immerse

INTEGRATION MAPPING OF REFUGEE
AND MIGRANT CHILDREN

Working paper #3

REPORT ON PSYCHO-SOCIAL AND WELLBEING OF REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CHILDREN

IMMERSE is a Horizon2020 funded project aimed at mapping the integration of refugee and migrant children in Europe. IMMERSE main goal is to define a new generation of indicators on the integration and socio-educational inclusion of refugee and migrant children in Europe incorporateing all relevant stakeholders (children and their families, researchers, NGOs, policymakers, educators or learning institutions) in the co-creation and validation of a dashboard of indicators in order to reflect their particular needs and expectations.

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Executive summary

Migration is a source of significant challenges and opportunities in Europe, as increasing flows of people seek new homes across the continent. International migrants made up approximately 11% of the total European population in 2019, or 82.3 million people, 2.8 million of whom are refugees and over 7 million of whom are below the age of 19 (Migration Data Portal, 2019). Recent years have also seen migrants from a much more diverse range of origin countries making their way to Europe, including to countries that had not previously been common migrant destinations. This movement places the successful integration of migrants and refugees into their host countries at the centre of migration policy in Europe.

This report details work carried out by IMMERSE on the identification of indicators of migrant children's socio-educational integration. By adopting a systems-based approach, influenced by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, IMMERSE aimed at identifying indicators at the micro, meso and macro levels.

The inclusion of the voices of refugee and migrant children is essential to understand their lived experiences and to help plan appropriate social and educational integration systems. Therefore, in addition to including children and young people as research participants, there was also active involvement of migrant children and youth in the research design and monitoring of IMMERSE's work through the formation of a Children and Young People's Research Advisory Group.

Schools are chief among the social institutions impacted by migrant flows as key sites of integration and support for migrant children. This report details research on the socio-educational integration of refugee and migrant children carried out as part of the Horizon2020 research project Integration Mapping of Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (IMMERSE). Research teams in Ireland and Greece conducted qualitative research focusing on the theme of psycho-social wellbeing and its relationship to integration through the lens of migrant and refugee children's experiences of education and school in their host countries. For details on IMMERSE research focusing on multilingualism/interculturalism and gender, please see the complementary reports compiled by the Spanish and Italian research teams (D1.2 *Report on Intercultural Competences and Multilingualism*) and the German and Belgian research teams (D1.4 *Report on Gender Issues*).

Both Ireland and Greece are countries that historically have been characterised by emigration rather than immigration. Over the past 30 to 40 years, however, migration patterns in both countries have seen dramatic shifts, though significantly different economic, social, and especially geographic contexts have resulted in contrasting current pictures. Approximately 17% of Ireland's population is foreign-born, but these are largely economic migrants, the majority of whom come from the UK and Eastern Europe. Refugees make up only a small proportion of migrants in Ireland, approximately 6,000, less than 1% of the total migrant population (Migration Data Portal, 2019). Greece, on the other hand, has been on the front lines of Europe's migration influx, particularly during the crisis of 2015/16. Massive mixed flows of largely international protection applicants and migrants from the Middle East and the conflict zones of Asia and Africa to the Greek Islands through Turkey exceeded the reception capacity of the country, which was still struggling with the consequences of the economic crisis of 2008. While many of these have moved onto western and northern Europe, Greece still has over 61,000 refugees, about 5% of its total migrant population (Migration Data Portal, 2019). Though both countries have struggled with incorporating refugee and migrant children into their education systems, Greece has had to contend with much more extreme conditions.

The findings of this report are based on qualitative data collection that took place between May and September of 2019. Participants were key stakeholders in the socio-educational integration of migrant and refugee children at three levels:

- Micro level – workshops with refugee and migrant children, aged 6-18 years, and workshops with parents of refugee and migrant children
- Meso level – workshops with educators and representatives working within the field of migrant services
- Macro level – individual interviews with policy-makers and experts in the fields of education and/or integration

In total, there were over 160 child and adult participants between the two countries representing a diverse range of ages, geographic, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and personal circumstances, including unaccompanied minors.

Findings from these workshops and interviews pointed to critical factors affecting socio-educational integration, and we identified seven particularly salient themes connected to psycho-social wellbeing, five of which were common to both countries.

1. Confidence and self-esteem
2. Friendships
3. Relationships with teachers
4. Language
5. Bullying and racism
6. School climate, policy, and curriculum (Ireland)
7. Access to education and academic achievement (Greece)
8. Housing policy (Ireland)
9. School resources (Greece)

The findings on integration from each country were not only highly aligned with each other, but also with the existing research literature. In particular, the importance of feelings of belonging were echoed by all the children's groups when they talked about their friendships and the pain of social isolation. Research has indicated that a sense of belonging in school is protective for students and supports the psychosocial and academic wellbeing of students. Others stressed the vital role of teachers and school climate in helping migrant and refugee children to integrate and succeed academically, a prominent theme from the children's and parents' workshops. Language and support for language learning, a central concern in integration research, was unsurprisingly a significant topic here, as well. Parents and children reported that incidents of bullying and racism had multiple negative impacts, as has been documented in numerous studies. Indeed, discussion from all three levels of participants reinforces Hart's (2009) caution that schools can be supportive, stabilising, integrating environments for migrant children, but they can also be sites of isolation, silencing, and discrimination.

1 Country Context: Ireland and Greece

1.1 Ireland

1.1.1 Migration in Ireland

Ireland has, historically, been a migrant-sending rather than a migrant-receiving country, with small flows of immigration outweighed by much larger flows of emigration. Economic growth in the first half of the 1990s, however, triggered significant change in migration patterns. In the latter half of the decade and particularly following the enlargement of the EU in 2004, immigration numbers began to surpass emigration numbers, peaking in 2006/7. Economic change then produced a sharp reversal, with the recession of 2008 prompting a dramatic fall in the number of immigrants and a rise in the number of emigrants. Immigration began to climb slowly again in 2010, and 2019 figures were around the same level as 2005 (though still well below the peak of 2006/7). While emigration began to decline again in 2012 and was once again outstripped by immigration in 2014/15, numbers of emigrants were still significantly higher in 2019 than they were before the recession and comparable to levels seen in the late 1980s (McGinnity, Fahey, Quinn, Arnold, Maitre, & O'Connell, 2018, p. 10).

As shown in Figure 1, while the number of people immigrating to Ireland has not returned to peak 2007 levels, it has nevertheless more than doubled between 2010 (41,800) and 2019 (88,600).[1]

Figure 2 breaks down migrants to Ireland over the past decade by the following regions of origin: **Irish nationals returning to Ireland**, **United Kingdom**, **EU West,**[2] **EU East,**[3] and **non-EU nationalities.**[4] The non-EU group saw the largest increase since 2010 and constituted almost a third of all migrants to Ireland in 2019.

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[1] Numbers from 2000-2016 are confirmed figures based on the Irish census and Labour Force Survey. Figures for 2017-2019 are preliminary.

[2] Original 15 countries of the EU, excluding Ireland and the UK – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Portugal.

[3] Countries that joined the EU in/after 2004 – Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Croatia.

[4] Including non-EU European countries, Asia, Africa, North and South America, and Oceania.

Figure 1. Estimated Immigration (in thousands), 2000-2019 – All Nationalities
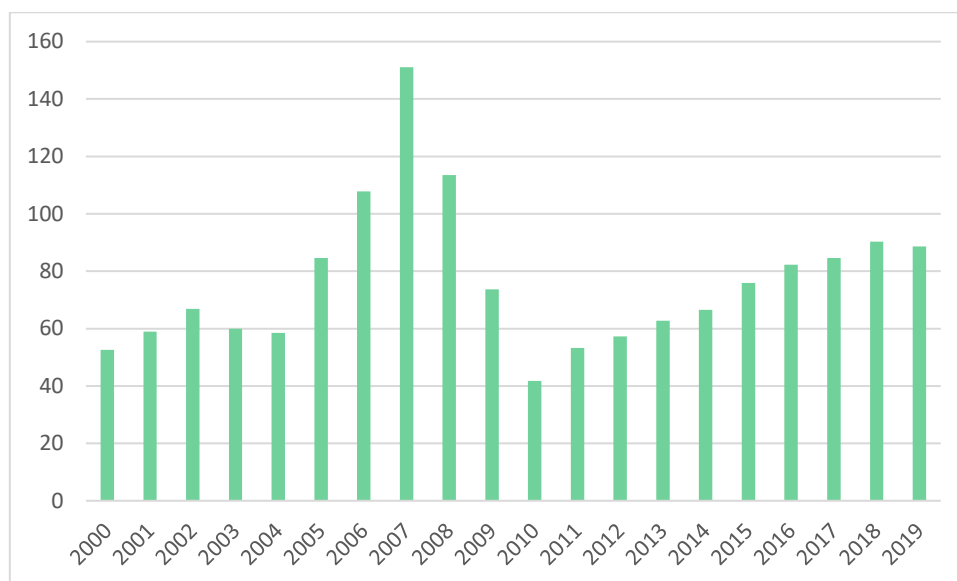
Source: Central Statistics Office, Annual Population Estimates, Table PEA17 (2019a). Figures here represent ALL categories of migrants to Ireland, including returning Irish nationals, who are permanently resident in the country or who intend to reside in the country for a period of 12 months or more.

Figure 2. Estimated Immigration (in thousands), 2010-2019 – By Region of Origin
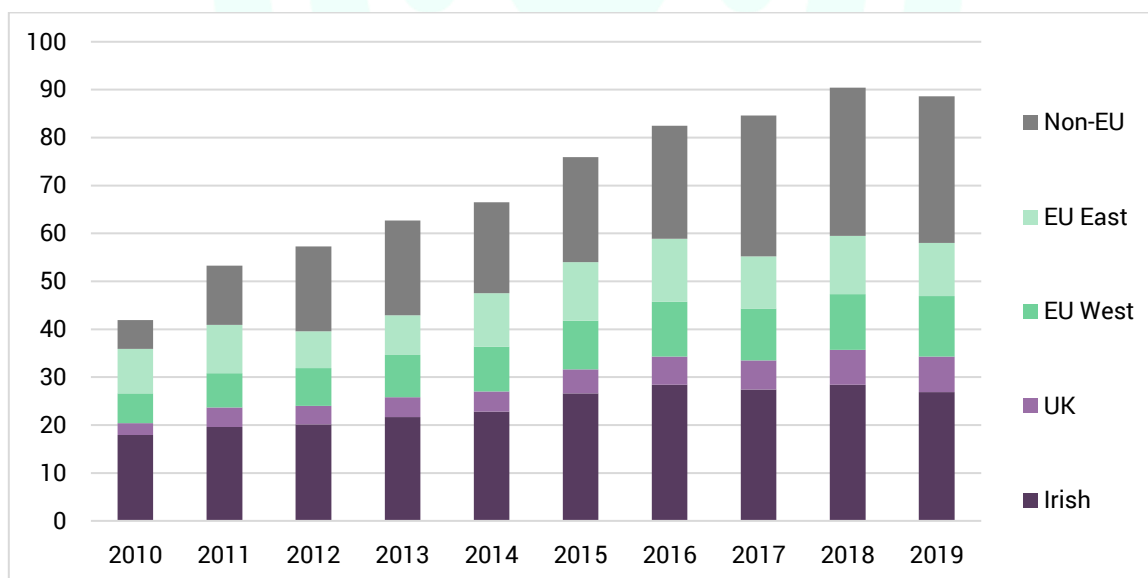
Source: Central Statistics Office, Annual Population Estimates, Table PEA17 (2019a).

According to the 2016 census, 17.3% of Ireland's population were foreign born, and 11.4% were born somewhere other than Ireland or the UK. Of those born outside Ireland, the largest group (34%) came from the UK. The second largest group (29%) came from EU East countries, chiefly

Poland, Romania, and Lithuania. The third largest group (12%) came from Asia, with South and Southeast Asian countries such as India, the Philippines, and Pakistan having the largest representation. 17.2% of the total population in Ireland in 2016 reported an ethnic or cultural background other than 'White Irish' or 'White Irish Traveller', and 15.2% reported a nationality[5] other than 'Irish' (Central Statistics Office (CSO), 2017a, 2017b).

Figure 3. Foreign born population in Ireland by region of origin – 2016 Census
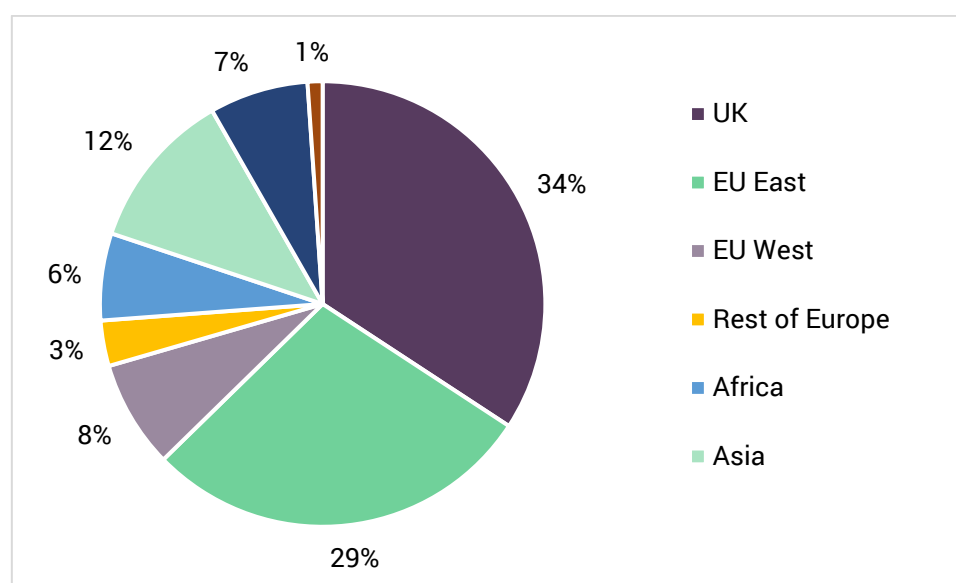
Source: Central Statistics Office, Census of Population, Table E7055 (2017c).

