



Best Practices Publication

YOUCAN - Best Practices Publication

Results from the transnational desk research in Belgium, Greece, Spain, Italy, and Portugal on good practices for prevention of migrant youth drop-out.

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Project
Coordination

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Introduction

Introduction to the You Can project

The YOUCAN project aims to be a reference addressing the drop-out of youths with migrant background through the creation of an inter-sectoral partnership. To this end, the project established a well-rounded partnership in terms of skills and experience, and partners visited each other workplaces and breathed in diverse environments, in order to learn and share different methodologies and experiences.

Additionally, the project has developed results aimed at teachers and trainers working with youth, particularly working with those with a migrant background, towards promoting the social inclusion of their learners and preventing their drop-out. The project has two main outputs, one is a **Best Practices publication** (1) and the other is a **Toolkit** (2).

This first project result, displays a main view of the collection of good practices from each country for dealing with youth school dropout, particularly migrant youth dropout. These practices are divided into 'transnational best practices', the ones which are applied in several international countries, and 'national best practices', that show practices in the countries participating in the project (Belgium, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain). This publication also focuses on how to organize EU/international projects in the field of education, training and youth.

The target group of this publication includes a variety of different people, but with one thing in common, it is addressed to people working with immigrant and migrant population (i.e. vocational schoolteachers, trainers in training centers, youth workers, associations, who will have the opportunity to explore different successful practices.

The second project outcome, is a toolkit containing guidelines for a successful project cycle management that addresses all the steps of a project cycle, starting from the moment in which it is initiated, planned, executed, monitored and controlled, and is concluded. It supports a diversity of people such as organisations, school teachers, senior and junior researchers, youth workers and trainers.

Theoretical Analysis: Early School Leaving

1.1 The general theoretical framework for education and early school leaving (ESL)

Education is an essential part of human beings' life and provides uncountable socio-economic advantages. Research has demonstrated that proper education helps individuals access better careers and wages, improves their capabilities of taking rational choices, and allows them to develop useful non-cognitive skills such as risk aversion and patience [1]. Therefore, it becomes highly beneficial for societies as a whole to ensure that as many individuals as possible receive the highest possible level of education. In particular, providing sufficient and proficient education to children and youth is of paramount importance because the capabilities and attitudes of future adults are deeply affected by youngsters' level of instruction.

Unfortunately, across Europe, some disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of pupils face constant challenges in entering education systems and consequently living a fruitful experience at school. Among these fragile individuals, there are the ones belonging to the so-called group of youth with migrant background. The 2019 Eurydice Report *"Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: national policies and measures"* defines students with migrant background as «newly arrived/first generation, second generation or returning migrant children and young people. Their reasons for having migrated (e.g., economic or political) may vary, as may do their legal status – they may be citizens, residents, asylum seekers, refugees, unaccompanied minors or irregular migrants. Their length of stay in the host country may be short- or long-term, and they could or could not have the right to participate in the formal education system of the host country» [2].

The definition provided by the Eurydice Report is quite extensive as it applies to students with multiple and slightly different migrant backgrounds. This publication acknowledges the complexities of relying on broad definitions such as "migrant background" because there exist many possible realities related to the phenomenon of migration. An example would be useful to clarify this point. Assume that there are two children, one child is born in a European State from migrant parents and another one who instead is born in a foreign country. Both children share a migrant background, but their situations are dissimilar. For instance, the child born in the EU is likely to be immediately taught the host country's language, whereas the foreign-born one– who arrives in Europe in a second moment– will face relevant linguistic barriers when settling in the new country as she or he must learn the host country's language from scratch. Hence, having in mind that there are different migration realities is important. Yet, talking about students with a migrant background is still acceptable because this concept is applicable to many different types of migratory backgrounds. For this reason, and also for sake of brevity and clearness, this publication will stick to the definition provided by the Euridice Report.

[1] Brunello, Giorgio, De Paola, Maria, *The costs of early school leaving in Europe*, IZA Journal of Labor Policy, Vol. 3 (22), 2014, p. 1.

[2] European Education and Culture Executive Agency, Eurydice, *Integrating students from migrant backgrounds into schools in Europe: national policies and measures*, Publications Office, 2019, p. 29, available at the following link: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2797/819077>. The Eurydice report aims to support European cooperation in the area of migrant education by providing a comparative overview and analysis of the policies and measures promoted by top-level education authorities across Europe to support the integration of students from a migrant background in school.

According to some recent estimates, in 2017 the proportion of immigrants under 15 years old was on average slightly below 10 % in the European Union. To be sure, percentages vary across the Member States, ranging from approximately 20% in Luxembourg to less than 3% in various Eastern European countries [3].

Research has shown that foreign-born students generally face much more difficulties than their native-born peers. This happens for several reasons. First, young migrants' well-being is affected by previous traumatic experiences like persecution, war or hunger, from which they usually flee their origin countries. Moreover, when they arrive in their destination country, they frequently go through high levels of stress due to resettlement issues, like poor housing conditions and a generalised lack of social networks. As pointed out by Trasberg and Kond, sometimes the host communities develop a certain hostility towards people coming from other places - whether they are newcomers or long-term residents-, and this circumstance further complicates the creation of crucial social bonds [4].

There are also other important barriers usually encountered by students with migrant background. These include:

- Lack of information in schools about the academic and non-academic (i.e. social, emotional, health, etc.) background of migrant children as they arrive;
- Inadequate grade placement;
- Linguistic challenges stemming from the fact that very frequently foreign-born students are not proficient in the host country's language;
- Insufficient learning support and a lack of social and emotional support;
- Poorly prepared teachers who are not trained and/or supported to teach in multicultural and multilingual classrooms;
- Insufficient - sometimes inexistent - home-school cooperation [5].

Not all students with migrant background are affected by such barriers, as many do not grow up in complicated or disadvantaged contexts. However, being a child with migrant background is usually associated with a higher probability of living in socioeconomic distress. When this is the case, the child gets exposed to the aforementioned obstacles with severe repercussions on the school life of the individual, especially in terms of integration. As a result, they may suffer from extremely negative outcomes deriving from this situation, such as bad school performances and social exclusion. These difficulties can be recognised also as the main cause of the alarming phenomenon of early school leaving (ESL), which constitutes the core issue of this publication.

[3] 2019 Eurodyce Report, p. 37. The data are extracted from the Eurostat Population database.

[4] Trasberg, K., & Kond, J., *Teaching new immigrants in Estonian schools—Challenges for a support network*, Acta Pedagogica Vilnensia, Vol. 38, 2017, p. 92.

[5] 2019 Eurodyce Report, p. 30.

1.2 The issue of early school leaving (ESL) of students with a migrant background

Early school leaving (ESL) ranks among the first concerns in the field of education in Europe. Early school leaving takes place when an individual aged between 18 and 24 has attained lower secondary education at most and is not engaged either in education or professional training [6]. Many experts consider this a really concerning phenomenon since it detrimentally impacts the future lives of children both at the economic and social levels.

According to Brunello and De Paola, ESL implies enormous private, fiscal and social costs, both for individuals and societies. However, it is a hard task to obtain accurate quantitative estimations of these costs. Consequently, it is even harder for policymakers to design suitable and efficient countermeasures for ESL. In fact, each Member State develops its own policies, which can then be far-tailored or far-reaching - for example, changing the minimum age for school leaving [7]. In European Union, reducing ESL levels has been a core target for decades. The Reflection Paper Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030, published in 2019 by the European Commission, has confirmed that ESL average rate has steadily fallen since 2002 and maintains that the European Union was on the right pathway to achieve the “Europe 2020” headline target of keeping ESL levels below 10% across the continent [8]. Despite the positive trend, ESL is far from being eradicated. One problem is that early school dropout does not affect European students equally. The Reflection Paper acknowledges that **«Young people with disabilities or with migrant background show significantly lower educational attainment. Early leavers and low-educated young people face particularly severe problems in the labour market»** [9].

Insufficient education attainment is a serious issue for students with migrant background. In almost all European Countries foreign-born students perform worse relative to their native-born peers in many important subjects at the primary and secondary levels. The Programme for International School Attainment (PISA) developed by the OECD provides additional validation to this argument. As reported in the PISA study of 2015, the difference in the proportion of low achievers between migrant students and native-born students is non-negligible, even when controlling for parameters such as socio-economic conditions [10]. The latest PISA study, published in 2019, further confirms again that students with migrant background still lag behind their native-born peers in terms of school attainments.

Poor performances and early school leaving seem to be quite correlated. In fact, the early school leaving rate is usually higher for student groups generally associated with relatively bad school

[6] Brunello, G., De Paola, M., *The costs of early school leaving in Europe*, p. 1.

[7] Trasberg, K., & Kond, J., *Teaching new immigrants in Estonian schools—Challenges for a support network*, p. 26.

[8] European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, *Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030: reflection paper*, Publications Office, 2019, p. 77. The paper is available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/676251>. In 2002 ESL percentage in Europe was 17%, whereas in 2017 it dropped to 10,6%.

[9] *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

[10] OECD, PISA 2015 Results (Volume I): Excellence and Equity in Education, PISA, OECD Publishing, 2016, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264266490-en> and PISA 2018 Results (Volume II), *Where All Students Can Succeed*, PISA, OECD Publishing, 2019, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b5fd1b8f-en>.

performances, such as foreign-born students. This of course does not mean that only some disadvantaged categories of students like migrant students are affected by ESL. Broadly speaking, according to Eurydice estimates the highest ESL percentages are recorded in Spain, Italy and Germany (respectively 31,9%, 30,1% and 23,1%), whilst the lowest can be found in Luxembourg (8,2%), Netherlands (6,6%) and Ireland (4%). However, evidence shows that migrant youth is over-represented in ESL rates across the European Union, suggesting that this specific group is particularly vulnerable to the risk of dropping school early [11].

As noted, this circumstance can be explained by a number of intertwined sensitive factors which normally characterise migrant students, most importantly a likely disadvantaged socioeconomic status, serious linguistic barriers and social segregation. Therefore, it is essential to tackle these issues as much as possible, and indeed there are many possible actions to be implemented to support these students. These measures include providing proper instruction in the host language, building and maintaining relationships with migrant children's parents, channelling more resources to schools with a high concentration of migrants to allow them to employ flexible actions to meet students' needs, ensuring access to high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) and disincentivising segregation practices linked to socio-economic factors [12].

Similarly, the policy brief sponsored by the Sirius Network proposes some other interesting policies to reduce the risk of ESL for students with migrant background. The document claims that there are some desirable features of national/regional education systems that can sensibly contribute to reducing ESL among migrant youth. Some of the features most worthy of mention are:

- More comprehensive secondary education and postponed educational tracking;
- Improve language acquisition by increasing quality preschool education;
- Providing quality apprenticeship opportunities to guarantee a smoother transition to the labour market [13].

Moreover, the European Union supports and finances many initiatives and projects in the field of education within the framework of the Erasmus+ program, including those related to tackling ESL. These European funds are commonly destined for schools, NGOs and youth organisations. The principal aim is to multiply best practices and practical knowledge to be adopted in order to design better policies to counter this phenomenon.

[11] Nouwen, Ward, Noel Clycq, and Daniela Ulicna, *Reducing the risk that youth with a migrant background in Europe will leave school early*, Migration Policy Institute Europe and SIRIUS Policy Network on the education of children and youngsters with a migrant background, Bruxelles, 2015, p. 3.

[12] Janta, Barbara and Emma Harte, *Education of migrant children: Education policy responses for the inclusion of migrant children in Europe*. Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 2016, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1655.html.

[13] Nouwen, Ward, Noel Clycq, and Daniela Ulicna, *Reducing the risk that youth with a migrant background in Europe will leave school early*, pp 5-6.

