The criticisms of these practices and services found in the literature concern the lack of responsibility towards the target group, the lack of quality of the services offered in the field of ECEC, the lack of visibility of the needs of the target group, the insufficient involvement of parents, the lack of preparation of educational staff for the challenges, and the fact that creating a language-sensitive environment is often only good on paper. All these critiques already contain possible solutions within themselves.

Measures created for refugee children and their families must both address immediate needs and enable longer-term success and social participation (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 19).

- Cooperation and networking

A whole-of-government approach to ensure successful integration of newcomers should be implemented, and partnerships between national and sub-national state actors should be established to also define roles and responsibilities clearly (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 16).

- Making needs visible

The special needs of refugee children and their families, the gaps in education that may have occurred in refugee camps, and war-related trauma; all these require special consideration in terms of the services offered in the ECEC sector (Vandekerckhove and Aarssen 2020; Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018).

- Language-sensitive environment

In terms of creating a language-sensitive environment, this involves several things: on the one hand, hiring and training multilingual staff, ideally from the refugee communities, and on the other hand, also recognising the value of multilingualism, and seeing it as an asset (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 43; Kirsch 2021; Hélot 2021; Thomauske 2021).

- Involvement of parents

To best support children, it is essential to strengthen the relationship between parents and childcare providers (Park, Katsiaficas, and McHugh 2018, 18; Thomauske 2021; Van Laere and Vandenbroeck 2017).

- Quality of the measures offered, training of professionals

In order to increase the quality of ECEC measures, the training of care staff must be improved, and they must be prepared for the special needs and challenges they face when dealing with refugee children and their families.

(2) Regarding school education and arrangements

Based on the findings of the existing literature on the education of refugee children and youth, a number of recommendations for action can be identified addressed to different stakeholders in education policy and administration, practice, and academia. Selected recommendations for action are summarized below.

- Transparency about the Education Systems

In order to enable transparency about the education systems of the host countries, a multilingual European platform should be created where refugees and newly arrived families can find

information about the different school systems. This platform should also allow a comparison of the school systems of the country of origin and the destination country (Koehler et al. 2018).

- Identifying Potential and Utilizing Resources

The education of students must not be reduced to language support. Rather, the heterogeneity of newly arrived children and youth requires a resource-oriented approach and a high degree of individual support and differentiation (Massumi et al. 2015).

- Highlight Good Practices

Large-scale European congresses focusing on the presentation of good practices and on successful educational pathways of young refugees would allow for the showcasing of the high potential of refugees. This would also motivate policy makers and stakeholders to adopt good practices from other countries (Koehler et al. 2018).

- Adopt whole-school and whole -community approaches

Implementations and programs will only be successful if schools can provide a positive school climate and take a whole-school approach to dealing with refugee students that includes parents and communities. In addition, schools are not the only institutions responsible for refugee students, so a community-based integration of these students takes place. In this regard, coordination between the education system and other sectors, such as health, social services, housing, labour market, and welfare is necessary (Cerna 2019).

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