The 2016 census indicated that the migrant population in Ireland is internally heterogenous in terms of poverty, education, and unemployment rates, with some groups performing at levels similar to or better than Irish nationals, but some groups showing persistent disadvantages. For example, the percentage of Irish national adults who had third level education was 37%, which was almost matched by those from EU East countries (35%) and exceeded by all other groups – UK, EU West, Africa, North America & Oceania, and Asia. However, despite these educational advantages, those from North America & Oceania, Asia, and particularly Africa suffered higher unemployment rates than Irish nationals (ESRI, 2019, p. 71). Indeed, "Black non-Irish jobseekers are five times as likely to experience discrimination seeking work as White Irish jobseekers" (ESRI, 2019, p. 76).

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[5]In the context of the census, 'nationality' refers to citizenship status.

In addition, an examination of those who report non-Irish nationality shows that there was a marked difference between UK migrants and migrants from other areas of the world in terms of age and time resident in Ireland; UK migrants tended to be older (45+ years) and arrived in Ireland more than ten years ago, while migrants from other countries tended to be younger and more recently arrived (McGinnity et al., 2018). This indicated that UK migrants were a much older and more established population in Ireland compared to other migrant groups. There are signs that the Polish migrant community (and other EU East groups) is becoming more established in Ireland, as well. They had the second largest concentration of migrants who have been in Ireland for more than 10 years, and in 2017, of the over 8,000 people who gained Irish citizenship, the most common former nationality was Polish (ESRI, 2019, p. 71).

ASYLUM-SEEKERS AND REFUGEES IN IRELAND

Ireland has received a much smaller number of asylum applications than many other EU countries, and asylum-seekers made up less than 1% of the country's migrant population in 2018. Asylum applications were almost non-existent until the mid-1980s and remained relatively infrequent until an explosion in the late 1990s and early 2000s, peaking at almost 12,000 in 2002. During that brief surge, the most common countries of origin for applicants were Nigeria (over a third), Eastern European countries, and Zimbabwe (Arnold, Ryan, & Quinn, 2018). This was followed by a rapid decline over the next decade to less than 1,000 applications per year in 2012 and 2013 (ORAC 2012, 2013).

The refugee crisis that shook the EU in 2015/16 caused applications in Ireland to rise again, though the effect was nothing like what other countries, such as Germany, Italy, Greece, and France, saw as a result, due in part to Ireland's geographic isolation on the periphery of the continent. The greater impact of the refugee crisis for Ireland was an overhaul of Irish policy and law regarding international protection, resulting in the introduction of the International Protection Act 2015, which brought, "Irish procedure into line with European practice" (Arnold et al., 2018, p. 20). One of the aims of the Act was to centralise the application process making it more efficient and thereby reducing waiting times for a decision. Applications have continued to increase,

however,[6] and one of the chief criticisms of the Irish asylum system is the amount of time applicants spend in process, with average wait times for first interviews at 19 months (UNHCR, 2018). Other major concerns include a myriad of problems with state provided accommodation centres, known as Direct Provision (DP),[7] the number of people in emergency accommodation due to capacity issues in DP, restrictions on the right of asylum seekers to access the labour market, and lack of access to tertiary education (Irish Refugee Council, 2019a).

Unaccompanied minors (UAMs), also known as separated children, who are under the age of 18 and are not in the custody of an adult on arrival in Ireland, are referred to the Irish Child and Family Agency (TUSLA), who decides whether to make an application for international protection on behalf of the child. If an application is made, TUSLA also continues to support the child through their application process (International Protection Office, n.d.). Numbers of UAMs in Ireland are low but have been increasing over the past five years. Of the 175 referrals TUSLA received in 2017 (up from 97 in 2014), 111 were taken into care and 70 were reunited with family (Groarke & Arnold, 2018). According to data published by TUSLA, in August 2019, they had 61 children under the Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum (TUSLA, 2019). Other data on UAMs is either inconsistent or simply unavailable, including any who do not submit an application for international protection or are otherwise unknown to authorities and TUSLA; "[L]ittle information is available on the extent to which unaccompanied travelling on their own or with an adult, including victims of trafficking, are identified on entry to the state" (Groarke & Arnold, 2018, p. 29), making it difficult to assess the scope and needs of this vulnerable population.

1.1.2   Migrant Integration Policy in Ireland

Policy development on integration of international migrants in Ireland is relatively recent, reflecting an imperative that only began to be felt in the mid-to-late 1990s after economic changes made the country more attractive as a migration destination. Policy initiatives have

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[6] At the end of 2018, the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) reported that there were approximately 5,700 cases for international protection awaiting a decision from the International Protection Office (3.673 of which had been received that year), and about 6,200 people living in DP. The top countries of origin for asylum seekers in 2018 were Albania, Georgia, Syria, Zimbabwe, and Nigeria (INIS, 2019).

[7] DP has been heavily criticised for overcrowding, substandard conditions, isolated locations and other problems documented in the McMahon Report (2015). A number of organisations in Ireland have called for its abolition.

been guided by national and international obligations and embedded within a more general equality agenda. At a national level, the key equality legislative framework includes the Employment Equality Act 1998, which for the first time included nine grounds where discrimination was prohibited: gender, family status, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, Membership of the Traveller community, race, ethnicity, and age. The Equal Status Act 2000 followed shortly after this, again naming the same grounds on which discrimination is prohibited in the provision of goods and services. These Acts have been updated periodically in the intervening years, though maintaining their original protected categories.

The first significant policy paper to specifically address integration of international migrants was a report by the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees in Ireland entitled *Integration: A Two Way Process*, published in 1999 by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The report defined integration as, "the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all of the major components of society, without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity" (1999, p. 9). The working group identified key issues brought about by the recent upsurge of in-migration: lack of organisational structure and co-ordination of the different departments involved in developing and delivering integration policy and services; challenging public perception of migrants as a dependent population and acknowledging their positive contributions to society, which were largely unappreciated; and low levels of encounters between host community and migrants, as well as verbal and, to a lesser extent, physical racism. Its recommendations spanned identifying a co-ordinating structure to address issues arising, raising public awareness, mainstreaming services, and conducting research to increase depth of knowledge and expertise.

The most recent integration policy initiative is the *Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future* (2017). Developed through the work of a cross-departmental Working Group on Integration set up by the Minister for Justice, it retained the definition of integration set out in *Integration: A Two Way Process*. After a review of activities undertaken across government departments on promoting integration over the past 20 years and consultation with key stakeholders, the working group proposed over 70 actions in the *Migration Integration Strategy* in 12 areas to be implemented between 2017 and 2020: general, access to citizenship/long term residency, access to public services and social inclusion, education, employment and pathways to work, health,

integration in the community, political participation, promoting intercultural awareness and combating racism and xenophobia, volunteering, sport, and implementation and follow-up. The report perceives the work of integration to be a multi-stakeholder endeavour involving the participation and co-operation of multiple government departments. A progress report published in June of 2019 indicated that 9 of the actions had been completed, 45 were on track, and 22 were facing minor or major problems. Areas that required more attention moving forward were in the realms of combatting racism and xenophobia, greater coordination between the integration work of Local Authorities and the National Strategy, and improving outcomes in adult education and employment (Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration, 2019).

1.1.3 Ireland's Education System

FORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR

Education in Ireland is compulsory for children aged 6-16 years, and attendance is essentially universal; Between 99 and 100% of children aged 6-16 were in full-time formal education in 2015 (CSO, 2017d). In fact, most children are enrolled in full-time formal school by age 5 and remain in school until they have completed the post primary cycle (more commonly known as secondary school), usually age 18. At the primary and secondary levels, education is state-funded and therefore free. Private fee-paying schools do exist, but they enrol less than 1% of all primary pupils (CSO, 2019b) and about 7% of all secondary pupils (DES, 2019a).[8]

Schools in Ireland can be differentiated by several factors – language,[9] gender,[10] DEIS status,[11] and "ethos", meaning religious denomination. Although the majority of schools are state-funded, "they are established by patron bodies [non-governmental, usually churches] who define the ethos of the school and appoint the board of management to run the school on a day to day

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[8] All school figures reported in this section were derived from the primary and post primary school lists for the 2018/19 academic year.

[9] Ireland has two official languages, Irish and English. Currently, for the majority of schools at both the primary and secondary level, the main language of instruction is English (91% and 90%, respectively), but classes in the Irish language are compulsory, a decision made following independence from the United Kingdom in an attempt to revive Irish culture (Ó Murchú 2016). In approximately 10% of schools across the country, Irish as the language of instruction is offered in at least some, if not all, classes.

[10] Ireland has a tradition of sex-segregated schools, though this is more common at the secondary level. Only 8.6% of primary schools are single sex (either all-male or all-female), while 32% of secondary schools are single sex (DES, 2019b, 2019a).

[11] In 2005, the Department of Education and Skills established a school classification system designed to help address educational disadvantage, known as Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)[11]. This is a national programme aimed at prioritising the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Schools who have concentrations of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are designated as DEIS and receive extra supports. For the 2018/19 academic year, 23% of primary schools and 27% of secondary schools were included in the programme (DES, 2019a, 2019b). See https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/DEIS-Delivering-Equality-of-Opportunity-in-Schools-/

basis" (DES, n.d.a). Primary schools are overwhelmingly owned and managed by local Catholic parishes (almost 90%; DES, 2019b), and secondary schools are largely under either Catholic patronage (42%) or joint Catholic and Protestant patronage (49%, known as inter-denominational; DES, 2019a). There has been a move in recent years toward multi-denominational schools under the patronage of non-religious organisations, like NGOs, but these remain very much in the minority as yet.[12] By far the most prominent is Educate Together, an independent NGO that runs 109 schools across the country, who describe themselves as providing, "inclusive, learner-centred education," and, "a long overdue choice of equality-based primary and second-level schools" (Educate Together, n.d.).

According to Irish law, asylum-seeking and refugee children have the same right to access education as children who are Irish citizens, irrespective of their application status.[13] Concerns about access have been raised with respect to children living in emergency accommodation due to an overextended DP system (Hennigan, 2019) and children who arrive late in the school year (Ni Raghallaigh, Smith, & Scholtz, 2019), but these groups appear to be quite small. A lack of available data makes it difficult to be certain, but it appears that the majority of asylum-seeking children in Ireland are able to access primary and secondary education. Far greater attention has been given to their integration and performance once in school, and the results section of this report will discuss many of the barriers migrant and refugee children face in Irish schools.

Unaccompanied minors (UAMs), also known as separated children, can access a specialised educational support programme provided by the City of Dublin Education and Training Board before entering mainstream education. The programme, "aims to support Separated Children Seeking Asylum, Aged-Out-Minors and young refugees to develop their individual, social and cultural capacity to negotiate and navigate their new environment and life in Ireland and to integrate into and contribute to Irish society" (CDETB, n.d.). It includes intensive language

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[12] Multi-denominational schools do not generally provide religious 'faith formation' education, though they may provide education about different religions and beliefs (DES, n.d.).

[13] This right is derived from a combination of provisions from key legal acts in Ireland: the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 that makes education compulsory for all children aged 6-16 years; the Equal Status Acts that prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origins; and the Refugee Act 1996 that grants refugees the right to access education, "in like manner and to the like extent in all respects as an Irish citizen" (Section 3, subsection (2)(a)(i)). Though this provision covers those who have been granted refugee status, there is no distinction in practice between refugee children and children still in the application process in Ireland, in accordance with Article 14 of Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament, known as the Reception Conditions Directive (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0033&from=EN).

support, outreach, integration programmes, and study help. It is the only such programme in the country at the time of writing, and as such, UAMs in other areas of the country are put directly into mainstream schools.

While accessing primary and secondary education is relatively simple for asylum-seekers in Ireland, access to tertiary education, is fraught with difficulty (Joint Committee on Education and Skills, 2019). Asylum-seekers technically have access to universities, colleges, and other non-vocational courses, but they are required to cover the cost of the fees, which usually makes university and further education prohibitively expensive. Some Irish universities, colleges, and other educational institutions have started an initiative called Universities and Colleges of Sanctuary that seeks to provide financial and other supports to asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants to study at third level (https://ireland.cityofsanctuary.org/universities-and-colleges-of-sanctuary), but this is a voluntary coalition and not a nationally mandated programme.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR

Formal schooling dominates the education landscape in Ireland for children of compulsory school age. The non-formal education sector therefore focuses on early childhood education[14] (also known as preschool or pre-primary and covers children ages 2-5), early school leavers (young people who leave secondary education without completing qualifications), and community education geared toward adults, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or with little formal education, provided through Education and Training Boards (ETBs).[15] Early school leavers can take advantage of some schemes, funded by government but provided outside formal schooling, such as Youthreach and the School Completion Programme, in order to gain education qualifications to help them enter employment or third level education. However, research suggests that, "[p]athways to pursue [educational] qualifications after early departure from second-level education are limited in the Irish context," (Byrne & Smyth, 2010, 177). Our own

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[14] Early childhood education is provided, "by a diverse range of private, community and voluntary interests," though some are in receipt of government investment primarily from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) (DES, n.d.b). The DCYA has also set up and provided funding for a framework called the Early Childhood and Education Programme (ECCE) that these services can take part in, which they then offer free for up to two years per child. There are also two government-run early childhood programmes, one of which focuses on disadvantaged urban areas and the other is run only in the Dublin inner city.