1.3 Conclusion

In the European Union, the current early school leaving rates are quite close to the pre-settled objective of keeping them below the 10% threshold. Nevertheless, ESL does not affect the student population evenly. Most of the time, vulnerable groups of students face much higher risks of dropping out of school due to socioeconomic struggles and harsh living conditions which eventually impinge on their school performance. This is the case for many migrant students who frequently have to cope with an educational system that is either unprepared or unsupported to ensure that these pupils could feel really included in the school system. Given this circumstance, it is essential to discourage ESL as much as possible by finding suitable solutions and policies to address the originating roots of the problem.

YOU CAN goes in this direction by seeking for providing innovative measures to address ESL. The following chapter will present the main features of the project, including the actors involved in its realisation and the expected impacts on tackling ESL of youth with migrant background.

The background of the page is light purple. It is decorated with several large, thick purple circles of varying sizes. Some of these circles are partially cut off by the edges of the frame. Additionally, there are several smaller, solid purple lines of different lengths and orientations scattered across the page, some pointing towards the central text.

YOUth with migrant dropout tackling: CApacity buildiNg – YOUCAN

2.1 Overview of the project

Developing proper countermeasures to early school leaving and fostering integration in European schools are two important objectives of the European Union Erasmus+ Programme [14]. Within this framework, a plethora of initiatives and projects receive funding in order to address priority concerns in the field of education. YOUNCAN has been born in this exact context. This chapter will introduce the project by highlighting its main characteristics, participating organisations, strategies and expected outcomes.

YOUNCAN represents the response to a specific need: the reduced capacity of the consortium to work transnationally and, especially, in a cross-sectoral approach to address youth with migrant background drop-out. In fact, schools are often left to their fate and must deal with the problem of migrant youth dropping out of school most of the time on their own. Youth organizations, chambers of commerce, associations of young people of foreign origin as well as training centres go their own way as well. They only become aware of the problem when it affects them directly. Instead, this project makes the cross-sector dimension its strong point and wants to contribute to building capacities. YOUNCAN reunites these types of organisations into a single multifaceted consortium that advocates a holistic approach to the issue of education, for they conceive it as a task entrusted to a broader community.

The role of organizations and institutions committed to the social inclusion of youth of migrant origin is strategic and has become even more important in the times we are currently living. As seen, many studies and research conducted over the past years have largely demonstrated how students who belong to disadvantaged groups, and among these those who come from a migrant background, have a higher risk of dropping out of school than natives. Therefore, in line with the general policy of the Erasmus + Programme, the general objective of this project is to trigger modernization and reinforce the response of education and training systems and youth policies to the main challenges posed by the migrant youth school drop-out and social exclusion, by building the capacity of the consortium to work transnationally and with a cross-sector approach.

By implementing the project, the consortium strives to achieve several outcomes. First, opened synergies and reinforced cooperation with local organizations/partners active in different fields than education, training and youth or in other socio-economic sectors. In addition, YOUNCAN is designed to increase the allocation of financial resources (other than EU funds) to organize EU/international projects in the field of education, training and youth. Last, but not least, the project aspires to increase the quality in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of EU/international projects and heighten the capacity and professionalism to work at the EU/international level.

[14] Detailed information on the Erasmus+ Programme is available on the official website at the following link: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>.

2.2 The consortium

YOU CAN was organised and implemented by a consortium composed of six partners belonging to different countries and sectors. Each partner was selected according to the idea that adopting a transitional and cross-sectoral approach is a very efficient way to address the issue of early school leaving of youth with migrant background. The partnership was built around two main criteria.

The first criterion entailed the strengthening of a historical group of five partners who had already worked together in the development of projects or project proposals in several fields. Moreover, the presence of a historical group allowed for a deeper cohesion of the partnership which was very useful in ensuring that the implementation process proceeds smoothly, especially in the most sensitive and challenging steps. At the same time, a second criterion envisaged the inclusion of new partners so that they could bring new expertise and knowledge to the consortium in specific fields. It is under these premises, for example, that the Chamber of Commerce of Cáceres was invited to join the YOU CAN partnership.

This section introduces the six participants of the partnership by providing general information about their governance structures, scopes and activity areas.

AidLearn, Consultoria em Recursos Humanos Lda. (Portugal) [15]

AidLearn, created in December 2003, resulted from the union of professionals with diversified backgrounds in the fields of Management, Economics, Human Resources Management, Social Sciences, Social Psychology, Organisational Behaviour and Intercultural Relations. It is a Training, Research-Action and Consulting Company, which operates at local, national and European Union levels. It is dedicated to the design, implementation and evaluation of studies, projects and training activities that promote individual, organisational or local development. It aims to contribute to a better qualification of Portuguese HR by building up a learning organisation concerned with the equality of opportunities, providing quality and innovative services targeted to the actual needs of organisations and individuals, and developing a strong commitment and teamwork. AidLearn main intervention areas are related to: diagnosis of learning needs; conception, delivering and evaluating learning tools, interventions and actions; as well as conceiving, executing and evaluating projects and research studies in different fields. For instance entrepreneurship and management sciences, educational sciences, computer sciences, health and safety, social services, environment, tourism and sustainability, innovation and creativity, cinema, multiculturalism, social inclusion and active and cultural citizenship.

[15] AidLearn official website: www.aidlearn.com.

AidLearn is a training provider certified by DGERT (Portuguese Directorate-General for Employment and Labour Relations) in various areas of education and the training work they carry out follows strictly standards of quality required by that public body. It has extensive experience working at the European level, either as a coordinator or as a partner, including projects specifically addressing social inclusion and active citizenship topics. Thus, it has made a contribution to the development of YOUNIC considering their experience in supporting staff elearners in individual and group counselling in labour market information, CV and cover letter writing, and competency development training.

Associazione di Promozione Sociale Joint (Italy) [16]

Associazione Sportiva Dilettantistica Association Maison d'Enfant pour la Culture et l'Education Baity APS (Italy) [17]

AMECE (Association Maison d'Enfant pour la Culture et l'Education) is a social promotion NGO based in Turin since 2000. Its activities aim to understand and address the needs of children, teenagers and young adults with migrant background, most of them originally from north African countries. The organization seeks to foster the growth and education of the new generations, starting from their extra-curricular and social education. In particular, AMECE works in order to raise awareness in migrant families about their children's needs, offer targeted action in-school support, promote opportunities for discussion and intergenerational dialogue and push for intercultural social education in the local community.

In particular, AMECE has triggered a series of interventions supporting families and school administrations that aim toward the integration and socialization of all minors including those deemed "at risk". The focus on intercultural education and migrants' integration is carried out by offering a range of activities such as individual homework help, targeted training opportunities, cultural mediation, guidance, sport activities and linguistic support through Italian, English, French and Arabic courses. In addition, AMECE organizes intercultural events and summer camps targeting local and migrant communities. Its activities are carried out thanks to a inclusive networking with public and private bodies working at a local level.

The association was selected to join the YOUCAN consortium due to its 20 years' experience in educational activities targeting second generations, young migrants, asylum seekers and refugees mainly from 6 to 18 years old -but also over. Aiming to support families and the school's formative role, its activities are carried out through both formal and non-formal educational methods. In particular, always in an inclusive approach, given the importance of linguistic learning for the migrant and religious identities and for the local and international labour market, AMECE organizes yearly and not linguistic courses in French, English, Italian and Arabic.

Besides traditional formal methods, youth workers use games in teaching the youngest while for teenagers practising the language by discussing relevant topics is preferred. Overall, AMECE focuses its actions on young migrant people, in particular on those with fewer opportunities that exit classic education programs and experience obstacles in joining the labour market.

Camera Oficial De Comercio e Industria de Cáceres (Spain) [18]

Founded in 1899, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cáceres (Camara Oficial de Comercio e Industria Cáceres) is a Public Law Body, whose main aim is to defend the general commercial and industrial interests of the province of Cáceres. The Chamber is run by a group of 29 entrepreneurs who are elected every four years by the other business people from the Province of Cáceres and made up the Assembly along with workers' commissions. It defines all the general objectives by closely analysing the economic sector and chooses the President and the Executive Board.

[17] AMECE official website: www.amece.eu.

[18] The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cáceres official website: www.camaracaceres.es.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cáceres has been involved in several activities in the areas relevant to the YOUCAN project. From 2009 to 2013, the Chamber of Commerce of Cáceres worked on “Promotion Entrepreneurship in the School”, a programme funded by the Operational programme - Adaptability and Employment. The topic was promoting entrepreneurship among students in secondary schools, high school, and vocational training in order to develop strategies and lifelong learning systems in companies. The Chamber of Commerce of Cáceres has been involved as well in the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLL Hub project), funded by the European Commission and aimed at making lifelong learning a reality (the first ET2020 Strategic Objective) by concretizing EU recommendations on a partnership approach among education and training stakeholders. Thanks to the LLL Hub project, the design and implementation of lifelong learning strategies were enriched by valuable peer learning between different actors to tackle four key challenges of the EU policy agenda.

Moreover, the Chamber of Commerce of Cáceres has been working on some projects within the Erasmus+ Programme. Between 2017 and 2018, for example, it has contributed to the development of the ME-Commercer, a programme which offers an online training course consisting of 6 modules specifically designed to provide all interested individuals with the information and knowledge necessary to become an e-commerce professional for microbusinesses.

The involvement of the Chamber of Commerce of Cáceres was important to the YOUCAN consortium because it generated multiple advantages. Most importantly, the presence of this institution facilitated the creation of linkages with the business world, which was one of the most innovative features of YOUCAN. Engaging the business world in the project was crucial to the declared aim of finding new sources of funding other than EU resources and allowed to keep an eye on a sector which is too frequently ignored when dealing with social inclusion.

ECEPAA (Belgium) [19]

The European Centre for Economic and Policy Analysis and Affairs (ECEPAA) is a Belgian nonprofit research organization founded in 2011 and based in Brussels. It is specialized in the development of European Union projects in the fields of social inclusion, education, youth and migration. The association, thanks to the use of funding from different programs, aims to contribute to the knowledge of topics related to social exclusion, and the persistent difficulties of the marginalised population due to economic, cultural, class, race and gender reasons. The organisation firmly believes that sharing this knowledge through a bottom-up approach can contribute to improving the management of the above-mentioned issues.

[19] ECEPAA official website: <https://www.ecepaa.eu/>.

ECEPAA has a long tradition of international exchanges for youth and trainees, and it has coordinated several projects dealing with topics of wide social interest, including education. During its activities, ECEPAA has often been involved in the implementation of initiatives whose aim was to address and prevent the issue of early school leaving, especially with respect to youth of migrant background. On this point, the organisation insists on the fact that learning the language of the host country is a crucial pillar of the integration process, while it is also fully aware of the importance of combining formal and non-formal methods to make the learning path fruitful.

The non-profit association has recently worked on a series of projects dealing with ESL. One project is SHIP (School & Home Involvement Participation) Strategic Partnership. The aim of SHIP was to encourage the involvement of parents with migrant background in the activities of their children as a measure to reduce the likelihood to incur early school drop-out. Another interesting project is called Language As a Bridge (LAB), whose aim was to train and increase the efficiency of adult educators in the language education of newly arrived adult refugees.

Then, it has been involved as well in the implementation of the IHAVET (Integrated Holistic Approach to a validated European Tool), whose focus is on the impelling issues of social inclusion of disadvantaged groups. Within these groups, the foreign-born youth stand out as one of the most problematic to integrate.

The aim of IHAVET is to reduce the high school dropout of this particular group of students by developing a tool that supports not only them but also their parents and teachers/trainers/youth workers working with them. The latest projects funded whose target is reducing ESL rates for youth with migrant background are DO-IT (Digital cOmpetence to teach youth with mIgranT background) and WAY (Whole-school Approach for youth with migrant background).

These projects have conferred to ECEPAA much expertise on projects in the field of education with respect to social inclusion and early school leaving, which was of invaluable importance for the YOUCAN consortium.

2o Epaggelmatiko Lykeio Katerinis (Greece) [20]

The 2nd Vocational High School of Katerini is located in the province of Pieria in northern Greece, 70km far from Thessaloniki. Founded in 1984, the school has been placed in the suburbs of the city since 2000 and it serves about 700 students aged 16 – 19 with 100 teachers. It comprises four different sectors (Informatics, Healthcare & Welfare, Agriculture/Food Technology/Nutrition and Business/Economics) and it includes a number of specialized teaching laboratories for each department, helped by the modern ICT infrastructure.

Many of the students come from villages in Pieria region and between 15-20% come from families who have migrated to Greece from Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, etc. The training they provide aims to combine general education with technical vocational knowledge, with specific purposes: development of skills, initiative, creativity and critical thinking of students, learning of technical and

professional knowledge, and provision of relevant skills for students to continue their studies at the next educational level.

The school was invited to become a partner of the YOUCAN consortium because its staff is well-educated and experienced in EU projects and is always willing to participate in new projects and face new challenges. In particular, they acknowledged that the topic of the project is significant to the school teachers. They and, more specifically, people with a key role in this project had solid experience in EU projects dealing with migrants given the high number of Syrian refugees enrolled.

2.3 The benefits of cooperating with transnational partners to achieve the project objectives

The project was developed on a transnational level because this certainly gives the opportunity to understand in a comparative way the different needs that had emerged at the level of the project partner countries, and above all, the various responses to those.

Accordingly, numerous benefits of transnational cooperation have been identified. First, transnational cooperation allowed for the development and improvement of the language skills of project participants and allowed to have a greater perception of cultural differences experienced not as an obstacle but as a source of richness. In addition, since each country has its own tradition, including professional ones, the comparison of the various professional traditions enriched the skills of the participants in the project. Finally though the exchange, the cultural, professional, and linguistic comparison between citizens belonging to different countries helped to create a bottom-up and solidary Europe.

[21] ARAVET project official website: www.aravet-project.eu.

2.4 Activities and expected outcomes

YOUCAN planned several activities:

- Three transnational meetings have provided the places and the time to monitor the activities carried out;
- Six Organization to Organization (O2O) tailored trainings during which a participant took part in a week of training at another organization that was part of the consortium and produced a report.

The aim was to reinforce the cooperation with local organizations/partners, increase the allocation of financial resources (other than EU funds) to organize EU/international projects in the field of education, training and youth and increase the quality of the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of EU/international projects and increased capacity and professionalism to work at EU/international level.

Two project results have been produced:

- A YOUCAN best practices publication of about 50/80 pages in the languages of the countries participating in the project (French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Portuguese) and English. It has identified the best practices coming from projects that have focused on the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation to address youth with migrant background school dropout (i.e., this document);
- A YOUCAN toolkit of about 30/50 pages in the languages of the countries participating in the project (French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Portuguese) and English. It has a very practical objective: training members of the participating organizations in increasing the quality of the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of EU/international projects and heightening the capacity and professionalism to work at the EU/international level by better knowing the project cycle management.

Additionally, there have been:

- Six local multiplier events and one final multiplier event during which the project activities and results were illustrated;
- One Memorandum of Understanding and cooperation among the consortium signed by each organization participating in the consortium;
- Three project applications to 3 calls for proposals from non-EU funds.

Transnational Best Practices



A.C.C.E.S.S. - Active Cross-sectoral Cooperation for Educational and Social Success [22]



Project Duration: October 1, 2018 - August 31, 2021

Project Coordinator: ilmiolavoro srl (Italy)

Project Partners: Siuolaikiniu Didaktiku Centras (Lithuania), Psientifica - Associação para a promoção e desenvolvimento social (Portugal), Universitatea Valahia Targoviste (Romania), Liceul Teoretic, Ion Ghica"-Racari (Romania), Salcininku Jano Sniadeckio gimnazija (Lithuania), Agrupamento de Escolas Águeda Sul (Portugal), Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Crocetti-Cerulli (Italy).

Overview and Objectives:

Many European documents keep stressing the need for a whole-school approach to tackling early school leaving (ESL). These documents generally advocate for the importance of adopting strategies aimed at building positive learning environments, improving teachers' competencies, and implementing professional communities between schools and between schools and external players. They also highlight that there are some relevant school-related factors with a high impact on early school leaving. In particular, these include a negative school environment – for instance, conflicts with teachers and peers-, low school results and lack of motivation, and students' perception of non-stimulating methods and low learning expectations. In this context, the ACCESS project aimed to face, in a preventive way, the problem of early school leaving linked to school-related factors, by reinforcing pedagogical quality and innovation through the improvement of teachers' skills and the creation of a positive learning environment.

Action:

The project partners (PPs) carried out a self-monitoring activity by using structural indicators defined by the Working Group on School Policy 2015. Based on these indicators, the PPs identified the following problematic areas: (1) an inadequate common adoption of a global and integrated school approach which makes it hard to create a positive relational environment at school in which students are “given voice”; (2) insufficient implementation of actions for the continuous professional development of teachers aimed to acquire skills for the identification of early school leaving signals and for support activities; (3) professional learning communities not properly organised.

ACCESS was specifically designed to provide responses to these deficiencies by accomplishing various objectives, such as increasing the understanding of the dynamics of early school leaving and structuring a periodic monitoring process to provide preventive support to students at ESL risk. Other important tasks were increasing the communication and teaching skills of teachers and strengthening the inter-sectoral cooperation between schools and external players according to local

[22] ACCESS official website: Access – Active Cross-sectoral Cooperation for Educational and Social Success (projectaccess.eu). A summary of the project is available on the Erasmus+ Programme website at the following link: [Search project results | Erasmus+ \(europa.eu\)](#).

contexts. In this way, it was possible to build multi-professional and transnational learning communities. The target group of ACCESS was represented by secondary school teachers and the main beneficiaries were students of the first two years.

Overall, the project had positive impacts on teachers by increasing their skills and on students, by reducing the risk factors of ESL. It also generated positive impacts on school management in terms of know-how for implementing a global and integrated approach to tackling ESL.



Whilst the ACCESS project has ended, a new project – ACCESS UP follows its work. You can check it on the ACCESS website!

ARISE - Active, Responsible and entrepreneurial citizenS united in diversity [23]



Project Duration: February 28, 2022 - February 27, 2024

Project Coordinator: Hellenic Open University (Greece)

Project Partners: P.R.S.D. (Associação Provedores de Respostas Sociais para o Desenvolvimento, Portugal), CESIE (Italy), Almasar (Greece), AAR (Social Development Association, Finland), CMT (Prooptiki Consulting Management Training, Greece).

Overview and Objectives:

ARISE is a recently created project dealing with the aim of preventing early school leaving and failure in education, promoting inclusion and quality and improving key competencies. The project partners acknowledge that achieving greater equity in education is not only a social-justice imperative but also a way to use resources more efficiently and increase the supply of knowledge and skills that fuel economic growth and promote social cohesion. Unfortunately, ensuring quality education and training for all remains a challenge for many countries, and a significant educational gap persists due to persistent categories of social inequality such as socio-economic status and class, gender and ethnicity.

The general objective of the ARISE project is to develop, implement and disseminate a proactive approach in secondary schools through multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary cooperation, using project-based learning to strengthen the capacities of education and training professionals for equity, diversity and inclusion challenges in the learning environment. Moreover, ARISE aims to promote inclusion, empower disadvantaged and/or third-country national learners (refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived migrants) and help them become active, responsible and entrepreneurial citizens. The ultimate purpose is to build an inclusive and prosperous European society, where all pupils, their families and communities feel a sense of common belonging to society.

Action:

This strategic partnership enables a system of dynamic cooperation, with teachers, researchers, social and youth workers, youth-led and grassroots NGOs supporting the inclusion of disadvantaged and migrant populations, and the private sector. They will jointly develop practical tools for teachers and pupils (handbook, pilot course, toolkit) positively impacting their daily practices in the classroom. Furthermore, in line with EU recommendations, the project will adopt a proactive approach involving also parents, communities, and other stakeholders to ensure early intervention and prevent pupils from falling into a NEET situation. By building on the partners' staff personal experiences and role models, as well as on European good practices to promote inclusive education tested by the partners, this pioneering initiative will bolster the social competencies, communication and intercultural skills of several children and young people. Under this framework, students are expected to boost their capacity to

[23] Information on ARISE available at: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2021-1-EL01-KA220-SCH-000032598>.

self-organise and to actively participate to set up new (formal and informal) youth organisations and networks across Europe.

The activities undertaken during the implementation of the project are designed to help pupils overcome social or individual barriers, build self-confidence in their ability to turn their ideas into actions and equip them with some of the key competencies necessary to trigger an entrepreneurial mindset. As for the expected impact, the project will develop a model which will have a strong potential for transferability and further exploitation since it can be used to support many disadvantaged categories of children, including but not limited to recently arrived TCNs. Finally, the dissemination strategy -based on multiplier events, info days, workshops and conferences is intended to reach out to additional members of the target groups as well as to policy-makers in the field of education and the wider public, with the aim of advocating for inclusive and cohesive societies

DEVOTE - Developing Competencies of Teachers to Integrate Students with Migrant Background in European Schools [24]



Project Duration: November 1, 2020 – October 31, 2022

Project Coordinator: European Association for Local Democracy ALDA (France)

Project Partners: Fo.Co. (Formazione e Comunione Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus, Italy), UCLL (Belgium), UTH (University of Thessaly, Greece), DRPDNM (Drustvo Za Razvijanje Prostovoljnega Dela Novo Mesto, Slovenia), Paydaş (Türkiye).

Overview and Objectives:

The DEVOTE project aimed to strengthen the integration of students with migrant backgrounds in schools and improve their success in education by providing training, coaching and guidance to teachers. During the implementation process, DEVOTE focused on equipping school leaders and educators with the necessary skills and innovative tools to support secondary students, as well as on strengthening collaboration between schools, families, and other external stakeholders. The project had indeed multiple target groups from a wider audience at local, regional, national and European levels that were provided with three main Intellectual Outputs:

- Educational content, designed to help teachers to integrate students with migrant background;
- Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), an open online course for middle and secondary school teachers;
- Community of Educators, which is a teacher community to share good practices.

Action:

In close collaboration with each other, DEVOTE partners set a series of important objectives to fulfil in a cross-sectoral way. First, the project favoured the professional development of teachers in dealing with migrant and refugee learners and diversity in classrooms and will support schools in order to facilitate the inclusion and success of newly arrived migrant and refugee students, thus contributing to the tackling of early school leaving (ESL).

Moreover, the project aimed to strengthen the collaboration among all members of the school community (school leaders, teachers and non-teaching staff, learners, parents/families) and to extend and enhance secondary school teachers' skills and competencies in the teaching of literacy and numeracy to students with migrant backgrounds. In so doing, DEVOTE developed a diagnostic tool for the effective assessment of literacy, numeracy and digital competencies, gaps and needs of students with migrant backgrounds and promoted innovative practices, digital and non-digital, in teaching literacy, numeracy and digital competencies of secondary students with migrant backgrounds.



[24] Devote project official website: https://devoteproject.eu/en_gb/project/.

E-EVALINTO - Evaluation environment for fostering intercultural mentoring tools and practices at school [25]



Project Duration: October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2018

Project Coordinator: Universidad de Salamanca (Spain)

Project Partners: Oxfam Italia Onlus (Italy), Universidad de Cadiz (Spain), Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology LTD-CARDET (Cyprus), Spoleczna Akademia Nauk (Poland), Dublin City University (Ireland).