[15] ETBs are part of the national education structure but operate on a local level.

research in the context of this project reinforced this, with staff from migrant reception centres noting a gap in services for those between 16 and 20 years of age.

Language learning and support for those of compulsory school age is provided within the formal education sector, though there are multiple challenges faced by schools in this area, as will be discussed in the findings section of this report. Language learning outside of the formal education sector comes in two main forms: English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programmes that are usually commercial tuition-charging courses in private language schools aimed mostly at international students, sometimes known as "educational tourism"; and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), which are publicly funded courses provided through ETB-managed adult and community education centres aimed at (mainly adult) migrants. These courses began as language support for asylum seekers but expanded to include all migrants who need English language tuition (SOLAS, 2018, 1).

The role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the provision of education in Ireland is relatively minimal. As discussed in the previous section, they can be involved in the formal education sector through the patronage/management of state-funded schools. NGOs also sometimes partner with schools to provide support and complementary activities in specialised areas such as international development or environmental education, but again this is organised through the formal education sector. NGOs have some involvement in supporting language learning for migrants, some independently and some in concert with the ETBs.

INTEGRATION POLICY IN EDUCATION

The Education Act 1998 contained language about respect for the diversity of values in Irish society and a spirit of partnership, and *Integration: A Two-way Process* made clear that migrant children, including those in the asylum process or who were granted refugee status, had the same right to primary and post primary education as Irish nationals. However, it was not until 2010 that an integration plan specific to education was developed, prompted by Ireland's National Action Plan Against Racism (2005). The Department of Education and Skills and the Office of the Minister for Integration partnered to form the *Intercultural Education Strategy 2010- 2015* (2010), whose key aim was to ensure that, "all students experience an education that *'respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a*

spirit of partnership' (Education Act, 1998)" and that, "all education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm" (DES, 2010, p. 2, emphasis original). The five "high level goals" identified in the Strategy were to:

1. Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment.
2. Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment.
3. Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction.
4. Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents, and communities
5. Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision-making is evidence based (DES, 2010, p. 56).

Each goal was accompanied by actions and expected outcomes, and the DES was to lead a monitoring group and communicate regularly with the Office for the Minister for Integration's interdepartmental committee in order to ensure implementation and update on progress. However, most of the actions and outcomes did not identify specific and measurable targets and the monitoring structure did not mention the production of any publicly available progress reports. It is therefore difficult to discern how much of the Strategy was realised. The conclusion stated that the Strategy would need to be reviewed at the end of its lifespan in 2015, but to date, it has neither been updated nor replaced by another dedicated intercultural or integration-focused education policy.

The *Migration Integration Strategy,* though it does not focus exclusively on education, could be seen as a successor in that it identified education as one of its 12 action areas, and many of the education actions outlined were consistent with the direction of the *Intercultural Education Strategy.* The education actions focused on school admissions policies, attracting migrants into teaching positions, training and CPD for teachers in diversity and addressing racism, language supports, data collection and monitoring for migrant students, and encouraging migrant parent participation in school life. According to the progress report in 2019, 8 of the 12 education

actions were on track, 2 faced minor delays[16] and 2 had been completed. Of particular note was the passing of The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, which aimed to ensure greater consistency and fairness in school admissions policies by eliminating waiting lists (which disadvantage newcomer families) and removing a provision that allowed denominational schools to use religion as a selection criterion.

1.2   Greece

1.2.1   Migration in Greece

Until the latter half of the 20th century, Greece, like Ireland, had been a migrant-sending rather than a migrant-receiving country. At the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, however, Greece started hosting increasing numbers of migrants, mainly from Albania, the Balkans, and the ex-U.S.S.R, along with a small number of migrants from Asia (Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia), North Africa and Egypt. During the last decade, migration flows have continued to increase significantly, especially from Asia (Pakistan, Bangladesh) and Africa, despite the shattering effect the 2008 international economic crisis had on the Greek economy. International protection applicants from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq are, in fact, still arriving in Greece.

The two-year period from 2015 to 2016 marked another radical change when massive influxes of mixed flows of mainly international protection applicants and migrants from the Middle East, the conflict zones of Asia, and Africa to the Greek islands through Turkey exceeded the reception capacity of the country, which was still regrouping from the consequences of the economic crisis. The overwhelming majority of applicants for international protection moved to Western and Northern Europe, but a significant number (approximately 62,000) remained in Greece following the closure of borders by neighbouring Balkan and Central European countries. The shortcomings of providing reception conditions to international protection applicants, the timely examination of their applications, and the lack of integration perspectives for persons granted international protection status remain contentious to this day. Of particular concern are unaccompanied minors (UAMs). As of October 2019, there were 4,962 unaccompanied and separated children in Greece but only 1,035 places in shelters and apartments for supported

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[16] The actions facing minor delays involved teacher training/CPD and monitoring the impact of school enrolment policies (Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration, 2019, p. 39-40). The report did not specify what the nature of the delay was.

independent living. As a result, many children spend lengthy periods in protective custody or in the reception centres on the islands and Eyros waiting for a place in a shelter appropriate for their age. Others stay in informal housing or risk becoming homeless (EKKA, 2019).

1.2.2   Migrant Integration Policy in Greece

The Ministry of the Interior set up Greece's first National Strategy for the Integration of third country nationals in 2013.[17] The Strategy included specific measures and actions to be implemented in the areas of service provision, introductory courses, employment, health, housing, political participation, anti-discrimination and intercultural dialogue (Marouda, Koutsouraki, Saranti, & Rossidi, 2014). The greatest emphasis was put on training and skills development for both third country nationals and public employees dealing with migrant issues (Maroudai, Saranti, Koutsouraki & Papaioannou, 2015). A Scientific Committee for the support of refugee children established by order of the Minister of Education drafted a policy paper providing for educational actions for refugee children in 2016 (Scientific Committee, 2016). Its tasks were to record the educational activities undertaken in Accommodation Centres, to identify activities that had already been tested in the field and decide on which could be applied during the summer period. These would start initially as pilot programs in certain camps and then gradually expand to all camps. The committee was also to undertake the organization and supervision of these activities and to formulate recommendations for the education of refugee children and their integration into the educational system structures during the school year 2016-2017.

One of the central obstacles to the integration of refugee children and especially UAMs is the lack of shelter spaces and their isolation on the islands. UAMs are transferred to the mainland only when appropriate shelter has been identified for them, leaving many stranded on the islands in insecure living conditions and without access to schools (UNICEF, 2019a).

In January 2019, the left-wing SYRIZA government set a new National Strategy for Integration, introducing measures for integration into the labour market, the educational system, local communities, etc., enhancing the role of local authorities in this process, and taking into consideration the needs of asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection. The integration of children of migrants, international protection applicants, and beneficiaries of

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[17] Available here: https://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/f0ff9297-f516-40ff-a70e-eca84e2ec9b9/ethnikisratig_30042013.pdf

international protection in the education system, non-formal education and lifelong learning for adults were key priorities of the Integration Strategy. However, following an election and change in government in the summer of 2019, the now-ruling New Democracy party (the right-wing liberal party in Greece) has avoided referring to the Strategy adopted by the previous government, as integration policies are not high on its agenda.

1.2.3 Greece's Education System

FORMAL SECTOR

According to Greek legislation, both asylum-seeking children (Article 13 Law 4540/2018) and child beneficiaries of international protection (Article 28(1) Presidential Decree 141/2013) have access to the education system under similar conditions as Greek nationals. Their registration must be facilitated in the case of incomplete documentation from the countries of origin, and registration must not take longer than 3 months from the identification of the child. In order to facilitate their transition to Greek schools, a Ministerial Decision of 2016 established a programme of afternoon preparatory classes (DYEP) for all school-age children aged 4 to 15[18] to be implemented in public schools that neighbour camps or places of residence for asylum-seekers. Children aged 6-15 years living in dispersed urban settings could therefore (theoretically) go to schools near their place of residence together with Greek children.

In January 2019 the estimated number of refugee and migrant children in Greece was 27,000, among them 3,464 unaccompanied children. However, it is estimated that only 11,700 asylum-seeking and recognized refugee children of school age (4-17 years old) are enrolled in formal education, pointing to the remarkable gap between *de jure* access to education and *de facto* access to education. The rate of school attendance is higher for those children living in apartments and for unaccompanied children in reception conditions (66%; UNICEF, 2019b). Access to education is especially problematic for children present on the Eastern Aegean islands, where they are obliged to remain for prolonged periods under a mandatory geographical restriction together with their parents or until an accommodation place is found for unaccompanied children (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2018). Despite the establishment of a number of afternoon preparatory classes on the islands in 2018 and early

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[18] Ministerial Decision 152360/ΓΔ4/2016, GG 3049/B/23-09-2016, available in Greek at: https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/kat-ekpaideuse/koine-upourgike-apophase-152360-gd4-2016.html

2019, access to formal education is still not guaranteed for many children forced to remain there (UNCHR, 2019). Migrants, asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection (and natives) are able, if they choose, to enrol in "Second Chance" schools, which were originally established to assist native Greek students who left school early. There is evidence that migrants and asylum-seeking children are taking advantage of these schools, of which there are 58 across the mainland and the islands, as one of the only routes into formal education available to them in Greece.

The only educational institutions suitable for the profile of non-native children are Multicultural schools. These schools approach learning Greek as a foreign language to non-native students, which is very helpful for older children as the curriculum is more adjusted to their needs. Such schools also have a high proportion of students from foreign backgrounds, employ teachers of diverse backgrounds and languages, and take a multicultural approach to education. There are approximately 26 of these public schools (elementary and secondary) across the country, which is a very limited number for the current number of non-native students in Greece.

NON-FORMAL SECTOR

Since 2015 international and Greek NGOs have contributed to the education of refugees. Their involvement ranges from improvised short-lived initiatives to systematic and organized long-term actions. As of the spring of 2016, when the Ministry of Education officially assumed the responsibility for the formal education of refugees, all NGOs involved in the field of creative engagement and education were invited to be certified by submitting proposals of specific programs to a single registry. At the same, the NGOs were informed about the terms of being active in the field of formal and informal education. Finding a way to evaluate the approved educational programs developed by the NGOs and other bodies for refugee children and improving the link between formal and informal education are still pending (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children, 2017).

Greek language classes (taught as a foreign language) are provided by universities, civil society organisations and centres for vocational training (non-formal education). Some of the children attending these classes may sit for the exams (with fees) for receiving the state language certificate issued by the Ministry of Education. At the moment, however, there are no official state

or public organizations that provide free or paid Greek language classes, taught as a foreign language for 15+ year olds or adults. Some informal provision of such classes exists through civil society organisations, but not in all regions of Greece, and they usually do not prepare migrants for a language certificate. A pilot programme of Greek language courses for youth and adults funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) announced in January 2018 began being implemented in 2019 (Ministry of Migration Policy, 2018).

Law 3852/2010 established Migrant Integration Councils, which are consultative bodies spread across all municipalities. Their members are elected municipal counsellors, as well as representatives of migrant communities and organisations. These Councils are responsible for identifying, investigating and helping local authorities acquire knowledge on problems encountered by the immigrant population legally residing in their municipality with regard to their integration and their contact with public or municipal authorities. The Councils are to propose actions such as counselling services and public events to effectively implement national integration policies, promote smooth social integration, and overall social cohesion. They also assist migrants in accessing local services and involve them in local structures and policy-making processes.

2 Literature Review

This section of the report outlines key literature on wellbeing and integration of migrant and refugee children. The concept of wellbeing is generally understood to be a multi-dimensional construct which has been subject to various forms of measurement and definition including objective and subjective measurements (The Children's Society, 2019; Smyth, 2015). Objective measures include physical health outcomes and socio-economic measures and are often used for national international comparative analysis of wellbeing trends in child outcomes, such as in the work of UNICEF. Subjective measures are often divided into two areas; hedonic wellbeing (subjective wellbeing such as life satisfaction measures) and eudemonic wellbeing (psychological wellbeing such as social acceptance measures) (The Children's Society, 2019).

The concept of migrant integration is contested and unclear. Ager & Strang (2008) noted that despite integration being identified as a, "chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood

differently by most," integration remained a stated policy goal and a targeted outcome for projects working with refugees. While its contested nature remains, a number of factors have been found to act protectively during child and youth refugee resettlement (Lustig, Kia-Keating, Knight, Geltman, Ellis, & Kinzie, 2004): parents' wellbeing and their ability to cope, paternal employment, social support from peers, own ethnic community and broad host community, and longer stay in country of resettlement (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010).