Overview and Objectives:

E-EVALINTO recognised that tackling early school leaving was a stepping stone towards improving the opportunities of young people and supporting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It further acknowledged that young people with a migration background were at great risk of ESL from school. To this extent, the gap between natives and young people born abroad was in effect very high. One of the factors explaining this trend was the lack of prevention and early intervention strategies, both at institutional and school levels, related to the need to develop effective methodologies and support for these students.

Having said this, the objective of E-EVALINTO was twofold. On the one hand, it was intended to promote peer mentoring actions addressed to both reduce early school leaving in migrant student population. On the other hand, E-EVALINTO aimed to develop an ICT framework for assessing, managing and developing activities for intercultural contexts. In order to accomplish these tasks, the project developed a partnership of six organisations from different sectors - higher education Institutions, an NGO and a Research Development and Education Centre. This multisectoral approach ensured that the consortium would count on a correct balance between different competencies and experiences in the fields of research, methodology, ICT and innovation and teaching training.

Action:

The E-EVALINTO team was supported by 16 pilot schools, located in the partner countries, all secondary schools with different percentages of migrant students and different gaps between natives and migrants. To succeed in the above-mentioned objectives, E-EVALINTO carried out the following activities:

- E-EVALINTO Framework: design of the theoretical and methodological framework for implementing peer mentoring actions and for evaluating the situation of a school with regard to interculturality and identification of migrant students potentially at risk;
- E-EVALINTO Environment: development of an educational portal, which offers schools and teachers a complete set of tools and activities to manage and evaluate the implementation of the intercultural mentoring programme with their students;
- E-EVALINTO Training Programme Design: elaborated to equip teachers with tools

[25] E-EVALINTO official website: <https://evalinto.eu/it/home-2/>.

to deal with diversity and to apply them at school in order to work effectively with pupils at risk.

The results achieved were closely related to the activities planned. Overall, it is possible to affirm that the E-EVALINTO project strengthened the profile of teaching professions by introducing in the classroom innovative intercultural strategies, which allowed teachers to access or create by themselves both the tools and materials for their daily teaching practices and the climate of inclusion and confidence among students at school. This was done by enhancing the development of inter-relational competencies and reducing also the stereotypes concerning languages and cultural diversity. Furthermore, the methodological framework (intercultural patterns, templates for activities, evaluation tools, guidelines and tutorials) let future users benefit from the results of the E-EVALINTO project.



KEEP ON - Supporting school teachers to prevent dropout of migrant students [26]



Project Duration: November 1, 2016 – October 31, 2018

Project Coordinator: Solidaridad Sin Fronteras (Spain)

Project Partners: Periferiaki Diefthinsi Protovathmias kai Defterovathmias Ekpaidefsis Kritis (Greece), Best Institut für Berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GMBH (Austria), Manisa Güzel Sanatlar Lisesi (Türkiye), Instituto para el Fomento del Desarrollo y la Formación SL (Spain).

Overview and Objectives:

The project assumed that the phenomenon of school dropout was closely related to poverty and exclusion because it was generally more of migrant origin and ethnic minorities. Early school leaving affected the interpersonal relationships and emotional health of these people and led to higher rates of unemployment and fewer social and labour opportunities.

It is in this context that the KEEP ON project was framed. It aimed to improve the professional development of professionals in the field of education by providing them with innovative approaches and methodologies to manage cultural diversity in order to prevent school dropout among immigrant students, refugees and asylum seekers and ethnic minorities and to promote their integration into the classroom. To achieve this, the project integrated methods and approaches aimed at training professionals in the educational field, so as to empower immigrant students in concepts such as self-control, self-efficacy, positive self-assessment, social identity and group membership. The project applied innovative pedagogies, such as dialogical learning and peer learning, to help students play an active role in the teaching-learning process and to build intercultural environments in the classroom. In the development of the KEEP ON project, 5 partner organizations from 4 different countries participated by bringing extensive experience in the field of social, educational and labour inclusion of the immigrant population and vulnerable groups.

Action:

KEEP ON produced four main intellectual products, namely:

- the Online Digital Database of good practices and resources;
- the Training Curriculum;
- the KEEP ON Pedagogical Manual;
- the KEEP ON Professional Tool Box for professionals in the field of education.

Throughout the project, project management and evaluation activities and dissemination and exploitation of the results were carried out. Overall, the partner organizations benefited from the knowledge acquired and materials produced by KEEP ON. Both professionals in the field of education and those who work directly with people of diverse cultural origins and vulnerable populations improved their intercultural skills and socio-educational intervention skills. This had a positive impact

[26] Keep On official website: <http://keepon-project.eu/>.

on the indirect beneficiaries, migrant students, with their empowerment and training, helping to reduce the risks of dropping out of school and, as a consequence, improving their social and educational integration. As for the dissemination of KEEP ON results, it is estimated that between training and promulgation activities, the project and its outputs reached more than 13,900 teachers, 1,285 schools and approximately 20,000 students. Thanks to the development of the KEEP ON project, alliances and new ways of collaboration were forged between social organizations and other associated organizations.



Migratory Musics [27]



Project Duration: September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2019

Project Coordinator: Musique de Nuit Diffusion Association (France)

Project Partners: Insup Formation (France), le LABA (France), Centre Culturel Bruxelles Nord - Maison de la création (Belgium), Commune de Begles (France), Ecole Fondamentale de l'Athénée Royal Bruxelles 2 (Belgium), Synkoino Coop (Greece), Kinonikes Sineteristikes Drastiriotites Efpathon Omadon (Greece).

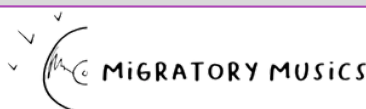
Overview and Objectives:

Communication in the mother tongue is one of the European Union's key competencies for lifelong learning. The migration crisis in Europe brought new students to schools, especially allophone children, who did not speak the language of their teachers. They were helpless in this situation due to a lack of training, translation and knowledge of migratory movements. This problem was of serious concern to municipalities that were willing to develop reception policies adjusted to these forms of migration. In this context, the link between mothers and their children in these migratory routes was an essential element in strengthening the chances of successful reception.

The Migratory Musics project built on this link, which was expressed notably through song, to stimulate innovation in the local reception policies implemented in Europe, especially in schools and cities. The Migratory Musics project was initiated to formalize a process which had originally begun in the municipalities of the City of Genon and the Municipality of Bègles and then expanded it on a European scale.

Action:

This project was implemented according to a strong cross-sectoral and transnational dimension as it brought together different partners including local authorities, schools, social integration professionals and cultural operators from three European countries (Belgium, France and Greece). Over a period of two years, the Migratory Musics project enabled the experimentation of an educational system, designed with the pedagogical teams, based on "know-how exchange" workshops between mothers, children and professionals (from the education, cultural and social sectors). Innovative pedagogical tools were developed to be distributed to teachers across Europe. They included a disc book, podcasts and documentaries, a communication guide and a MOOC developed "in vivo" and presented in the form of educational and sound creations. At the end of the project, teachers received methodologies and tools to better communicate and cooperate with allophone migrant mothers and children. As for the impact, the tools developed concerned more than 6,000 education professionals in the second year of the project and thus fostered the integration of families.



[27] More information about Migratory Musics project available at: <https://moocmigratorymusics.blogspot.com/>.

KIDS4ALL - Key Inclusive Development Strategies for Lifelong Learning [28]



Project Duration: April 1, 2021 – April 1, 2024

Project Coordinator: University of Turin (Italy)

Project Partners: Oslo Metropolitan University (Norway), Tarki Social Research Institute (Hungary), Sirius – Policy Network on Migrant Education (Belgium), Koç University (Türkiye), University of Peloponnese (Greece), University of Jena (Germany), University of Barcelona (Spain), University of Padua (Italy), INDIRE - National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research (Italy), Levinsky College of Education (Israel), Ars Media Srl (Italy), Institute for Education (Malta), Foundation for Access to Rights (Belgium), University of Girona (Spain).

Overview and Objectives:

The KIDS4ALL project has been awarded the Innovation Action in the frame of the Horizon2020 Work Program SC6 entitled 'Europe in a Changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies' and with particular reference to integration challenges of migrant children in educational contexts. It aims to strengthen and valorise transcultural, interdisciplinary skill sets in a highly diversified learner population, that increasingly corroborates the actual necessity for lifelong learning. The project partners claim that facilitating access to educational systems has become as urgent as challenging in the 21st-century society, especially when considering the contemporary global pandemic situation that emphasises the thread of existing performance discrepancies among the highly diversified student population. High NEET rates and shrinking participation in education evidence the demand for a targeted transmission of life skills to support individuals' resilience and participation in wider society. For this purpose, the lifelong learning approach recognises that competencies needed by children and adolescents today are not only technical but encompass learning to learn as competence in its own right. Two dimensions are essential: lifelong learning on a temporal scale -thus referring to different stages in life- and lifewide learning which considers the diversity of learning settings.

Action:

Given these premises, the KIDS4ALL project advocates for the general assumption that everybody should have the lifelong right and opportunity to access high-quality education. Moreover, the project team strongly believes that learners should also have the possibility to co-create their learning environment and thus be involved in both their own learning and the potential training process of others. Therefore, the project aims to implement a pilot action that will test a learning method and learning environment in formal, non-formal and informal educational contexts to address the integration challenges of migrant children. As a response to the educational needs of children, in particular of migrant children, and of educators as pathfinders for

[28] KIDS4ALL official website: <https://www.kids4all.eu/>.

continuous lifelong and life wide learning, the project is grounded on three Key Inclusive Development Strategies (KIDS) towards LifeLongLearning (LLL), which represent the specific objectives of the project.

KIDS4ALL sets three main objectives to achieve:

- Promoting and fostering the acquisition and transmission of competencies that have been defined under the several LLL key thematic areas;
- Enhancing the methodological competencies of educators towards inclusive and participatory teaching, training and intercultural dialogue;
- Testing the concept of peer-to-peer learning in form of buddyship collaboration (guided pairing of learners) with the lifelong and lifewide dimensions of learning in a 9-months pilot phase.

Moreover, the project partners have identified multiple target groups. The first is composed of children and students enrolled from elementary to secondary school. In addition, there is the group of educators in the different learning settings that are considered by the project, that is, teachers in schools and trainers in non-formal settings, such as cultural organisations. Finally, the parents of the children, even though not directly involved in the project implementation, will be indirect beneficiaries of the created competencies and skills of their children and the educators who are surrounding them day-by-day.



PICESL - Promoting Inclusion to Combat Early School Leaving [29]



Project Duration: September 10, 2019 – August 9, 2022

Project Coordinator: Universidad Pablo De Olavide (Spain)

Project Partners: Agrupamento de Escolas do Cerco do Porto (Portugal), Paula Frassinetti Escola Superior de Educação (Portugal), Hellenic Open University (Greece), International Association of Intercultural Education IATE (Netherlands), Gimnazija Vladimira Nazora Zadar (Croatia), Malala school (Spain), I.C.S. Giovanni Falcone (Italy), Centre on Migration Policy and Society COMPAS (United Kingdom), Consejo de Educacion Inicial y Primaria (Spain), SIRIUS Policy Network on Migrant Education (Belgium).

Overview and Objectives:

The PICESL project recognised that Early School Leaving is linked to unemployment, social exclusion, poverty and poor health. The European Union was aware of this issue and tried to encourage Member States to cope with it in several ways. Member States worked with health, employment and police services and collaborated with school heads, parents and community organisations in order to promote a whole-school approach to work around the socio-emotional context of each child. Despite these efforts, there was and there is still much work to do to tackle early school leaving.

In this context, the PICESL project made important contributions. PICESL is an Erasmus+ project that aimed to promote inclusive intercultural pedagogies and practices for student engagement. PICESL innovation was that it brought together teachers and researchers on an equal footing with both teams collaborating and participating in a project to further the cause of early school leaving. The project has set four objectives:

1. Map and provide a selection of effective intercultural/inclusive education practices in the EU that combat early school leaving regarding students at risk of social exclusion;
2. Develop, test and propose a system of indicators to identify effective intercultural/inclusive practices;
3. Design and implement a systematic teacher training programme that enables teachers to employ and further develop these intercultural/inclusive practices;
4. Disseminate a set of effective intercultural/educational practices in schools across Europe, as well the system of indicators so that teachers can diagnose their own practices and then sharing these indicators with international institutions and Ministries of Education.

[29] PICESL official website: <https://www.upo.es/picesl/>.

Action:

The essential feedback and experience of teachers were put within an established academic framework that allowed the project to produce two essential outputs. Firstly, a European mapping of successful intercultural and inclusive practices in the classroom, which includes a set of indicators with which teachers can evaluate their own practices in the classroom. Secondly, a teacher training guide based on the above-identified effective practices. Therefore, by combining and analysing best practices in inclusive education, PICESL presented an accessible guide which offers teachers a hands-on approach to re-inventing their teaching practice and adding new tools to their portfolio. The teachers involved in the project then reflected this approach within their schools and local areas. Moreover, it should be noted that approximately 75% of the project team were active in their local and national politics around education issues and will continue to engage at the national level in Spain, Italy, Croatia and Portugal despite the project coming to a close. Similarly, the team based in Brussels will watch the policy work on inclusive education for migrants at the European level and will influence the way research promotes inclusion in decision-making and classrooms.



Promoting inclusion to combat
early school leaving

National Best Practices





Belgium



DASPA: Dispositif d'accueil et de scolarisation des élèves primo-arrivants (Reception and Schooling Service for Newly Arrived Student)



The Reception and Schooling Service for Newly Arrived Student (DASPA: Dispositif d'accueil et de scolarisation des élèves primo-arrivants) are the official special reception facilities for the integration of newly arrived migrants in the school system of the French Community of Belgium. DASPA aims to respond to the specific needs of newly arrived schoolchildren and assimilated students in terms of "reception, learning, support and language proficiency" [30] in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, while pursuing three principal objectives:

1. "Assuring the reception, orientation and effective insertion of newly arrived schoolchildren and assimilated students [...] in the educational system";
2. "Offering an academic and pedagogic accompaniment suited for the education profiles [of these] students and which takes into account their difficulties in terms of proficiency in the language of instruction and school culture, in particular by granting periods dedicated to learning the language of instruction";
3. "For a fixed period, offering an intermediate stage of schooling accompanied by progressive integration before its insertion, in the long term, in a school year" [31].

The Decree of May 18, 2012 precisely defined the target group of the DASPA service by outlining the criteria that schoolchildren have to meet in order to be recognized as newly arrived students (élèves primo-arrivants) in terms of age, status as well as time passed since first arriving in Belgium. The Decree of February 7, 2019 later enlarged the target group of DASPA by including in it a new group of pupils called "students assimilated to newcomers", whose main characteristics are presented within the document.

In fact, the 2019 Decree represented a turning point in the history of the DASPA system, introducing a number of significant changes such as the creation of the FLA accompaniment service (dispositif d'accompagnement FLA), the definition of new tools for assessing proficiency in French and the abolition of the previous regulation for which DASPA was limited to a set number of schools located near reception centers. The latter in particular proved itself to be an especially effective decision as it caused a significant increase in the numbers of schools which can receive ad hoc means for the creation of a DASPA [32].

[30] European Website on Integration, DASPA: Dispositif d'accueil et de scolarisation des élèves primo-arrivants, European Commission, accessed 7 March 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practice/daspa-dispositif-daccueil-et-de-scolarisation-des-eleves-primo-arrivants_en.

[31] Parliament of the French Community, Décret visant à l'accueil, la scolarisation et l'accompagnement des élèves qui ne maîtrisent pas la langue dans l'enseignement organisé ou subventionné par la Communauté française, 2019, p. 3, available at the following link: https://www.gallilex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/46275_000.pdf.

[32] Parliament of the French Community, Circulaire 7232, 2019, p. 4.

DASPA services aim to foster intensive learning of the French language, familiarization within the Belgian school culture and to make possible for students to enter the school grade suited for their age as quickly as possible [33]. Therefore, the weekly schedule of each DASPA must include a minimum of 16 out of 28 school periods dedicated to intensive teaching of the French language, school culture, humanities and to educating students in terms of philosophy and citizenship.

Students can benefit from the DASPA service for a maximum of 12 months, to which 6 can be added if deemed necessary by the Integration Council, a body of professionals which is mandatorily created in all schools offering a DASPA. In case the newcomer or assimilated student has entered the school system with a low or non-existent degree of literacy, the maximum period for attending a DASPA is extended to two years.

In order to effectively promote their integration students within Belgian schools, after some time students attending a DASPA gradually start taking classes in ordinary school grades, accordingly to their age. The progressive integration process becomes mandatory for all students enrolled in a DASPA for more than 10 months.

Finally, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the DASPA system, a monitoring Committee was created in order to assess, among others, the academic career of newly arrived schoolchildren and assimilated students, the average time spent in DASPA and the general orientation of pupils who previously benefited from the DASPA service within secondary education in Belgium (General, Vocational or Qualifying Education). [34].

[33] Parliament of the French Community, Décret 2019, p. 8.

[34] Parliament of the French Community, Décret 2019, p. 1.

Dispositif d'accompagnement FLA (FLA Accompaniment Device)



The FLA accompaniment service (Dispositif d'accompagnement FLA) is defined by the 2019 Decree as an “educational structure for the promotion of the acquisition of the language of instruction within the ordinary preschool, primary and secondary education”; it can be regarded as a service complementary to DASPA as it contributes to the pursuit of the objectives outlined in the 3rd Article of the Decree. The organization of a FLA accompaniment service is mandatory for all school establishments in which newly arrived schoolchildren and assimilated students are enrolled if a DASPA service is not offered. It is also compulsory to create a FLA accompaniment service in preschool and primary education facilities in which “FLA students” are enrolled, that is, pupils (aged 4 or older) who do master the language of instruction to the degree necessary to participate successfully to the activities of their school grade [35].

In order to first assess the level of proficiency in the language of instruction of FLA and assimilated students, a set of different evaluative tools are used, and these vary significantly depending on the age of the concerned students. The possible results are A, B and C, with the latter being equivalent to a “degree of proficiency in French too low for attending classes independently and fruitfully” [36]. All students having obtained a C during their initial language assessments benefit either from DASPA or FLA services.

Therefore, schools in which FLA students or assimilated students are enrolled are required to organize supplementary school periods dedicated to the acquisition of the language of instruction and to the familiarization with the school culture. In order to achieve this, school establishments are provided with additional support from the Government. More specifically, starting from the 2022-2023 school year, each school offering a FLA accompaniment service are granted an additional 30% of a (0,3) school period for each FLA student enrolled in the establishment, which they can benefit from for 12 months in total. The percentage is equivalent to 40% for newly arrived schoolchildren and assimilated students.

All designated teachers are required to have completed specific training in teaching French as a foreign language or as the language of instruction and in intercultural mediation; alternatively, they are required to enroll in the in-service training programmes targeted for educators working in the DASPA and FLA services.

[35] Parliament of the French Community, Décret 2019, p. 2

[36] Enseignement.be, Outils d'évaluation de la maîtrise de la langue de l'enseignement, Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, accessed 7 March 2023, <http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28252&navi=4593>.



Greece



Overview of Greek Government response to refugee children integration

Greek officials' opinions around the issue have been conflicting, sometimes contradictory. On one hand, extreme conservative voices have reacted negatively to the integration of refugee children in school, on the other, some were of the idea that integration should have been immediate and unconditional with the assistance of international organizations.

Common ground in the planning and implementation of a program has been found progressively to ensure targeted action for refugees' children integration into the school system. By law, free and anti-discriminatory education is institutionally guaranteed by the Greek state.

Firstly, migrant children were given the possibility to enrol in a regular school program, or in an intercultural one thanks to the 25 intercultural schools that operate throughout the territory. Secondly, depending on their initial level of Greek, they were divided in different Educational Priority Zones (ZEP): I ZEP for children with minimal or no knowledge of the native language and II ZEP for those with moderate speaking and writing skills. This was the first move to help their integration and lack of previous schooling experience.

Then, to deal with the large concentration of refugee children in the accommodation facilities, the Ministry of Education decided to set up a Special Scientific Committee for the Support of Refugee Children to develop general planning and programming for the 2016-2017 school year and to create specific Reception Structures for the Education of Refugees (DYEP) for families that could not take their children to school.

Lastly, the same state department came up with the Refugee Education Management, Coordination and Monitoring Group, as well as a Group that develops educational actions, cooperating with official bodies and civil society bodies, while seeking to inform the competent educational bodies of the territory.

Best Practice to tackle migrant youth education gap

The institutional effort in Greece to intervene in the educational integration of youth with refugee backgrounds has progressed over the years and despite difficulties and political deadlocks, it has for the majority worked effectively. This is especially true for two of the abovementioned initiative: education priority zones (ZEP) and Reception Structures for the Education of Refugees (DYEP) respectively.

ZEP – Educational Priority Zones



The program started with the co-financing of the European Union and was implemented for the first time in the school year 2010-11, and since 2011-12 it has increasingly evolved. For example, during the 2020-2021 school year, it was extended to school dropouts coming from different cultural and religious backgrounds.

Yet, in the first place, the initiative was the result of increased migratory flow to Greece that ultimately lead to the necessity to narrow the gap between native and immigrant pupils. Not only by providing educational support, but also an emotional one to strengthen the connection of the school community with the family.

According to the ministerial decision numbered Φ1 TY/1375/170829/Δ1, "reception classes are defined as all Regional Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education that include Primary Education school units, where ZEP19 Reception Classes can operate". Koutouzis et al. (2012) state that the reforms in the country's education system, such as the Reception Classes and the ZEP departments, aim to address the lack of infrastructure and preparation of the educational staff [37].

In tackling those, it aims at strengthening school integration and educational resilience to benefit both students and the entire school community, while also encouraging children's socialization and self-esteem building.

The program itself is divided into two cycles integrated into the school timetable: the Reception Classes I ZEP and Reception Classes II ZEP. The former deals with students with little to no knowledge of Greek. Thus, the program entails intensive learning of the host country language that is combined with courses such as Physical Education, Art, Music Education, Foreign Languages and any other one deemed necessary. The maximum time limit for studying in Reception Class I ZEP is one year.

Whereas the latter, Reception Classes II ZEP, students have a moderate level of Greek knowledge. Despite this, it can still be difficult for them to attend exclusively native classes. Hence, they are provided with parallel or extra support. However, three years is the upper limit to stay in this educational program.

Generally speaking, students who have completed their studies in these classes cannot go back to ZEP Reception Classes. Instead, their approval to study in Reception Classes I and II ZEP follows specific steps. Firstly, a diagnostic test done by the teachers in collaboration with a

[37] Koutouzis, M., Kyridis, A., Maloutas, T., Papadakis, N. & Syrigos, S. (2012). Educational Priority Zones. Summary report of its results Social Research Group of the Ministry of Education. National Social Center Research. Retrieved March 28, 2016 from <http://www.ekke.gr/publications/wp/wp26.pdf>.

relevant school counsellor assessing their level of learning [38]. Then, In the next step, parents or a caregiver need to sign and submit their authorization. Finally, teachers' association review the process and reach a unanimous decision.

Normally, at least 9 children are needed to start the course and the educational staff takes care of them. This means substitute teachers are in charge of the actual learning, while the head of the school checks in on the weekly schedule and lastly, school counsellors supervise and guide the teachers.