2.1   Overview of Key Topics of Wellbeing and Migrant Children

This synthesis draws on Correa-Velez et al.'s (2010) ecological systems model for predictors of subjective health and wellbeing. This model was developed through their research among settled refugees in Australia and is based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory[19] (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) which underpins much of the literature and research on refugee and migrant children's integration into their host communities. For example, Hart (2009) argued that the kinds of support and intervention that refugee children may benefit from are likely to require more than simply focusing on the individual and their post-traumatic stress symptoms (related to past events). Indeed, they necessitate a broader focus on school and family ecology and systems. Correa-Velez et al.'s model is outlined below in Figure 4 and is made up of demographic indicators pre- and post-migration, as well as indicators of wellbeing outcomes post-settlement. The predictors of wellbeing after three years of settlement covered individual, familial/community, school/friends, and broader community levels which, in turn, mapped onto to Bronfenbrenner's micro and meso systems of influence.

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[19] A discussion that explains this model in detail and its application to migrant children's wellbeing forms part of the wider literature review on children's wellbeing.

Figure 4. Correa-Velez et al.'s ecological model for the predictors of subjective health and wellbeing among resettled youth

Fig. 1. Ecological model for the predictors of subjective health and wellbeing among resettled refugee youth.
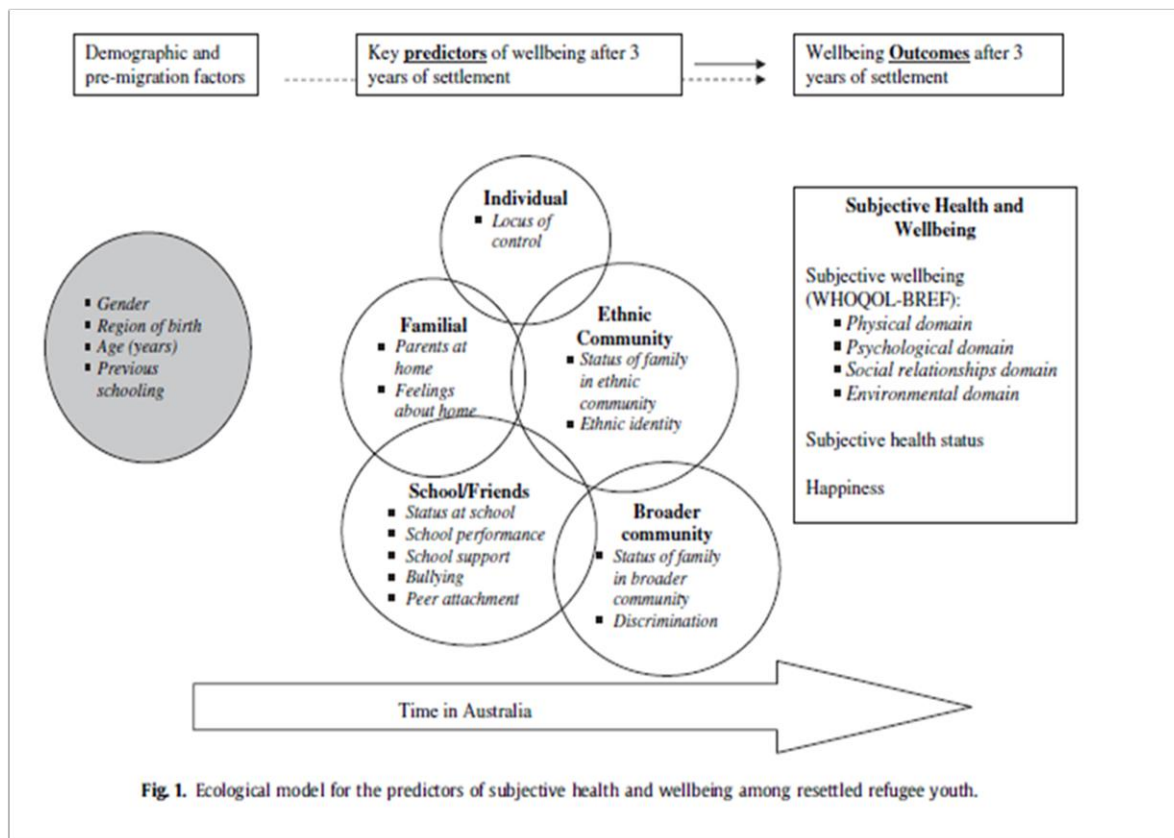
2.2 The Relationship Between Wellbeing and Socio-educational Integration

Motti-Stefanidi et al. (2008) contend that school is one of the most important cultural contexts for immigrant adolescents because it exposes them to the values and norms of the host culture and provides a rich array of acculturative experiences. Mohamed & Thomas (2017) identified the positive role schools play in the lives of refugee children and young people. Participants in their study regarded schools as the most stable social institution in what were often insecure and unstable lives, providing safe and supportive environments. Educational achievement could act as a protective factor for refugee and migrant children, particularly for those who came from backgrounds where education was highly prized (Kinzie, Sack, Angell, Manson, & Rath, 1986; Kohli & Maher, 2003). Ager & Strang found that for refugee children, schools were, "experienced

as the most important place of contact with members of local host communities, playing an important role in establishing relationships supportive of integration" (2008, p. 172). They also identified barriers towards integration in schools including insufficient support for host society language, social isolation and bullying, and a lack of information about the education system.

Hart (2009) noted that schools were critical in child migrant's integration, because they offered the first place of security, consistency, and emotional containment for refugee children. He warned, however, that schools were also potentially threatening and stressful places for refugee children, and any assumed sanctuary may, in fact, be illusory. Darmody, Byrne, & McGinnity (2012) discussed the impact of cumulative disadvantage, such as existing structural inequality and social and cultural barriers, on educational outcomes for migrant students. They cited research which found that migrant students have longer and more difficult adjustment periods in new schools than other students (see also Smyth, McCoy, & Darmody, 2004). Darmody et al. argued that research needs to move beyond the focus on academic achievement and recognise the multifaceted experiences of migrant youth to include other aspects of education such as the, "social experience of schooling including interaction with teachers and peers; school attachment and school engagement as well as experiences of school organisation and process and exposure to curricular and pedagogical practices" (2012, p. 6). In the Irish context, O'Riordan, Horgan, Martin, & Blaney (2013) found that teacher's low levels of knowledge of the living conditions of asylum-seeking children and their families acted as a barrier to and negatively impacted on children's participation in school activities. The next section will explore literature on socio-educational indicators connected to the micro, meso and macro systems.

2.2.1 Supporting wellbeing and socio-educational integration of refugee and migrant children at the micro system

Individual level factors which have been shown to support the wellbeing outcomes and socio-educational integration of migrant and refugee children include: individual resilience and coping styles; educational success in school; living with supportive family members; feelings of belonging to one's ethnic community; and being able to develop positive relationships with the broader host community. Individual indicators related to health and wellbeing for children include those related to health status such as the absence of illness/disease (Hickey, 2016; Rees et al

2010), birthweight and morality rate (O'Hare et al., 2013), rates of abuse and maltreatment, and sexual health and behaviours (Hanafin & Brooks, 2005). Social capital was a key factor for young refugees' establishment in the new country, and therefore resettlement for refugee youth was underpinned by opportunities to participate and to belong to their family, their ethnic community, and to the broader host community (Correa-Velez et al., 2010).

Resilience and coping styles have been identified as protectors from stress during the phases of the refugee experience (Lustig et al., 2004; Mohamed & Thomas, 2017). Bermen (2001) identified the disposition of the child as a key protector from stress during the refugee experience, including their self-esteem and response to new situations. These included internal qualities, such as an engaging temperament, good communication skills, strong problem-solving skills, the ability to recognise and seek out supportive caregivers, special skills valued by others, and belief that their actions will lead to positive outcomes. Similar individual characteristics were also identified by Carlson, Cacciator, & Klimek (2012) as protectors from stress. Correa-Velez et al. (2010), analysing findings from a cohort of 97 refugee youth (aged 11-19) during their first three years in Melbourne, Australia, reported that youth with a better sense of control were significantly more likely to report higher levels of wellbeing in the physical and psychological domains and better subjective health status. In a qualitative Canadian study, Yohani & Larsen (2009) focused on refugee and immigrant children's views of hope and what gave them hope during their early years of adjustment. They found that children experienced hope as an enduring dynamic trait linked to other contexts and activities that were important to them and to their relationships with other people and, interestingly, their relationship with nature. In a similar vein, Carlson et al. (2012) identified levels of resilience related to internal protective factors in coping with a new culture. These included high levels of intelligence, easy temperament, good coping and problem-solving abilities, having faith, and being female.

McCarthy & Marks (2010) used the Children's Society's wellbeing framework as a basis to develop child-friendly participatory action research methods to explore wellbeing with a group 19 of asylum-seeking and refugee children. They used a slightly modified version of a wellbeing journal similar to that developed by Gifford, Bakopanos, Kaplan, & Correa-Velez (2007) in the 5-year longitudinal Good Start study with newly arrived young people in Australia. This journal was mainly qualitative but included some quantitative measures, such as a self-reported quantitative

health scale using Cantril's Ladder.[20] Overall, participants in the study reported positive self-report health ratings, though there were some reports of ongoing physical and psychological health difficulties. A small number of participants reported more significant psychological trauma which the authors contended was symptomatic of post-traumatic stress disorder. Participants in the study were positive about the role of education in their wellbeing, and the study identified a link between education and a sense of purpose and hope; "[P]articipants expressed a strong sense of responsibility to achieve, do well, given that they have generally been sent here to have a better life" (McCarthy & Marks, 2010, p. 592). Gresenz, Derose, Ruder, & Escarce (2004) examined the relationship between stress and children's coping strategies across White and Hispanic children in the United States. They found that the most common stress indicator that children expressed was "feeling sick" and suggested that this is an important indicator to be considered in listening to the embedded messages that children communicate to school staff. They argued that it was, "important information for school nurses, teachers, and parents because owning to their limited life experiences, children may experience physical illness as a significant psychological, social, and physical stressor" (p. 418). They also found that children use humour, and, "distracting activities such as listening to music or reading and having positive social relationships with adults and other children," as coping strategies to alleviate stress (p. 481).

Recent analysis of data from Growing Up in Ireland (GUI), a longitudinal cohort study, on wellbeing and school experiences among 9- and 13-Year-olds indicated that the wellbeing scores of children from immigrant backgrounds was lower than those of Irish children across a wide range of measures (Smyth, 2015, p. 66). However, in relation to educational achievement and potential, they found that immigrant children were slightly more positive at age 9 about their perceived academic ability than non-immigrant peers, again drawing our attention to the important role education can have for this cohort of children.

A child's age is also considered important, and existing literature alerts us to its intersection with positive and negative factors. Motti-Stefanidi et al. (2008) noted that age and developmental stage could have a more negative bearing, as immigrant adolescents could be expected to contend with a range of stressors associated with their unique situation, while at the same time

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[20] A measurement of life satisfaction also known as Cantril's Self-Anchoring of Life Satisfaction or the Cantril Ladder of Life developed in 1965.

they confront the normative challenges of this developmental period, including identity formation, peer pressure, transition to secondary schooling, and adjusting to pubertal changes.

2.2.2 Supporting wellbeing and socio-educational integration of refugee and migrant children at the meso system

FAMILIAL FACTORS

At meso level familial factors have been identified as significant to integration of child migrants. The extent to which a child's family manage to adapt to its new surroundings and circumstances has been shown to impact on the child's wellbeing and the extent to which a child can successfully adapt to a new school. Key familial factors which have been found to act protectively during resettlement of refugee youth include parents' wellbeing and their ability to cope and paternal employment (Lustig et al., 2004). Furthermore, living with parents at home was significantly associated with greater wellbeing in the social relationships domain, with those youths who reported positive feelings about home being significantly happier (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). In this regard then, the extent to which a child had contact with the familiar social environment (or even a subset of that environment, such as family, extended family, friends and neighbours) could be expected to positively impact on the child's ability to thrive within the new environment and particularly in school. Ziaian, de Atiss, Antoniou, Baghurst, & Sawyer (2013) found further impactful family dynamics, including parents' concerns "that their children would be treated differently in school should teachers become aware of their refugee histories" (p.141). Yohani & Larsen (2009) argued for increased recognition of the influence of the pre-migration experiences as an important factor in newcomer adjustment. Importantly, their argument drew our attention to the importance of recognising and addressing pre- and post-migratory experiences.

In consideration of the recognition of pre-migratory experiences, Timshel, Montgomery, & Dalgaard (2017) examined familial environments and the links between parents' PTSD, family conflict, violence, and children's wellbeing. Their findings, "indicate[d] that the individual's experiences of trauma before and during flight [was] a significant predictor for the development of family related violence" (p. 320), posing risks to children's wellbeing and highlighting the

importance of looking to familial belonging and support, alongside individual supports and indicators of belonging.

Dyson (2015) in her study of 202 children aged 8-13 years, composed of Chinese immigrants and Caucasian non-immigrants in Canada, pointed to differences in the acculturation process between children and their parents as a key socio-ecological factor influencing the adjustment of migrant children. Regarding refugee children's experiences at school, for example, Correa-Velez et al. (2010) noted that youth may be encouraged by their families to stay loyal to their ethnic values while they are also asked to master the host culture in school and social activities. For example, Skidmore (2016) examined how music educators might help refugee children and their families adapt to life in Canada and found that refugee parents were accustomed to a more structured by rote style of teaching. Often, they did not understand the relevance of the play-based approach that teachers were taking, and this difference represented a barrier to their children's adjustment. In a study using a brief family theory intervention with a small group of refugee families Bosnia-Herzegovina, Björn, Bodén, Sydsjö, & Gustafsson (2013) found that after the short intervention there was a positive impact on the children's psychological wellbeing, and the authors concluded that it may be beneficial to offer all refugee families family therapy to support their integration to host societies.