All of them follow the principle of positive discrimination; that is, targeted education is provided to children of immigrants and refugees so that they can acquire the knowledge and resources required for their personal development in the new country [39]. They are especially given time to process the change, settle down in this unfamiliar reality and resolve internal conflicts that may arise. The reason being starting a new reality is a slow and difficult process.



[38] Kalogridis, S. (2017). The Reception Classes in primary school: an institution support and inclusion of students from vulnerable social groups. Newspaper "The Dawn". Retrieved from: <https://www.avgi.gr/koinonia/253984 oi-taxeisypodohis-sto-dimotiko-sholeio-enas-thesmos-ypostirixis-kai-entaxis-ton>.

[39] Perrenoud, P. (2005). The school facing the multitude of cultures. THE differentiated pedagogy, between the demand for equality and the right to dispute (translation: C. Papadopoulos). Retrieved from: http://users.sch.gr/ppiliour/papers/Papadopoulos_X/15_Cultures.pdf.



DYEP - Reception structures for the education of refugees

Many refugee families live in Reception Centers after entering Greece temporarily. Most of their children have remained out of the education system for a long time period, due to the unfavourable conditions in their country of origin, thus are in need of an immediate solution. However, transporting their children to and from school is often not possible.

In order to deal with the above mentioned issue, the Greek state ensured the creation of Reception Structures for the Education of Refugees (DYEP) after appointing Refugee Education Coordinators (RECs) and teachers. The safe transport of refugee children to and from schools is achieved by securing funds from the EU and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Following article 38 of Law 4415/2016, A' 159, the first DYEP started operating during the school year 2016 – 2017. DYEP are transition structures where teaching takes place either within the Hospitality Centers or within the school units providing the existence of available and suitable rooms. [40]. The children have the possibility to attend the full-day programme or go for the morning or afternoon one [41].

Their primary goal as Branches of Kindergartens, Elementary and High Schools is to meet language and communication need for refugee children, which is achieved with an educational program of twenty hours every week where refugee pupils were taught Greek, Mathematics, English, Information Technology, Arts and Sports [42]. According to the OAL data, 2883 children from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq enrolled in DYEP that year [43-44].

Yet they also target two other categories of vulnerable students. Firstly, they look after unaccompanied children, who come from third countries and now reside in Hospitality Structures. Either way, the minimum number of students to create a DYEP department is 10 while the maximum 20 students.

[40] Maligoudi, X. & Tsousidis, A. (2020). Attitudes of teachers who teach in Refugee Reception and Education Structures (DYEP) towards education refugee students. Democritus University of Thrace. Research in Education. (9) 1, 22-34. Retrieved from: <https://ejournals.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/hjre/article/view/22066/19490>.

[41] Greek Government (2016). Refugee Education Reception Structures (DYEP) for refugee children of all ages. Greek Republic. Retrieved from: <https://government.gov.gr/%ce%b4%ce%bf%ce%bc%ce%ad%cf%82%cf%85%cf%80%ce%bf%ce%b4%ce%bf%cf%87%ce%ae%cf%82->

[42] Education Policy Institute (2016). Reception and Education Structures Refugees. Press release. Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. Athena. Retrieved from: http://www.iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/EPISTIMONIKI_YPIRESIA/Epist_Monades/A_Kyklos/Diapolitismiki/2016/2016-10-04_dt_dyep.pdf. [36] Scientific Committee for the Support of Refugee Children, (2017). The play of Refugee Education. Athens: Ministry of Education.

[43] Papadopoulou, D. (ex.). The refugee phenomenon: The Greek and the international experience. Aspects of the refugee phenomenon. Training program Awareness. Patras: EAP.

[44] Child Advocate (2016). Tracking mechanism. The rights of of children moving to Greece. Exhibition. Retrieved from <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/20170420-ekthesi-mixanismos.pdf>.

Secondly, they are concerned with preschool children, to ensure their safety and meet their developmental needs without separating them from their family at such young age. Moreover this gives the opportunity to parents to participate in children's educational activities. "This fact is of major importance for the development and educational inclusion of young children, given that the direct cooperation of parents and teachers apart from cultivating climate of mutual trust, strengthens children's sense of security and greatly accelerates their learning rate" [42].

The organization and operation of the DYEP is determined and supervised by the Refugee Education Management, Coordination and Monitoring Group who are the first people the children come in contact with.

Room for improvement: Overcoming pitfalls

Despite the implementation of specific programs for the inclusion of refugee children in education, delays in planning and deficiencies in the coordination and cooperation of the involved services and agencies have slowed down progress in granting them easy access to the country's public education system.

This is also true for the best practices that though effective have not followed a linear progress. For example, when it comes to ZEP Reception Classes, some unaccounted-for problems have hindered to some extent the operation of the program during its first year of implementation. Not only, in the years after its start some other issues, which were not foreseen by the competent authorities of the Ministry of Education and Culture, came up.

Firstly, there was a lack of interpreters in the schools, which created communication problems, both for the children themselves and for the teachers and parents, who could not understand Greek. It is worth mentioning that students who either did not study in ZEP Reception Classes and faced language difficulties, could get help outside school from the Reinforcement Tutoring Department.

Yet, the absence of qualified teachers and appropriate educational materials acted as a barrier to the inclusion and adaptation of immigrant and refugee minors in schools [45]. Especially because among them there were several school dropouts that did not feel adequately motivated to attend class due to their low performance [46]. Finally, the hostile environment created by the native community stagnated the full inclusion of foreign students in the education system [47]. There was a negative reaction in the local and wider society to the hostin-

[45] Mogli, M. & Kalbeni, S. (2020). The education and training of teachers in the Refugee Reception and Education Structures (DYEP). PROCEEDINGS of the 2nd Panhellenic Conference of the Practical Exercises Network. Teacher training and Pedagogical Departments, 30 years later: Facing the new challenges. Marble. 28-30. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347752241_E_ekpaideuse_kai_e_epimorphose_ton_ekpaideutikon_stis_Domes_Ypodoches_kai_Ekpaideuses_Prosphygon_DYEP.

[46] Maligoudi, X. & Tsousidis, A. (2020). Attitudes of teachers who teach in Refugee Reception and Education Structures (DYEP) towards education refugee students. Democritus University of Thrace. Research in Education. (9) 1, 22-34. Retrieved from: <https://ejournals.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/hjre/article/view/22066/19490>.

[47] ELIAMEP (2017). The integration of refugees into the education system in Greece: Politics and management in "quick sand". Retrieved from: <http://www.eliamap.gr>.

g of refugees on national soil. Many invoked security arguments, reiterating prejudice, intolerance and racism when confronted with the possibility of refugee settling in Greece long-term. Their presence felt uneasy the more they were visible in the urban fabric [48-50].

Similarly, there were also shortcomings in the logistical and operative part of the DYEP [48-50]. It failed to understand the specific characteristics of the refugee condition that make it difficult for children to be included in any form of education. This includes: cultural peculiarities, heterogeneity, fluidity, constant movements, living conditions, lack of stable living conditions and long-term absence from the school environment as well as the ignorance of the Greek language.

Coming from different war zones, having experienced traumatic and harsh situations, refugee families with their children appear wary of the education provided. Their socioeconomic and cultural background leads them to question the effectiveness of the host country's educational systems and pedagogical methods [48-50], especially when the national teachers are ill-prepared to deal with the issue of school dropouts. In other words, the absence of professional figures specially trained to teach refugee and foreign language students, only amplified tensions. They were not informed enough about the characteristics and needs of this specific population, nor were they equipped with specialized educational materials. Not to mention the necessity to customize the educational experience of refugees with new methods of active learning and conflict management techniques [51-53].

Conclusion

In conclusion, Greece from the beginning sought assimilation and integration of foreign students, to narrow the gap between native and non-native students. Gradually, it progressed to pluralistic models of education aimed at the interaction and union of all cultures.

The existence of immigrant and refugee students positively strengthened both the host country pupils and the wider society in all aspects. The language, the culture, the knowledge and the experiences they brought, constituted – and still do - a life experience for local students, who got to know the Other, accepted them and reflect on the reasons for the arrival of their classmates in Greece [54].

[48] Scientific Committee for the Support of Refugee Children, (2017). The play of Refugee Education. Athens: Ministry of Education.

[49] Papadopoulou, D. (ex.). The refugee phenomenon: The Greek and the international experience. Aspects of the refugee phenomenon. Training program Awareness. Patras: EAP.

[50] Child Advocate (2016). Tracking mechanism. The rights of of children moving to Greece. Exhibition. Retrieved from <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/20170420-ekthesi-mixanismos.pdf>.

[51] Scientific Committee for the Support of Refugee Children, (2017). The play of Refugee Education. Athens: Ministry of Education.

[52] Papadopoulou, D. (ex.). The refugee phenomenon: The Greek and the international experience. Aspects of the refugee phenomenon. Training program Awareness. Patras: EAP.

[53] Child Advocate (2016). Tracking mechanism. The rights of of children moving to Greece. Exhibition. Retrieved from <https://www.synigoros.gr/resources/20170420-ekthesi-mixanismos.pdf>.

[54] Paleologu, N., Evangelou, O. (2003). Intercultural Pedagogy. Educational, Didactic & Psychological Approaches. Athens: Atrapos.



Italy



Boosting entrepreneurship among migrant early school leavers

Italian best practices have so far focused on the somewhat missing link between early school leavers and entrepreneurship. While it is crucial to tackle and work on practices that reduce school dropout, it is equally essential to target those people who, having already left education, are confronted with a discriminatory and exclusive job market. Terminating one's education before it is expected should not be an obstacle to work. Thus, these projects are set to pave the way for alternative post-education practices that could boost job market integration for migrant early school leavers.



MENTOR 2 - MEditerranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular migration [55]



Project Duration: July 2021- June 2024

Project Coordinator: Municipality of Milan (Italy)

Project Partners: Municipality of Turin (Italy), AFOL Milan training and job agency (Italy), Piemonte Job Agency (Italy), Anolf Piemonte (Italy), Soleterre (Italy), CEI Piemonte - foreign center for internalisation (Italy), PROMOS Italia (Italy), CeSPI - Center for international political studies (Italy), ANAPEC – Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences (Morocco), Beni Mellal Region– Khenifra (Morocco), Municipality of Tangere (Morocco), : ANETI – Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi et le Travail Indépendant (Tunisia), Municipality of Tunisi (Tunisia), Municipality of Sfax Financed by Italian Ministry of Labour (Tunisia), ANAPEC – Agence Nationale Marocaine de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences and the EU Programme Mobility Partnership Facility III (Tunisia).

Overview and Objectives:

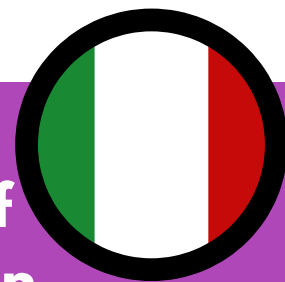
This project coordinated by the Municipality of Milan, now in its second edition, aims at improving the cooperation between Italy, Morocco and Tunisia for reasons of study and work, for young people. It will allow a group of 50 Moroccan and Tunisian youngsters to carry out professional three-year-long internships in enterprises of Milan and Turin, and then come back to their countries with new hard and soft skills and to contribute to local development. Alongside, it also wants to increase the awareness of migrant enterprises in Italy, Morocco and Tunisia by highlighting the existing employment opportunities for job training and exchanges, in order to understand the rules of the labour market and play by them.

Results:

Mentor 2 tackles the ability of local associations and institutions to implement a sound circular migration scheme in Italy, Morocco and Tunisia that could help stakeholders influence policy towards a job-oriented migration. To achieve this objective, partners have developed an approach based on the cooperation of territories, through a transnational collaboration guided by the local authorities. It expects to create a network that facilitates these kind of training paths and implements good practices, that will in turn enhance new generations' skills and social and economic development.

[55] Information on MENTOR 2 available at: [MPF Projects - Mediterranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular migration \(MENTOR\) II - Migration Partnership Facility](#).

RE-STARTUP - National network to build cooperative enterprises of vulnerable international protection holders [56]



Project Coordinator: Social Cooperative Camelot – Officine Cooperative (Ferrara)

Project Partners: Legacoop Ferrara (Ferrara); Association ADL a Zavidovici Onlus (Brescia); Social Cooperative Programma Integra (Roma); Lazio Form Social Cooperative (Roma); CIAC ONLUS – Centre for Immigration Asylum e Cooperation Internazionale di Parma e Provincia Onlus (Parma); Rinascita Società Cooperativa Sociale (Copertino); ICS – Office for Refugees Onlus (Trieste)

Overview and Objectives:

The project aims to promote socio-economic integration and the full realization of vulnerable international protection holders, with particular attention to women, through the implementation of entrepreneurial training courses and accompanying the start-up of social cooperatives. While it was financed by the Italian Ministry of the Interior and the European Commission within the framework of the European Fund for Refugees, it brought together 6 Italian cities with different associations, all coordinated by the Social Cooperative Camelot – Officine Cooperative (Ferrara).

Expected Results:

The beneficiaries of the project were mostly refugee fleeing torture and violence or vulnerable international protection holders coming - for the large part - from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East.

After they were selected, they were supported in writing a CV to write the curriculum by assessing first their competencies. Then, they participated in entrepreneurial training courses that each city organized. Mostly, they focused on 3 main macro-areas: 1) Basic elements of market placement and marketing within a specific socio-economic context and; 2) Social enterprises: principles and constitution; 3) Social enterprise management (administration and employment contract). Finally, 12 out of all stakeholders' business ideas were chosen to become de facto start-ups. They received continuous seminars and targeted workshops, as well as evaluation and psychological support, including babysitting service and job orientation.

Final remarks:

The 11 social enterprises created by immigrants and refugees born in the project Re-StartUp are:

C.i.s. – Cooperativa Immigrant Service a Roma ; T.A.R. – Società cooperativa a Ferrara ; Happiness - Società cooperativa a Ferrara ; DJ – Laboratorio Sartoriale a Gorizia ; Curry Mix – Saperi del mondo a Trieste ; Debo Sartoria a Brescia ; Gekake – Società cooperativa a Brescia ; Cooperativa 'Lo sciame' a Parma ; World in progress – Cooperativa sociale di servizi a Parma ; Rugiada – Società cooperativa a Copertino (LE) ; AfricAsia – Società cooperativa a Copertino (LE)

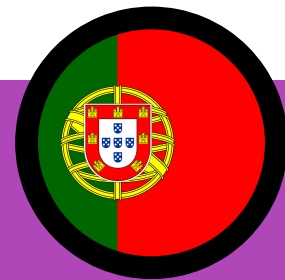
At the end of the project, from the questionnaires merged that the perception of their living conditions has significantly improved from the start of the project's activities.

[56] Information on MENTOR 2 available at: [MPF Projects - Mediterranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular migration \(MENTOR\) II - Migration Partnership Facility](#).



Portugal

NO Border [57]



Project (Lisboa) **Coordinator:** Crescer

Project Partners: Associação Renovar a Mouraria, Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, CAVITOP, União de Refugiados em Portugal – UREP.

Overview and Objectives:

No Border aims to create a space where asylum seekers and refugees in the city of Lisbon can find a set of services/support directed to the needs that we have identified as most pressing - medical, psychological and social support, translation, language training, legal support, information/awareness of local communities. Additionally, this project is complementary to others being implemented by the same organization such as É UMA VIDA (focusing on helping refugees finding a house, managing money, getting into the Portuguese labour market, and promoting a good relationship with the community and an active life), and yalalearn (focusing on learning the portuguese language and employability).

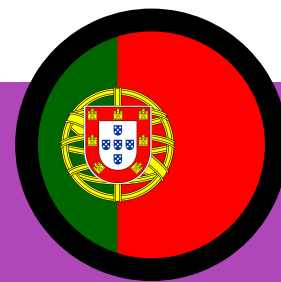
Results:

Overall, the project has a good impact on the refugee population of Lisbon by helping them get individualised help towards their integration and promoting a good relationship with the local community.

Final Remarks:

The project addresses various issues related to the inclusion of refugees in Lisbon, additionally, as Crescer already has other projects with refugees covering other areas (i.e., finding a house) this means refugees can get aid in different areas (i.e., language learning, psychological support, and finding a house) in one single organisation: Crescer.

[57] Information about the project available at: <https://crescer.org/projetos/projeto-no-border/>



Academia CV.pt [58]

Project Coordinator: Fundação da Cidade de Lisboa, Renovar a Mouraria.

Project Partners: Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade; Agrupamento de Escolas Gil Vicente; Agrupamento de Escolas Patrício Prazeres; Câmara Municipal de Lisboa; Junta de Freguesia Penha de França; Junta de Freguesia São Vicente; Associação de Pais Rosa Lobato Faria; LENNTE – Núcleo Laboratorial Teórico, Empírico, Neutro e Elementar; Gabinete de Apoio Psicopedagógico ao Estudante da Faculdade de Psicologia; Gabinete de Apoio Psicopedagógico ao Estudante do Instituto de Educação da Universidade de Lisboa; ADM Estrela – Delegação de Lisboa; Junta de Freguesia de Campolide; Agrupamento de Escolas Marquesa de Alorna; ESEL – Escola Superior de Educação de Lisboa; Agrupamento de Escolas Manuel da Maia.

Overview and Objectives:

Academia CV.pt focuses on the psychosocial, academic and civic development of migrant children, through individual tutoring sessions with volunteers. In other words, it promotes scholar success and active citizenship. The project was born out of a broader one - Academia CV, which has been working with children in vulnerable situations since 2015. During the initial phase, it became clear that there were specific needs regarding migrant children. Thus, the idea of creating a branch of the project that was designed specifically for the migrant population and with a special focus on the learning of Portuguese that could work directly with schools. For this new sub-group, a local development association from Lisbon's historical centre was integrated into the project, Renovar a Mouraria, for their experience working with the migrant population.

The objectives of the project are: 1) Increasing the language skills of migrant youngsters; 2) Increase motivation and academic success of its target group; 2) Increase awareness for interculturality and global citizenship.

Results:

The degree of satisfaction of the educational communities with the project was higher than 90%. The teachers, educators and volunteers working with migrants felt more empowered in the integration of migrant and refugee children. Similarly, students' skills rose, on average, by 30% after a year.

Final Remarks:

This project focuses directly on preventing migrant children dropout, and it has resources available on its website, which are divided into 15 categories, such as self knowledge, focus, motivation for learning, etc. The resources help discover new ways of working with migrant youngsters, through the learning of the language, and are only available in Portuguese.

[58] Information about the project available at: <https://www.academia-cv.pt/>



Spain



ACCEDER Program and School Absenteeism Eradication Program [59]



The gap between the educational situation of the Roma population and the rest of the population contributes to widening the gap of inequality and social exclusion that a good part of this community suffers. The educational level of the Roma population is well below that of the Spanish population as a whole. There is a large educational gap between Roma and non-Roma.

The Spanish Roma population has been incorporated into the educational system for just 30 years. In such a short time, progress has been enormous, and it has gone from exclusion to schooling, previously going through separate schooling through bridge schools. Today we can say that Roma girls and boys are enrolled in primary school, a fact that was unthinkable a few decades ago.

But the great educational gap is starkly shown both in the possibilities of young Roma to access secondary school and in the possibilities of completing compulsory studies. The gap begins to be drawn in Primary, but it opens even before the end of Compulsory Secondary Education -with 64% of Roma students between 16 and 24 years of age not completing compulsory studies compared to 13% of all students.

From 15 to 16 years old there is a big drop in schooling. At age 15, 86.3% of Roma students are in school (compared to 97.9% of the population as a whole) and at 16 this figure drops to 55.5% (for the entire student body, this figure is 93.5%). The year in which most dropouts occur is the 2nd year of ESO and the age at which most Roma students drop out is 16 years old. Early School Dropout of Roma youth stands at 63.7% compared to 13.3% for the population as a whole [60]. The school failure of the Roma community is 64% compared to 13% for the population as a whole. 6 out of 10 young Roma do not successfully complete their compulsory studies.

The high school dropout rate is therefore one of the great challenges that the entire educational community faces in relation to the Roma community: it is necessary that the Roma families themselves, schools, students, as well as other educational and social agents, contribute jointly to this cause. The promotion of Roma students towards higher levels of study is one of the basic aspects of their work. The presence of young Roma men and women in post-compulsory studies, although still scarce, is becoming more notable every day. (For more information, see "Life stories of 50 Roma students").

Adult Roma people have also been feeling the increasingly obvious need to cover one of their main disadvantages: the lack of academic training. Some concern is observed both in young Roma who dropped out of school prematurely, and in adults who did not have the opportunity of adequate schooling.

[59] Information about the project available at: <https://www.gitanos.org/extremadura/caceres/>

[60] For more information see "Roma students in secondary school. A comparative study". FSG, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. Madrid, (2013))

Idea Moret is a peripheral neighborhood of Cáceres. It is in this environment away from the city center where the work is carried out.

Since 2006, the Foundation has carried out its work in the city of Cáceres, betting primarily on the ACCEDER Program, and later also with a program to Eradicate School Absenteeism. The Promociona program was launched in 2011 to offer guidance and educational support. All this without forgetting the activities carried out in programs such as RED-Conecta, Adult Literacy, Health, Healthy Living Habits... which allows them to work with the target population from a holistic and comprehensive perspective. For the development of these programs there is a team made up of 6 people.

Little by little, they are reaping the fruits of the work carried out over the years in the area of education, since absenteeism has decreased considerably, the number of students who decide to continue their studies at the Institute has increased, and the importance of education is penetrating, even among those who once decided to leave training, increasing every year the people who decide to access the EPA.

This program is carried out by the Roma Secretariat Foundation Cáceres, and is co-funded by ESF and the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality





Building Futures, Sharing Good Practices: Migrant Children's Transition to Adulthood [61]

This project is carried out by the CEPAIM, and funded by "la Caixa" foundation. Its main objective is to design, implement and strengthen measures for comprehensive intervention and access to resources for young people and families, accompanying them to successfully face the different phases of their life cycle through the definition of Itineraries of Family intervention, adapted to their needs and in coordination with the public-private agents of the territory.

The structure develops intervention projects with family units in situations of vulnerability and/or social exclusion, with the aim of favoring social inclusion, promoting their development and autonomy, through the development of itineraries that contribute to improving social integration processes.

This line of action includes projects with a common methodological framework:

1. The social and community diagnosis as a starting point for the proposed itinerary with each family unit.
2. The family is at the center of the intervention, from a position of co-responsibility and enhancing its autonomy, as the main actor in its life and its process of change.
3. Community work, in Network, with the public-private fabric of the territory, with the aim of coordinating the intervention and promoting a united community.
4. Support in access, under conditions of equality and non-discrimination, to the resources to which they are entitled, especially when they are in a situation of special vulnerability in terms of child protection, attention to basic needs, including vulnerability in housing matter.
5. Special coordination with training and employment resources, favouring access to quality educational opportunities that favor their autonomy and future labor inclusion.
6. Promotion of family links with the territory, as part of the development of their social and community life.
7. The promotion of innovation, the detection of good practices and the promotion of lines of field research, which allow maintaining and improving the quality of care for children, their families and the community of which they are a part.

This line of action also includes the CaixaProinfancia Program, promoted by the "la Caixa" Foundation, where actions are promoted in the key to the transformation process, to promote the development of children, adolescents and their families. The objective is to break the cycle of hereditary poverty, which affects children and adolescents in a situation of social vulnerability, guaranteeing their access to quality educational opportunities.