SCHOOL LEVEL INDICATORS

Mohamed & Thomas (2017) argued that studies have identified the positive role schools have in supporting the wellbeing outcomes of refugee children and young people. Schools have been regarded as the most stable social institution in what are often insecure and unstable lives and were seen by participants in this study as providing a safe and supportive environment.

Impact of resilience and trauma on educational outcomes

Emotional and psychological wellbeing is a basic condition for meaningful engagement in learning (Timm, 2016). Yet, for many migrant and refugee children this can be problematic. Deveci (2012) explored a holistic relationship-based approach to promoting the wellbeing of separated refugee children in the UK. The study, based on children's testimonies and case examples gathered over 10 years, highlighted the importance of school in providing stability and

hope for the future and in building resilience. For separated children and young people, school or college offered a structured environment in which they could begin the process of rebuilding their lives. Time spent in a classroom setting, focusing on education in the company of peers, helped to return a sense of normality to daily life. Numerous studies have shown that going to school was crucially important in helping refugee children cope with loss, displacement and the effects of persecution and armed conflict (Rutter & Jones, 1998, cited in Deveci, 2012).

Hart (2009) drew on research on trauma in children, highlighting the negative impact on children's educational functioning in terms of attainment, attendance, maintaining effective relationships, and their overall experience of school. In particular, such research suggested that memory and concentration are negatively affected by traumatic experiences. He concluded that these were important considerations given the kinds of traumatic incidents to which refugee children may have been exposed. Skidmore (2016) in this regard, highlighted challenges for refugee children arising from disruption to their education through war and erratic provision of education in refugee camps.

Education and attainment have a significant role in building resilience. Mohamed & Thomas (2017) discussed the concept of "educational resilience" which referred to, "achievement in schools, despite difficult circumstances" (p.252). Daniel, Wassell, & Gilligan (1999) suggested six areas within which resilience-building interventions can be framed: the promotion of a secure base, educational success, friendships that have a positive impact, nurturing talents and interests, promoting positive values, being and becoming socially competent (Daniel et al.,1999, cited in Deveci, 2012). Fazel, Wheeler, & Danesh (2005) noted that effective schools and teachers have the potential to promote resilience in refugee children by becoming the focal point for educational, social and emotional development.

Peer relationships in school

Positive peer relationships have been associated with greater self-esteem and social adjustment among refugee children (Lustig et al., 2004). Getting along with peers, a key task of the school years, also predicted positive future adjustment (Masten, Obradović, & Burt, 2006). However, Motti-Stefanidi et al.'s (2008) findings were consistent with the phenomenon of 'friendship homophily', whereby students tended to choose friends who were like themselves. Adolescents

who had friends and were accepted by classmates showed better social and emotional adjustment than their rejected peers, currently and over the long-term (Parker, Rubin, Erath, Wojslawowicz, & Buskirk, 2006). Furthermore, adolescents who related well to normative peers at school also perceived school more favourably and performed better in the classroom (e.g., Ryan, 2001).

In Mohamed & Thomas (2017), children identified creating strong friendship bonds, fulfilling aspirations of achieving success, and contributing to a better future among the advantages of going to school. Hek's (2005) review considered the experiences and needs of RCYP in two UK schools and found that they identified the positive attitude of teachers, friends, and peer support as important in their adjustment to the new country. A stronger peer attachment was significantly associated with greater levels of wellbeing in psychological, social relationship, and environment domains. Being bullied was negatively associated with happiness (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). This was particularly the case for adolescents, as findings suggested the importance of, "ethnic peer support in creating an alternative sense of belonging for adolescents who did not feel that they fit into the school" (p. 36). Mohamed & Thomas (2017) found that the social support gained from friendships prevented social isolation and loneliness and gave children a sense of belonging, especially in school.

Bullying, racism and social isolation

Negative experiences, for example, bullying, racism, social isolation and exclusion due to ethnic differences (children indicated racial abuse was a common feature in relations in school) impacted on the performance levels of migrant students (Mohamed & Thomas, 2017). Similarly, Manyena & Brady (2006) in their large-scale UK study, found racism and bullying was identified by refugee parents as one of the main issues negatively affecting the performance of their children at school. An important aspect of integration was discrimination, and the study found that, in EU countries, native-born children of immigrants reported higher levels of discrimination than young immigrants (OECD/EU, 2018).

School Performance

Perceived school performance anda supportive school environment play a key role in determining wellbeing outcomes among refugee youth (Bond, Giddens, & Cosentino, 2007). Young people with greater perceived school performance scored significantly higher in the physical domain, psychological domain, and in their subjective health status, while bullying at school had a negative impact on wellbeing among youth (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). School belonging, mental health and wellbeing, and peer relationships were all negatively affected by experiences of discrimination (Priest et al., 2014, cited in Due, Riggs, & Augoustinos, 2016). The research literature has suggested that educational outcomes were more positive when migrants stayed connected to their native culture while at the same time acclimatizing to the host country's culture. Advocating cultural pluralism and multicultural education, Timm (2016) cited research demonstrating that newcomers acculturate best by maintaining their unique cultural identities, values and practices, provided they were not in conflict with the laws and values of the host society (Bernstein, 2015, cited in Timm, 2016). Timm (2016) argued for acculturation/cultural pluralism in his examination of the integration of Syrian refugees into Germany's educational system, advocating a strengths-based approach focused on contributions made by refugee schoolchildren rather than the burden they create. This inclusive multicultural approach created a diverse educational setting that allowed schools to educate students about soft skills such as a sense of responsibility, empathy, tolerance, and the ability to overcome and profit from differences.

Teacher expectations

Motti-Stefanidi et al. (2008) cited teacher expectations and the related general school social climate as partially explaining differences in the level of educational achievement of native Greek students from the two samples studied. A number of studies have shown that teachers often seem to have lower academic expectations of minority students and of students from lower social class family backgrounds (see Eccles, 2004). Similar issues have been identified in Ireland related to teachers' academic expectations of Traveller students (O'Riordan, Twomey, & O'hAodain, 2010). Martin, Horgan, O'Riordan, & Christie (2016), in their study on educational transitions of asylum-seeking children in Ireland, found that teachers and principals had low

levels of knowledge of the conditions under which the children lived and of the consequent barriers the children then faced at school.

Streaming and tracking of migrant children

Fazel (2018) identified accurate educational assessment and grade placement as important for migrant integration in schools. Darmody et al. (2012, p. 15) in their survey with Irish schools, found that schools use a combination of criteria to allocate migrant students to class groups on arrival. These approaches included interviews with the students and their parents, student age, individual assessments and previous school reports. They found that migrant students were often placed in classes with peers who were younger than them and that the teachers in the study perceived the students as resenting this practice: "Importantly, tracking/streaming practices have far reaching implications as segregation within class groups is likely to lead to different levels of educational attainment and subsequent pathways" (Darmody et al., 2012, p. 7).

The study also found that proficiency in English appeared to be the dominating factor in influencing the decisions on which class a child should be placed, more influential than the age or previous academic attainment of the student. A number of studies have shown that the level of school achievement among immigrant adolescents varies according to the ethnic group studied, a group's sociocultural history, and family economic status (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). The "lower school achievement of some immigrant students appears to be related to socioeconomic disadvantage (McLoyd, 1998) although Portes (1999) has also shown that in some immigrant groups immigrant status independently accounts for additional variance in school achievement difficulties" (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2008, p. 237).

Community factors

Community support and integration have been identified as important factors. Mohamed & Thomas (2017) in their research at five schools in three London Boroughs with 21 children (aged 9–19 years), refugee parents, and school staff, found that some migrant parents and children felt socially excluded and did not belong to any group either in school or in their localities. This isolation was usually attributed to not having others from their ethnic background in the school or local area and consequently affected their levels of happiness.

Participating in extra-curricular activity was viewed as a means of creating social connections to peers and to the wider community for migrant youth. Interestingly, there has been evidence from US research that participation in extra-curricular activity, "varies by immigrant generation, with first-generation immigrant children reporting the lowest level of participation and third-plus-generation ones reporting the highest (Jiang & Peterson, 2012; Okamoto, Herda, & Hartzog, 2013; Peguero, 2011)," (Jiang & Peguero, 2017, p. 315). These patterns of participation may have been affected by family social-economic-status (SES), family size and composition and parent-child connectedness and again, draw attention to generational factors in the migratory process.

Utilising data from the US National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, Jiang & Peguero (2017) found that family characteristics mediated the children of immigrants' participation in school extra-curricular activities. Their study found differences between ethnic groups, for example that first-and second-generation Asian children had similar levels of extra-curricular participation as third-plus-generation. Whites and Hispanics of all generations had substantially lower levels of participation in extra-curricular activities compared to third-plus-generation Whites.

2.2.3 Supporting wellbeing and socio-educational integration of refugee and migrant children at the macro system

Critical educational supports for positive wellbeing outcomes at macro level are the availability of early prevention and intervention programs, additional support for at-risk students (Mitchell, 2017), and initiatives to identify high risk children (Fazel, 2018). Accessibility to basic health services was identified an indicator of child wellbeing by Hanafin & Brooks (2005). Ager & Strang (2008) discussed the importance of good health and access to health services as a factor for active engagement in a new society for refugees. Language difficulties, gender and cultural perceptions of health could be a barrier in accessing health services for refugees in host societies. Therefore, the support services available in the host country, and the degree to which they are coordinated to help children and families, could either facilitate or present barriers to the process of adaptation and integration (Anderson, Hamilton, Moore, Loewen, & Frater-Mathieson, 2004, cited in Hart, 2009). International evidence has suggested there is a link between access to schools and school segregation and housing segregation experienced by migrants (Darmody et

al., 2012, p. 7). Ager & Strang (2008) identified a number of housing related indicators affecting physical and emotional wellbeing, which included physical size of the house, quality and facilities of housing, financial security of tenancies, and, where appropriate, ownership. Overcrowded housing and housing problems are identified as negatively impacting on children's wellbeing (Bradshaw & Richardson, 2009) and access to personal and private rooms are identified as positively impacting child wellbeing (Semerci & Erdogan, 2014). Ager & Strang (2008) discussed some of the key indicators of successful integration as defined in previous literature and contended that for adult refugees and their families vocational training and further education were key aspects of integration as they fostered employability through both language and work skills. Fazel (2018) also identified opportunity to work and be a part of the economic system as indicators of integration.

2.3 Conclusion

Overall research has identified several inter-related factors that are key indicators of migrant children's wellbeing in education. Individual factors pertaining to migrant youth include their own disposition and levels of ability as well as the interaction with education and their family circumstances. Having hope and belief in education were important considerations. Their coping strategies and ways of expression were important in interpreting messages they communicate.

Recognising pre-migratory and post-migratory experiences were important in understanding participation and achievement in education. Ensuring school environments made diverse cultures visible ensured institutions were visibly and proactively welcoming. Issues here included competency of staff in understanding country of origin practices and having some language fluency. Support for language acquisition of migrant students was important in facilitating participation and achievement, as were the expectations and assumptions teachers have about migrant students. The degree to which migrant children felt they belong in school intersected with their relations with staff and other students and the overall school environment. Macro level indicators included appreciation of the community in which migrant children were living as well as the resources available to them, their families and communities, and the barriers to integration that their communities face.

While schools were thought to be important spaces where migrant children could experience a level of security, make friends and achieve, research warned that the protective factors of education should not be assumed. Factors such as attention to possible trauma and its impact on school performance, peer relations, relations with teachers, and attention to challenges of acculturation need to be taken into account in identifying facilitators and barriers to children's wellbeing.

3 Methodology

The findings of this report are based on i) micro-level workshops with refugee and migrant children, aged 5 to 18 years, enrolled in formal and non-formal education in Ireland and Greece, ii) workshops with parents with a refugee and migrant profile, and iii) semi-structured interviews with professionals at meso and at macro level.

Twelve micro-level workshops were carried out with children aged from 5 to 18 years and 2 with refugee and migrant parents. At meso-level, four workshops and three semi-structured interviews were held with 48 education and migrant organisation professional participants, while at Macro-level, interviews were conducted with 12 key representatives of the Irish and Greek Education sector, NGO and community participants. Ethical approval was obtained from the Social Research Ethics Committee, University College Cork following a lengthy process. Both research teams comprised 5 researchers and fieldwork was conducted between May and August 2019.

Table 1. Summary of Data Collection Activity

LEVEL	IRELAND	GREECE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
Micro (Child)	1 workshop Children 6-9 yrs. (n=6) 1 workshop Children 10-12yrs (n=7) 1 workshop Children 13-16 yrs. (n=6) 2 workshops youth 16-18 yrs. (n=15)	1 workshop 6- 9 yrs (n=3) 1 workshop 10-12 yr olds (n=7) 3 workshops Children 13- 16 yrs. (n=12) 1 workshop 16-18 yrs (n=8) 1 workshop 16-18 yrs (n-8)	72 children

Micro (Parents)	1 workshop Parents (n=25)	1 workshop Parents (n=9)	34 parents
Meso	2 workshops (n=14)	individual interviews x 3 2 workshops (n=31)	48
Macro	9 individual interviews	3 individual interviews	12
Total			166

3.1 Recruitment

Recruitment was initiated through e-mail, telephone communication, and visits with sector representatives, school principals, and educators, in order to identify relevant groups. Thereafter, identifying a suitable place and time to meet participants proved challenging in some instances. In particular, efforts to reach specific groups of children identified in Greece were not successful due to bureaucratic procedures, limited resources, coordination issues, and the limited fieldwork timeframe (May-June) which coincided with exams, school holidays and elections in Greece.

The research team in Greece tried to identify children's groups based on the highest population concentration of nationalities of migrants and refugees and a decision was then taken to focus on Athens city. Workshops were organised so that each could be conducted in one language, and that all the children could understand what was being said within the group. These workshops were conducted with the assistance of 3 interpreters and in the presence of 5 teachers.

Workshop participants in Ireland were all functionally fluent in English, therefore interpreters were not necessary. As in Greece, the migrant population in Ireland is concentrated in urban centres, so the UCC research team conducted workshops in Cork, Dublin and Limerick. UCC developed research information and consent forms and shared these with all of the partners involved in data collection for WP1 who then translated the material into relevant languages.

3.2   Micro-level Workshops

3.2.1   Participants

In total, 72 children aged from 5 – 18 years who have diverse backgrounds and experiences[21] participated in 11 workshops and are at various stages of the integration process. The aim was to include a diverse a range of participants in order to identify the maximum possible integration indicators.

Workshops in Ireland took place in primary and second-level school settings with 35 children (20 boys and 15 girls). Two workshops were held in primary schools with children aged 5 to 12 years. One was held in an **Educate Together**[22] school in a satellite town in southern Ireland comprising a very diverse group of migrant children (born in Kenya, Belgium, Canada and Germany) and the other in an inner city **DEIS**[23] school largely comprising second generation migrant children from Eastern Europe (Czech, Slovakian). Three workshops were conducted with students in second-level education: two with students in senior cycle (age 16-18); one in a **Catholic secondary school** with most of the participants having lived in Ireland for 8 years or more and originating largely from Eastern Europe (Polish, Croatian, Nigerian, Hungarian, Lithuania); one workshop was held in the **CDETB**[24] Youth and Education Service for Refugees and Migrants in Dublin with unaccompanied minors (from Albania, Afghanistan, China, Iraq and Africa). The final second-level workshop was held with students in the junior cycle (13-16 years) of a **Community College** in Cork city. These students were, largely, recently arrived migrants in Ireland who originated from Eastern Europe, South America, and Africa.

In Greece the workshops with 43 children (29 boys and 14 girls) were held in a variety of settings including: the Centre of the Hellenic Red Cross in Athens, an Albanian Community Centre where second generation migrant children attend language classes on the mother tongue of their parents; the Greek Council for Refugees at the social centre "Pyxida", 2nd Lyceum of Athens, which hosts first year "morning reception classes" for third country national children; Elaionas

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[21] As detailed in the methodology, the research focused on first and second generation migrants and refugees.

[22] See p.14 for more details on Educate Together schools.

[23] Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) is the Department of Education and Skills policy instrument to address educational disadvantage.

[24] This centre provides the only programme of its kind in Ireland specifically for unaccompanied minors

Camp, an "Open Reception Accommodation Facility" in Athens, which is a designated camp/site set by the Greek Ministry of Migration Policy, and where there are specific designated "Safe Zones" for unaccompanied children who live within the site under the protection of "Guardians"; and a designated community space of Municipality of Athens where children live with their families in apartments in the city of Athens, under a specific Reception Accommodation Programme funded by the European Commission. The participating children included 2nd generation migrant children of Albanian parents, 1st and 2nd generation Syrian children, 1st generation migrant children from the Middle East and Africa, first generation migrant children from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Egypt, and unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan.

Two parent workshops were conducted. One was held in Ireland with 25 parents drawn from a pre-existing group of migrant mother and child group that meet weekly in the Cork Migrant Centre. All parents in the group were mothers, who are either currently in the asylum system or have recently received refugee status or permission to remain in Ireland. One workshop was held in Greece with 9 parents of which 4 were women and 5 were men. All were born in Syria. Two were less than 5 years in Greece (newly arrived refugees) while the rest had migrated between 17 and 20 years ago. Their children were born in Greece and had attended Greek school from primary level.

3.2.2 Methods for Micro-level Workshops

Focus groups ranged from less than an hour to an hour and a half in length. All of the focus groups with children and young people followed a participatory research methods approach and were designed to reflect the ages and language competencies of the children in each group. These were facilitated by a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 5 team members who are all experienced in interviewing children and had police clearance for this work. The workshops methodology was based on the "imagined child" and the 'life-line activity".

Warm-up activities were based on both the DOZ document "Stakeholder engagement training", the methods tested with the IMMERSE Child and Youth Advisory Group (facilitated by UCC) and on experiences of the research team, as agreed through experiential seminars for children by UCC. Each of the focus groups with the children and young people involved a "get to know each other" warm-up activity involving saying one's name or favourite habits etc., by using a ball, a

string and music or 'human bingo' game. Children were asked to say something, walk, move in certain ways so that by taking ownership of the space and getting some information about each other, a safer environment was created for the children to speak up freely. In total, 1 to 3 warm-ups or "coolers" took place at each workshop, based on the feedback from the children.

Children then examined 'how you can help children to feel happy at school' with an emphasis on the *imagined child* rather that asking the children to talk about themselves. The researchers used different participatory methods for the focus groups based on age. For the younger groups this comprised Talk and Draw methods and an individual life-line activity to discuss how the imagined child can be supported to feel happy at school at 3 different stages of their school experience.

A post-it activity was used to explore what helps young people feel like they belong in school as well as what creates barriers to their sense of belonging and a group life-line approach was used to discuss how the imagined child/young person can be supported to feel happy at school. Finally, young people were invited to vote on the most important issues on the life-line mats to help identify the key themes emerging from the data (Horgan, O'Riordan, Martin, & O'Sullivan, 2018; Martin, Eldin, Horgan, & Scanlon, 2018; Pirskanen, Jokinen, Kallinen, Harju-Veijola, & Rautakorpi, 2015).

The two parent focus groups comprised 34 parents in total and lasted one and a half hours. The Cork group had 25 participants, and while this is a large number for a focus group, it drew on an existing group of migrant parents who meet weekly and was facilitated by four experienced interviewers. It developed into a world café methodology to facilitate the large numbers. In Greece a focus group was held with 9 Syrian parents.

Parent focus groups followed Krueger's (2002) method in: welcoming participants, offering an overview, and setting ground rules, followed by discussion. The focus group was open and participant-led in form and enabled probing by the researchers on particular issues arising. Discussions focused on the parents' experiences of their children's integration into school and education: (i) the barriers they face; (ii) the supports they have had; (iii) those they recommend, and (iv) any further suggestions they have on integration of their children into school and education. Open discussion was facilitated through the familiarity of participants with each other and with the centres.

3.3 Meso-level Workshops

3.3.1 Participants

The Irish team conducted two meso-level workshops with 9 participants. Participants comprised 2 Primary School Principals, 1 Second Level Principal, 2 Education Welfare Board representatives, and representatives from TUSLA, the Cork Migrant Centre, Welcome English, and a Community Educator Representative. The second workshop was held with 5 professionals working in the area of education in Limerick, comprising: a School Completion Coordinator, a Home School Liaison Teacher, a Primary School Principal, a support diversity and integration in schools project worker, and an Education Support Centre Coordinator.

The Greek team conducted three semi-structured interviews with three specialised professionals working with the NGO Network for Children's Rights. They also conducted two meso-level workshops with 31 participants. The workshop in Athens included volunteers, social workers, psychologists, social workers, and teachers from a variety of NGOs – Hellenic Red Cross, International Committee of the Red Cross, METAdrasi, the Greek Council for Refugees, Doctors of the World, and NGO Zefxis – and 2 representatives involved in the Accommodation Program for the Municipality of Piraeus. The workshop in Crete included professors and researchers from the Department of Social Work at Hellenic Mediterranean University, representatives from the Municipality of Herklion, the Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education, the Regional Center for Educational Planning of Crete, and 14 teachers.

3.3.2 Methods for Meso-level workshops

Two meso-level workshops were held in Ireland, in Cork and Limerick with 14 Education and Migrant Organisation Professionals in total, each lasting approximately 2 hours. In Greece there were 3 semi-structured meso-level interviews with professionals working in the NGO Network for Children's Rights in Athens and two meso-level workshops with 31 participants.

Discussions focused on the views and experiences of these professionals in supporting migrant children in their integration into education and school. It elicited: (i) the issues they identify in this process; (ii) challenges they face; (ii) the supports available to them in meeting these challenges; (iii) examples of successful interventions/initiatives; and (iv) any further suggestions they had.

The workshops were open and participant-led in their form enabling probing on particular issues arising by the researchers and took the form of a world café (Brown & Isaacs, 2005), whereby participants, while following discussion guidelines and direction, generate key identifiers during the course of discussions.

3.4 Macro-level Interviews

3.4.1 Participants

Twelve individual interviews were conducted with key education policy professionals and NGOs in total. These included 8 in Ireland comprising: the Director of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment; the Director of the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (Secondary level); Irish Primary Principals' Network CEO; Irish Refugee Council CEO; Ombudsman for Children and Youth Affairs; a representative from Tusla, the Irish Child and Family Agency; a Cultural Planner with a national anti-racism sporting organisation; a senior representative from the Department of Education who is a member of the Social Inclusion Unit.

Three macro level individual interviews were held in Greece, and participants were: the Children's Ombudsman, a representative from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs who is the Head of the Department for the Coordination and Monitoring of Refugee Education, and a representative from UNICEF.

3.4.2 Methods for Macro-level Interviews

These interviews were conducted both face-to-face and by telephone/VOI and generally lasted between an hour to an hour and a half. Participants were asked to consider issues focused across child/ family/school/policy levels. All participants were sent the transcripts of the interview and none of them wanted to make any changes to these transcripts.

3.5 Data Analysis

Analysis of the data from the workshops and interviews was undertaken looking at what the data say and identifying patterns within the data using a systematic thematic method. Verbatim quotes from the raw data transcriptions where used to support the write-up of findings in relation

to the children, young people, parents, educators and other relevant stakeholders (Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis, & Dillon, 2003).

In conducting the preliminary analysis, partners aimed to identify the relevant issues/codes/themes that relate, in particular, to the assumptions of the conceptual framework already produced based on the literature review (D1.1). Following initial coding, commonalities and differences of Migrant Children's views on integration in Ireland and Greece were examined.

4 Discussion of Results

4.1 Results from Ireland

4.1.1 Micro level – children's data

While similar themes emerged from all five workshops, the way they arose differed across age groups, reflecting changing interests, interpretations, and priorities for belonging at different educational levels. While some issues relate to more general aspects of belonging in school, certain factors arose that are especially salient for recognising and addressing children's migratory circumstances. Key themes which we will further discuss are friendships and peer interactions; bullying and racism; relationships with teachers and school climate; and language.

FRIENDSHIPS AND PEER INTERACTIONS

Children across all age groups cited friendships as key to their happiness and sense of belonging. Younger children (aged 6-8) emphasised the importance of including everyone and valued having kind friends that they could sit with, play with, and help with schoolwork. Developing friendships also eased transitions between school levels from pre-school to primary and primary to secondary, indicating the significance of length of time in the county and longevity of friendships. Older children (aged 16-18) focused on the importance of "getting along well with others", "being included in conversation", having the "same interests" and "getting a good start with good friends". While these comments indicate the importance of group identity and sense of belonging, one student commented that the school was not helpful in enabling the development of friendships, saying 'school doesn't help … just makes friends themselves', indicating this young person's perception of the importance of self-reliance in making friends and of their perception of

school as ineffective in relation to social integration. This reflects Martin et al.'s (2018) findings that school staff had little knowledge of the circumstances and challenges faced by asylum seeking children in their classes, such as direct provision housing which is often isolated from the community. Another boy (6-9 group) commented that he only met his friends at school, saying, "I don't have any friends outside of school."

Further to this, it emerged that for the younger group (aged 6-9) some of the children only had friends from the same cultural background as themselves. Similarly, some of the secondary school students (13-16) identified having people in the school from the same country or having the same nationality as beneficial for integration. The 16-18 year-old participants reported that they liked having friends who spoke the same language. One of the participants felt that as the school was becoming more diverse, there was more interaction between migrant and Irish students and this was being influenced by the age of arrival of migrant children. While it is recognised that friendships with those of similar cultural backgrounds can be supportive in facilitating cultural continuity, over-emphasis on such friendships limits the potential of education to offer diverse multi-cultural experiences and immersion for children and young people.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

The younger children highlighted positive relationship with teachers as important to belonging, in particular using care related terms to describe these relationships, such as the "teacher is kind." "teacher that helps us" (Girl, 6-9 age group) "caring teacher", "nice teachers", "teacher supporting you" and "kind words" (8-12 age group). They also pointed to the leadership of their school principal, making reference her being "wise", saying she "cares" and that she "looks out for us" (Girl, 6-9 age group). The role of teachers in making students welcome was also identified. Children in the 8-12 age group referred to having a "warm welcome" and made specific connections to teachers' roles in this.