[61] Information about the project available at: <https://www.cepaim.org/areas-actuacion/intervencion-con-jovenes-y-familias/building-futures-sharing-good-practices-migrant-childrens-transition-to-adulthood/>

The work model has a holistic and territorially based approach, which places families and minors at the center of the intervention, from a position of co-responsibility, through community work with the CaixaProinfancia entities, public agents and the community itself. Starting from an individualized diagnosis of each family, the CaixaProinfancia Program allows the intervention to be complemented with:

- Promotion of Education: Educational reinforcement, Leisure and free time, Family educational support and Psychotherapeutic support.
- Health Promotion: Infant nutrition, Infant hygiene and Glasses and hearing aids.



Recommendations

Recommendations

Given the high rates of school dropout among young migrants in the early stages of the educational itinerary, there is a tendency to think that the success of students with migrant origin is focused on passing the secondary education stage, and for this reason many of the educational centers are mainly focused on achieving this goal, thus overshadowing the underlying problem of the lack of continuity in the training of these young people once they have finished compulsory education in schools. The continuity of migrant students within the formative itineraries after compulsory education must be considered of total relevance by all stakeholders within this framework, thus encouraging young migrants to continue learning.

Many of these young migrant students, during their stage in secondary education, are more likely to end up in groups with a low educational level, mainly aimed at obtaining the diploma for access to professional training, which, on the other hand, has great potential and high rates of labor insertion, although it is true that most vocational training centers have an insufficient and/or unbalanced training offer with respect to compulsory education, depending of course on which territories, for what is usually the previous stage, the end of their formal education, especially when they live in rural or low populated areas

Although this problem exists with the vocational training offer, it is also necessary to emphasize the transcendental role played by the families of these young migrant students, their expectations and their closest circle, in making the decision about their continuity in education programmes. For this reason, it becomes even more necessary, if possible, the holistic approach to education (whole school approach), in which not only students, teachers, middle managers, but family members and close environment of young students take part, so that all of them can come to understand the importance of this educational path beyond the regulated one.

Recommendations to prevent Early School Leaving with the help of migrant associations:

1. Creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. It is important for the migrant associations to create a safe and welcoming environment for young people, so that they feel comfortable and supported in their school experience;
2. Offering educational support. Young migrants often need additional support to achieve academic success. It is important for the association to offer educational support, such as tutoring and remedial courses, to help young people overcome any difficulties;
3. Promoting social integration. Socialisation is crucial for young migrants, especially if they come from a different culture. The association should act as a bridge between young people and the local community, positively impacting social integration;
4. Valuing different languages and cultures. It is essential that young migrants are valued for their cultural and linguistic diversity, rather than being stigmatised. The associations should promote diversity as a value, organising cultural and mother tongue events;
5. Creating opportunities for the future. Immigrants often struggle to access good job opportunities and higher education. The associations should establish job orientation programs, working with young people to help them achieve their future goals.

Recommendations for teachers in order to contribute to the smooth social integration of immigrant students, to the reduction of student leakage and to the improvement of their educational performance:

1. Training in immigrant education;
2. Training in classroom management with immigrant students;
3. Supporting diversity in the classroom;
4. Supporting equal opportunities in the classroom;
5. Regular communication with students & parents;
6. Support of immigrant students with the support of psychologists and social workers;
7. Remedial courses for immigrant students when needed to fill learning gaps;
8. Exhortation for the participation of immigrants in various activities of the school unit;
9. Creation of prototype activities in the school community, where cooperation will be promoted as well as the highlighting of students & skills and abilities;
10. Organisation of activities both in the school unit and outside with the participation of the parents of all students in order to strengthen social relations;
11. Adopt practical methodologies in classrooms, to experience intercultural situations (non formal activities);
12. Promote Open Days (visits) in public spaces associated with different culture realities, such as, churches, Musquins and places of living.

Recommendations for Youth Workers:

1. There should be more direct communication between schools, social services, and youth centers; including, for example, periodic promotional events to strengthen the relationship and make it consistent about current topics and needs;
2. Youth workers should consider in international mobility projects, the impact that Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) projects can have on young people dropping out of school and/or young migrants, foreseeing a relevant quota of young people facing these kinds of situations while planning our projects. As a consequence, we should also foresee activities focusing on intercultural learning and dialogue, to create a safe and inclusive environment, when implementing our projects;
3. There should be a specific focus on the mental well-being of young people (specifically related to Young People with Migrant Background (YPMB) students with difficult backgrounds), providing them with structured support able to help them in the widest case of emergencies possible. In this way, eventually, the school dropout of the aforementioned young students will diminish following concrete support to their mental health;
4. A stronger cooperation among NGOs and local services working with YPMB should be foreseen. To this extent, a census of youth centers, associations, libraries, social services etc. in the area should be developed;
5. Organisations should receive specific training on intercultural learning and methodologies, especially to train them in the full inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, in particular young migrants;
6. Career guidance, psychological help and orientation in the local community should be provided to families coming from abroad or with a background of migration;
7. Mapping the exact needs of YPMB should be implemented in each local community.

Recommendations for Research Centers:

1. Effective teaching methods for dealing with multicultural and multilingual classrooms should be an essential concern for research centers wishing to promote the integration of schoolchildren coming from migrant backgrounds; developing practical tools on this topic, e.g. handbooks and toolkits, would also be particularly helpful;
2. One of the main barriers to the reduction of ESP of students with a migrant background is the fact that actors working closely with them, such as educators in formal education, often lack knowledge of intercultural and inclusive teaching strategies. In order to tackle this issue, research centers experienced in dealing with migrant education should organize training sessions targeted at schoolteachers, youth workers and other types of actors in order to provide them with useful competences and disseminate their vast knowledge of the topic;
3. On the basis of their high degree of knowledge of these issues, research centers specialised in migrant education and integration should provide schools and other organisations working with students with a migrant background with reliable indicators for both the individuation of signals pointing at a risk of ESP and the assessment of the educational practices carried out in order to prevent it;
4. It would be useful to create a continuous mapping system for strategies effective in dealing with ESP of YPMG by regularly overviewing projects aimed at tackling this issue or at proposing alternatives for those individuals who have already left education, with a special focus on those who have adopted cross-sector and whole-school approaches in doing so;
5. Collecting data on and regularly monitoring the phenomenon of ESP of students with migrant background on a local level should be made a priority; in order to attain this objective, cooperation with schools and other organisations working directly with YPMG should be enhanced.

Conclusion

Conclusion

The aim of the YOUCAN Best Practice publication is to provide an overview of the phenomenon of early school leaving of students with a migrant background, as well as a collection of the most effective practices recently implemented in Europe, both nationally and internationally, in order to effectively tackle this issue and increase the degree of social inclusion of these students. Therefore, the content of this document is aimed at a diverse group of actors, ranging from teachers and other professionals in both formal and non-formal education and youth workers to training centers, migrant associations and research centers, as well as other socio-economic actors committed to ensure the social inclusion of foreign-born students in Europe.

The issue of school drop-out in recent years has received considerable attention both from experts and the European Union itself, which has made it a core aspect of its education policies; this is since not living a proficient experience at school can have dramatic consequences on the future degree of socio-economic integration of these individuals. As highlighted by recent studies [62], [GS1] among all groups of students those having a migrant background seem to be exposed to a significantly higher risk of leaving school early due to the many obstacles they have to face after entering in the European educational system, some of the most relevant ones being a low degree of proficiency in the language of instruction, insufficient academic and emotional support and a general lack of competence in dealing with foreign-born students shown by teachers. The members of the YOUCAN consortium, deeming this problem as an especially concerning one, have therefore decided to combine their synergies and expertise in dealing with education and social inclusion of the migrant population in order to help advance the fight against it.

The YOUCAN Best Practices publication emerged from this specific concern; this document provides the diverse target group of the YOUCAN project with an extensive overview of the most relevant projects carried out in Europe with the aim of providing students with a migrant background with a fruitful school experience and ensuring their integration within local communities. A close analysis of these projects, implemented both at a national and international level, would be especially useful to actors interested in tackling this issue, as it reveals some of the most effective strategies for removing the obstacles faced by this disadvantaged group of students. The national best practices include a quite diversified group of projects; some of them (such as those carried out in Belgium and Greece) focused on responding to the specific needs of immigrant-origin students, by providing them with intensive educational and linguistic support to promote their full integration in the school system of the host country.

In addition, some of them were aimed at avoiding socio-economic exclusion of at-risk members of the immigrant population by providing them with practical support and training opportunities. As for the transnational best practices included, in order to provide professionals in formal and non-formal education with the skills required for dealing with multicultural classrooms, a number of them focused on organizing training activities on intercultural education, and many of them also produced extremely useful outputs with a high degree of transferability, such as MOOCs, training curricula, educational portals and diagnostic tools for assessing both the potential risk of school drop-out in students and the effectiveness of the practices enacted. In addition to that, all of projects carried out at an international level had one thing in common: they all highlighted the relevance of carrying out whole-school, holistic and cross-sectoral approaches in tackling the issue of early school leaving.

[62] Nouwen, Ward, Noel Clycq, and Daniela Ulicna, Reducing the risk that youth with a migrant background in Europe will leave school early, Migration Policy Institute Europe and SIRIUS Policy Network on the education of children and youngsters with a migrant background, Bruxelles, 2015, p. 3 and European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030: reflection paper, Publications Office, 2019, p. 77. The paper is available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/676251>

In the light of this information, it appears evident that the YOUCAN project was pertinent and well-inserted within the current direction taken by projects dealing with education and social inclusion of foreign-born students. The consortium consisted of a diverse group of actors coming from five different countries and professional fields, including institutions in formal and non-formal education as well as a youth association, a research center and a chamber of commerce. This allowed the adoption of a truly cross-sectoral and transnational approach, with all partner organizations equally contributing to the implementation of the project by sharing their diversified professional competences with one another. Moreover, the diverse nature of this partnership made it significantly to address the needs of the target group of the YOUCAN project, which is equally as diversified.

In addition, the two intellectual outputs produced by the partner organizations are also particularly relevant to the issue of ESL of immigrant-origin students; in addition to the Best Practices publication, the consortium also produced a YOUCAN Toolkit which provides concrete recommendations concerning the preparation, management, monitoring and follow-up of international and EU projects to actors wishing to implement them, especially in the domains of education, training and youth.

Finally, in the light of the analysis carried out on the most successful transnational and national projects aimed at tackling this issue and of their high degree of experience in dealing with ESL and migrant integration directly, the members of YOUCAN consortium agreed that it would be useful to also include a list of recommendations to actors interested in taking part in the fight against school drop-out of foreign-born students within the Best Practices publication. These recommendations, divided according to five different types of actors, aim at providing the target group of the YOUCAN project with practical suggestions on how to participate in the fight against school drop-out of students with a migrant background, while also highlighting the specific need for a close cooperation between teachers and education professionals, families and other types of actors working with migrant youth.

In conclusion, it can be argued that several improvements have taken place in recent years within the fight against early school leaving of students with migrant background; a number of very effective practices have been implemented both nationally and internationally, and the rates of school drop-out throughout the continent have been steadily decreasing [63]. However, it is evident that in order to keep reducing the scope of this truly problematic phenomenon, much still can and needs to be done. In order to help its target group to further advance the fight against migrant youth drop-out, the YOUCAN project produced both an overview of practices which have proved to be particularly useful in the past, that is the YOUCAN Best Practices, and a set of guidelines for implementing similar projects in the future in the form of the YOUCAN Toolkit.

[63] European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030: reflection paper, Publications Office, 2019, p. 77. The paper is available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/676251>. In 2002 ESL percentage in Europe was 17%, whereas in 2017 it dropped to 10,6%.

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