The secondary school students also valued the caring and leadership roles of their teachers. They referred positively to being "known" by the teachers, having "understanding teachers" and "teachers mentoring students" (16-18 age group) and mentioned the leadership role of the principal in supporting integration. They also spoke about feeling at ease with their teachers,

being able to "have jokes with them" and having an "informal relationship" (16-18 age group) with teachers who allow students to "talk in class and get off topic." For some, this more informal relationship with teachers was different to their pre-migration experiences of education; "The school systems here are different than our own country. In our countries teachers are more worried about grades than children's wellbeing" (Boy, 16-18 age group). They appeared to appreciate a more flexible learning environment and pointed to instances where teachers asked them about their country of origin during classes and commented on how these discussions were then integrated into the curriculum.

These comments provide examples of how teachers can develop strengths-based culturally relative curriculum using the children's own experiences, concurrently and seamlessly contributing to migrant student integration in their classes. On the other hand, having 'bad teachers' or teachers who ignored students were seen as negative for student belonging (16-18 age group).

In addition to the practices and orientations of particular teachers, the school climate or ethos in general was important to the participants' experiences of diversity in their schools. The 8-12 age group was in a multi-denominational, co-educational school, which was identified as contributing to the children's their sense of belonging; "This is a good school. It isn't a boy or girls' school. We don't have uniforms. You don't have to be religious; we learn about all religions. Everyone is different" (8-12 Age Group).

In the Irish context this is significant, as most schools are denominational (mostly following a Catholic ethos), single sex, and require school uniforms. While there is a move towards more multi-denominational schools such as the one above, they continue to be in the minority.

The older children also identified the atmosphere and ethos of the school as important for belonging. "Religion is the last thing that separates people here" (16-18) and "hav[ing] other people from different countries" (13-16) and "seeing other migrants accepted" was viewed as positive (16-18). Children identified specific examples of intercultural awareness of other members of the school community which helped them feel that they belong at school. For example, one said that others having "knowledge of their homeland" was positive for belonging, and another said it was important to be able to talk about your own country (16-18 age group).

The children noted that democratic practices and "having a voice" were important to their happiness in school. This included having teachers who listened to them and being able to choose what clothes to wear (8-12). They compared their level of choice to different school levels and hoped that their agency and choices would increase when they transitioned to secondary school.

Participants commented on the importance of a welcome class and tours of the school. For example, one student noted that "I was brought into the class. [A teacher] explained how things worked and that sort of stuff, and I just started talking to people" (Girl, 16-18 age group). This type of integration activity had a positive impact and eased integration into the school. However, students who joined later in the school year were not offered similar induction programmes, making integration more difficult, particularly for older children.

BULLYING AND RACISM

Just as friendships were identified as one of the most important facilitators of happiness, belonging, and integration, bullying, exclusion, and racism were identified as some of the biggest barriers. Specific examples ranged from "not letting someone play" and "saying mean words" amongst the younger children (aged 6-9) to "organised fights" (aged 8-12) and "rough and informal behaviour" (aged 16-18) in PE, where the children were not as closely supervised. While the younger children were able to recognise what would count as racist comments or race-based bullying, it was the older children who had direct experience of it in school. Students in the 16-18 age group reported incidents of being told to "go back to [their] country." One student comment that "Irish students would make fun of your language and call you foreigner. A student came recently, they would make fun of his accent." Two boys in the 8-12 age group discussed the difficulty in identifying certain comments as racist or not, because, "sometimes it is for jokes, and sometimes it can cut deep."

Some children in all age groups (except the youngest) expressed either dissatisfaction with the way schools dealt with incidents of bullying and racism or reluctance to report such incidents to teachers. As one girl in the 13-16 age group put it, "Since I was new and stuff, I didn't want to be the rat or something." The children also noted that even if racist and bullying incidents are addressed by the teacher or school, they can still continue outside of class and school.

Moreover, children in the 13-16 and 16-18 age groups also experienced discriminatory behaviour from teachers themselves, particularly in disciplinary matters, such as Black students being unfairly policed and punished for their haircuts. One student felt that he was judged and silenced in school for holding views that ran counter to the majority values held by his classmates and teacher, specifically views relating to feminism and religion: "I try to refrain from speaking about my religion 'cause I know that the class is going to context me, argue with me . . . Nowadays I stop bring[ing] out my opinions based on my religion" (boy, 13-16 age group).

LANGUAGE

Curriculum and language choices were discussed by all the children. Concerns included support for mother tongue, English language support, having to study Irish and, in particular, a lack of choices. Their concerns point to the need for the development of a more culturally sensitive and flexible curriculum.

The participants pointed to English language supports (EAL) as helpful to their integration, but access to resources appeared to vary depending on when the participant arrived in Ireland and the grade to which they were assigned. Though acknowledging the importance of learning English quickly and having to practice with other English speakers, the participants noted some fears around getting things wrong. For example, being asked by teachers to read aloud in class led to anxiety among the older students leading them to become uncomfortable, as they felt they could not express themselves properly in English; "When someone is uncomfortable speaking English so they would rather speak their own language and then you can't talk to them as they don't want to embarrass themselves or something" (Boy, 13-16 age group). Some students spoke about being actively discouraged students from speaking their native language, commenting that "[teachers] tell you to stop talking in the language. I was speaking to my Italian friend and a teacher said stop speaking Italian. I needed to speak English" (Boy, 13-16 age group).

Language support across all the educational levels seemed to be focused on acquiring English. The participants identified lack of support for their mother tongue at school as a barrier to their integration and would rather have seen the school embrace a multi-language culture. Some children attended cultural or language schools at weekends to support the development of their mother tongue and referred to the importance of this in enabling them to communicate with their

relations and extended family. While there appeared to be little curriculum support for mother tongue in schools, one of the children talked about having a Polish teacher in preschool who helped him with his language development: "There was one Polish teacher in early start. She spoke Polish and if there was something I couldn't say in English, she would be able to help me and that was nice" (Boy, 6-9 age group).

The children also they felt that there should be more exemptions from learning Irish as a language, as this was impacted by arrival age in Irish schools. For example, one boy said

> My brother and sister were born in Italy because my mom is Italian but I was born in Ireland, so they don't have to do Irish for their leaving cert. My brother didn't, but I do because I was born in Ireland. It's sad … I feel that we should have the choice if we want to do it (Irish). Like the way we have a choice in secondary school.

(Boy, 8-12 age group)

The older children felt that not supporting a more diverse language culture within schools led to students only interacting socially with students who speak the same language, leading to a lack of peer interaction and potential social isolation for the newcomer children. The focus on English speaking is a potentially exclusionary practice and one that does not adhere to Irish Integration policy, generally or with specific reference to education.

4.1.2 Micro level – parents' data

EDUCATION SYSTEM AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The parents commented positively on the general environment of schools in Ireland as they experienced it. Many of them expressed satisfaction with the schools their children were in, commenting that their children were "shown new things everyday" and that there was "peace and safety". They were also positive about education supports such as extra classes, homework clubs and supports for reading and writing provided by the schools.

They felt teachers listened to them and were "nice" and commented on the provision of "balanced healthy food at school". They observed that their children were accepted at school, there was a

respect for religious identify, and that schools were "very helpful" and "understanding". They noted that there was "not too much pressure on children" and there was "less work load" compared to their countries of origin. However, some parents also felt there should be more emphasis on study; "Don't want child to play too much – more study."

They mentioned positive outcomes which they felt their children developed due to their participation in school. This included "more and better independence" and "better confidence", linking these not only to school, but also to extra-curricular activity. They also felt that their children could interact more with others and "express themselves now". They said that children are "taught in school to ask questions if they don't understand," making the children "more confident and out-spoken."

While the positive impacts of children experiencing a child-centred environment was acknowledged, this also raised tensions for parents in negotiating new cultural norms on child-discipline, parental authority, and children's rights in Ireland. For example, one parent said,

"If you look at African children and you look at Irish children, there is a very big difference, you know. In Ireland, the mother hits the child and the child is taken away. It comes to the stage where a parent is not able to control her child."

This quote demonstrates the cultural tensions that can arise when legal and normative frameworks regarding child protection and children's rights are different in countries of origin and host migrant countries. It also demonstrates the fear parents may have of being under surveillance by social services and possibly having their children taken away. However, another parent found the parenting frameworks which she experienced in Ireland to have a positive effect on her interactions with her children and her children's confidence.

On the other hand, parents described difficulties they had in interacting with the Irish education system. The cost of schooling in Ireland was mentioned as problematic, and they also commented on the demands made of them by schools. Accessing additional supports for their children, particularly speech and language therapists, was noted as a barrier. Comments indicated the lack of a transparent and accessible route to educational support information as there was no key person to guide them through the system.

A number of parents mentioned language barriers and felt that more EAL and Irish language supports are needed to integrate their children into the education system. They commented that some of the children experienced peer exclusion because their English was poor. For example, one mother described other children not wanting to play with her child "because she can't talk well." Some of the parents also felt their children generally lacked confidence and were uncertain while they were in school. As their children's English improved, parents commented that so did their academic achievements and integration;

"There could be more [language support]. When we came her first, she [daughter] knew nothing in Irish and then one of the directors from her nursery helped me to source someone to come in, and she taught her how to speak, and one day when I went to collect her, she was with all the other kids and they were playing in Irish, you know."

This comment highlights that some migrant parents may need additional social and cultural capital to support their children in the Irish education system.

RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHERS

Parents identified a positive relationship with teachers as one of the most important indicators of integration in school for their children. They said that their children had "good relationships with teachers", and that "teachers are motivated and give support", commenting on the supportive and caring relationship their children had with teachers. A number of parents noted teacher recognition of their children's strengths and efforts to get to know their child. However, they also identified a lack of diversity and cultural inclusion as barriers to integration.

FRIENDSHIPS, RACISM, AND BULLYING

Parents identified a number of positive and negative factors related to peer interaction that impacted integration. Having friends was a very important aspect of integration for their children, and participants commented that their children 'mix with other children very fast'.

However, they also commented that their children were often isolated from peers or lonely and that other children did not want to play with them. They pointed to the leadership role of the

school in facilitating and promoting the development of friendships and challenging exclusion, with ongoing monitoring of the challenges children face.

Another felt that racism was experienced more in primary school. Specific incidents of bullying connected to racism their children experienced were mentioned, such as being "bullied because of skin colour and language" or "making fun of them by comparing lifestyles." One mother described an incident that she felt emanated from the racism of other parents. She felt that children were copying their parents who were modelling anti-migrant discrimination and racism at home, highlighting the need to address racism and acceptance of migrants and diversity more generally within homes and communities.

4.1.3 Meso level

FRIENDSHIPS, RACSIM, AND BULLYING

Peer interactions were of critical importance and were discussed in two main contexts – within school and in extra-curricular activities. Within school, the participants noted the effectiveness of "buddy systems" for helping new migrant children to integrate, because entering a new school without being able to speak the majority language could be a very challenging and isolating experience for migrant children. This strategy was beneficial to the mentor, too, building a sense of belonging, confidence, and investment in the school, at least at the primary level. Results atthe secondary level were less strong. Participants also advocated for effective school classroom set up and management, involving active learning and group work as particularly good ways to help new students integrate. Participants felt that a sense of belonging was perhaps the most important indicator of integration.

Participants also agreed on the importance of extra-curricular activities for developing relationships with peers, particularly a wider variety of peers, so that "integration doesn't end with the school day." However, there were a number of barriers cited to participation in extra-curricular activities, such as fees, isolated living situations (a particular problem for children in direct provision housing), and lack of support networks. Migrant children's involvement in extra-curriculars often depends on individual kindnesses and exceptions, rather than consistent systemic support.

In terms of racism and bullying, participants felt that school management and teachers were responsible for setting the tone and vigilantly monitoring situations that could end up in isolation, segregation, or racism and being proactive to avoid them. It was important for schools to enforce anti-bullying and anti-racism policy, which all schools are required to have under the Equal Status Act. This would help prevent minor issues from becoming major ones. Unfortunately, instances of racism were still present, and the participants noted that children experience racism from their peers and also occasionally from teachers and the parents of Irish-born children.

TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The participants agreed that teachers are becoming more open and inclusive generally, and that good student/teacher relationships are more valued. Such relationships mean that children are happier, more comfortable in school, and more trusting of their teachers. This is especially important when instances of racism and bullying occur, because students are less likely to report such instances if they think they will not be believed.

Trusting relationships with migrant parents are also important for teachers, and these relationships can be even more challenging than relationships with the children. Parents are often worried about their children's ability to cope, and schools and teachers have to help manage these worries, a task which is very often made more difficult by language barriers and uncertainty about the availability of support and resources. Teachers rely on parents for information about their children, which can be sensitive if the family has left their home country under duress, and parents need to trust teachers to do what is best for their child's education.

LANGUAGE

Language was the most discussed topic of the focus group and clearly takes up a great deal of integration attention. Language barriers can prevent effective communication with parents of migrant children as they often do not speak English fluently, preventing back-and-forth flows of information regarding the child's background and education. There are no funds for professional translation services, so school staff have to improvise translation, often resorting to google translate or an intermediary like the child, a friend, or another parent.

Schools undergo extensive annual testing procedures to prove that EAL supports are needed, a time and resource intensive process. Indeed, lack of funding and resources and cumbersome, inflexible bureaucratic procedures as obstacles to integration was a recurring theme throughout much of the focus group. The testing process is further confounded when there is a possibility that the child also has a learning disability or does not yet have a full grasp of their home language. This leaves teachers frustrated as they try to guess what kind of support is needed. Another language-related challenge teachers faced was striking a balance between getting their migrant students to an adequate level of English fluency as quickly as possible, so as to allow them to succeed academically and integrate with their peers, and ensuring the migrant students do not lose their original languages, which are an important part of their identity. They spoke about the importance of academic success, but always in combination with at least one other wellbeing outcome, underlining the connections between them. They noted that lack of success in school can contribute to mental health problems, distress, low self-confidence, and poor self-image. Conversely, succeeding at school can help boost confidence and promote belonging. As such, participants were eager for teachers and schools to shift away from a deficit approach to language, where speaking a different language is a disadvantage, almost like a special education need, and work instead from the premise that having multiple languages is an advantage and something to be celebrated.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES, RELIGION, AND DIVERSITY

Different cultures have different expectations of school and the progression of learning. Some migrant children have little to no experience of education before arriving in Ireland and have to learn what happens in school and how to behave as Irish children are expected to behave in school. Some families took education very seriously, expected their children to be in school for long hours, and frequently checked in with teachers. Others would take their children out of school for months at a time and did not seem concerned about what the child was missing. In addition, not all parents embraced the ideals of child rights, child voice, or child-centred education.

The majority of Irish schools are Catholic, and participants felt that, though Ireland is becoming an increasingly secular society, the education system still often reflects its largely Catholic

heritage. Children who do not do communion or confirmation can be/feel isolated, because it is such a prominent rite of passage for their Irish peers. Participants emphasized that respect was the most crucial element for teaching about topics that may be sensitive because of religious or cultural differences – teachers being respectful of other religions and cultures and teaching the students to be respectful, as well.

Having a concentration of migrant students could make it easier to secure supports and resources and could prompt the school to develop good integration practices. It could also help migrant children to fit in more easily, especially if there was already a group of other children with a similar background at the same school. It created an environment where diversity was the norm, a direction in which participants felt Irish society was moving. However, concentrations of migrant children could inhibit language progression (as students tend to speak their home language more rather than practicing English) and encourage segregation.

4.1.4   Macro level

Participants from both the governmental, policy-making side and the NGO/community partners side agreed that integration is a relatively new issue in Ireland. As the representative from TUSLA put it:

> *"[Inter-culturalism in Irish society] is still in its infancy. I think it is only now the various government departments are starting to see their responsibilities and roles and are starting to work together so it is slow and very much dependent on individuals so I would say there is quite a bit of work to be done there."*

However, participants were somewhat divided between the policy-makers who were optimistic about the work currently being done in the field of integration, and the practitioners and NGO/community partners who were critical of the scope of these efforts and the slow pace of change.

EDUCATION POLICY AND CURRICULUM

According to the representative from the Department of Education, the general approach to migrant children in Irish education is one of integration from the beginning, rather than separate

integration classrooms or schools. All children are assessed individually for additional supports, and migrant children are not specifically targeted for additional supports expect for EAL. It was noted that many migrant children are attending DEIS schools that already have additional supports for children and families such as Home School Liaison Teachers, School Meal Programmes, School Completion Programmes and afterschool clubs. Some participants also pointed to the new *Education Admissions Bill* and *Student and Parent Charter Bill* as steps in the right direction to redress past discrimination and encourage greater involvement of migrant parents in Irish schools, though not all participants were equally optimistic about these measures. Department of Education and Skills Inspectors, whose work is informed and guided by legislation, examine school documents including school enrolment policy as part of the whole school evaluation process. These documents are reviewed from the perspective of the quality of education provision, admissions and inclusion. The Inspectorate's *A Guide to Inspection in Primary Schools* (DES, 2016a) states in the section "Quality of support for pupils" that

> *"[t]he manner in which the school manages and addresses the wellbeing of all of its pupils is evaluated. The support that the school provides for the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those from minority groups is examined. Provision for both classroom inclusion and individual support is assessed"* (DES, 2016a, p. 29).

The Inspection framework (*Looking at our School 2016*, primary and post-primary; DES, 2016b, 2016c) is shared with schools to guide internal self-evaluation and to set down the standards for DES evaluation. The "Leadership and Management" section outlines key actions for school leaders:

- promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment
- foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each pupil manage the planning and implementation of the curriculum
- foster teacher professional development that enriches teachers' and pupils' learning (DES, 2016b, p. 12)

NGO and community partners criticised the Irish curriculum for its inflexibility and lack of diversity. The policy-makers described various changes to both the primary and secondary curriculum that are only recently implemented or will be implemented within the next few years. In general, these changes signal a move to a more adaptable curriculum that can reflect the different cultural backgrounds of the student population. This includes a new language curriculum at the primary level, new courses on religious beliefs & ethics and politics & society, and health and wellbeing programmes.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS AND TEACHER TRAINING

Like the participants at the micro and meso levels, the macro level participants acknowledged the importance of good relationships with teachers to the integration of migrant children. However, the Irish teaching population is majority white, middle-class, Irish-born, and predominately female. The NCCA participant referred to data on the impact of a shared cultural and religious background between teachers and pupils and the impact of this on student-teacher relations. There have been some recent initiatives in order to address this homogeneity, but it is too early to gauge the magnitude of their effects.

Teacher training for integration and interculturalism has so far been limited, though the interviewees stated that the new curricular changes will involve some Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Currently, there is no special qualification in Ireland for EAL teachers. It has been largely up to independent organizations to form workshops on diversity, inclusion, integration, etc., and up to individual teachers to seek out such resources.

RACISM AND BULLYING

Policies to address racism and cultural discrimination are local level policies often tied to general anti-bullying policies with a focus on identity-based bullying, rather than specific policies to address racism. The NGO and community partners, however, felt that these policies were inadequate to the lived experiences of migrants. The SARI interviewee highlighted issues of racism, Islamophobia, and discrimination experienced by migrants in their communities and the low levels of prosecution and convictions due to absence of Hate Crime legislation leaving the Garda to rely on the Public Order Act which he views as inadequate. He felt there was a

significant amount of bullying of young people based on skin colour and many incidents of referees at football matches ignoring racist incidents. The IRC participant noted that incidents of racism are on the rise in Ireland and wondered whether reluctance to make real progress with integration is being driven partly by racism and fear of migration.

LANGUAGE SUPPORTS

According to the National Census 2016, 612,018 residents spoke a language other than Irish or English at home (CSO 2017e), and second level schools in Ireland have students from over 160 nationalities. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that a number of macro participants identified EAL support as the most important support for migrant children's integration, after welcoming them to a school and supporting them to make friends, because it enables social engagement. Frequent cuts to EAL supports therefore impact the integration and monitoring progress.

According to the interviewee from the Department of Education and Skills, the policy for Irish schools is, "to prioritise the host language to ensure there can be maximum participation in the education system and boarder life of Ireland." At both primary and post-primary levels, additional language support is provided for students who do not speak English as their first language. EAL funding had previously been allocated based on the number of children in a school who are classified as EAL using an assessment toolkit[25] to test levels of English language proficiency, a process much criticised in the meso-level focus groups. The DES interviewee stated that a new model for allocating special education teachers to schools was introduced for all mainstream primary and post-primary schools in 2017 and was updated in February 2019. The new model for allocating special education teachers is designed to distribute teaching resources fairly to schools, taking into account the profiled needs of each school, as indicated by a set of key data indicators. The model provides all schools with a baseline teaching allocation to assist current and future pupils who have learning and literacy difficulties, including those arising from English Additional Language (EAL) needs. The special education teaching allocations which are being made for schools effective from September 2019 will remain in place for two years, following which, revised profiled allocations will be considered for schools from September 2021. In

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[25] The guidelines for this assessment were published by Integrate Ireland Language Training (IILT) in collaboration with the Southern Education and Library Board in Armagh on behalf of the DES in December 2007; Together towards Inclusion: Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School and its post-primary counterpart were distributed to all primary and post-primary schools in the country.

primary schools, the standardised test scores on which part of the profile is based reflects where pupils have literacy problems. In post-primary schools, Junior Certificate examination result data in English and Mathematics represent the literacy and numeracy achievement scores and have been applied in a graduated manner to create a value for each school. The profiled allocation therefore takes account of the extent of the literacy needs a school has, including where these literacy needs arise due to language difficulties. The profiled allocation for schools therefore takes account of EAL needs in schools. Where schools can demonstrate that they have high concentrations of pupils requiring EAL they can continue to apply for Additional Allocations for Schools with High Concentrations of Pupils that require Language Support (EAL) in accordance with the procedures set out in the primary school staffing schedule for the 2019/20 school year. Schools where a significant number of the total enrolment is made up of language support (EAL) pupils with less than B1 (Level3) proficiency can make an appeal to the Independent Post Primary Teachers Appeals Board for additional resources. Procedures for making an appeal are set out in the annual post primary staffing circulars.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) resources are designed to allow individual students to participate in mainstream education on a par with their peers. The EAL Assessment Toolkit provides teachers with tests of English language proficiency for use with pupils for whom English is a second language. The EAL Support Team from the Department's Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) offer a range of supports to teachers. The work of the PDST is complemented by the work of the English Language Support Teachers Association. The PDST provides support for schools at primary and post primary level in these areas through the provision of workshops, seminars and in-school support. PDST Team-Teaching for Literacy seminars were rolled out nationally again in 2018/2019 and will provide guidance to Special Education and mainstream class teachers in how children for whom English is an additional language can be supported in their own classrooms through the inclusive team-teaching model. DEIS plan 2017 contains a commitment that EAL provision at second level is to be reviewed with a view to establishing current identified educational need, particularly in relation to reading literacy. In addition, DEIS Plan 2017 has provided that arrangements are to be made for the collection of data on EAL inputs, outputs and outcomes in all schools, with particular emphasis on provision in schools with the highest concentrations of pupils from disadvantaged communities to establish whether the needs of pupils are being met. The DEIS EAL Working

Group will consider the current level of provision of English as an Additional Language (EAL) supports at post primary level and to make recommendations in relation to future EAL provision

Primary and Post-Primary Language Curriculum

The Primary Language Curriculum (PLC) is an inclusive curriculum, designed to support teachers in meeting the needs of all students. PLC **seminars** which are running from September 2019 to January 2020 place a strong emphasis on child-centred practice, supporting teachers to consider the needs, interests and abilities of all learners, while supporting them to move towards language learning outcomes, through appropriate language learning experiences. The seminars also highlight the 'curriculum in practice' section of the curriculum that presents the big ideas underpinning language teaching and learning in the classroom, including second language learning, cultural and linguistic diversity, and pedagogies for integration and for literacy. The PLC was introduced from junior infants to 2nd class on a phased basis from September 2016 and will be introduced from 3rd class to 6th class from September 2019. At post-primary level, under the Department's Languages Connect action plan, the Post Primary Languages Initiative (PPLI) supports Migrant Learners' Home Languages.

State examinations

In relation to exams, EU migrants can present for a non-curricular examination in any of the other EU languages. This non-curricular language initiative contributes to encouraging students to maintain proficiency in their heritage language. Under the reformed Junior Cycle, schools may develop short courses for study in a range of topics, including new languages and cultures. Students can take the following subjects in the Leaving Certificate examination: English, Irish, Ancient Greek, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Japanese and Arabic. Non-curricular languages do not appear as part of the normal school curriculum but students may opt to be examined in them if they are from a member state of the EU, speak the language as a mother tongue, are presenting for the Leaving Certificate examination and Leaving Certificate English.

SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The SARI interviewee described the role that sport can play as an integrator and in tackling racism. He identified international programmes, such as a refugee educational programme in

Portugal run by the Olympic Federation and Welcome football programmes in Germany for Syrian Refugees, as examples of good practice. Some of the coaches in SARI come from refugee backgrounds which "allows for greater empathy." SARI has carried out research on the impact of school sports on sense of school belonging with very positive results.

The NAPD interviewee also felt that extra-curricular activities were very important and that there should be funding available to support this type of integration for migrant children. He also suggests that there should be support for integration through work experience and volunteering opportunities.

ASYLUM PROCESS AND DIRECT PROVISION

The Direct Provision system which provides accommodation for asylum seekers was viewed as not fit for purpose, with particularly strong criticism about the length of time people spend in the system. While the law clearly lays out refugee children's rights to safe housing, education, and healthcare, the implementation side, "has just been quite haphazard" (IRC CEO). DP centres are often remote and/or isolated from other neighbourhoods, making it difficult for refugee children to interact with their peers outside of school and participate in extra-curricular activities. Recent strains on the system have forced authorities to forego normal induction procedures and place refugee families in emergency centres where even access to school is not guaranteed. There is, moreover, concern over the estimated 5,000 undocumented children in Ireland, and the gaps in the system for those aged 16-20.

4.2 Results from Greece

4.2.1 Micro level – children's data

FRIENDSHIPS – SOCIAL RELATIONS

All children at all ages mentioned friendship as an important factor for their happiness and psychosocial wellbeing, as well as love and peer support. It seemed that friendships contributed in creating a sense of belonging, which positively affected children's wellbeing. Young children mentioned that they need their friends and free time for playing. Within the context of school, the positive experiences that they mentioned were relationships with their classmates. Older children

mentioned that relationships with peers and a sense of belonging to the class and school level was also very important. This came from having an active and real social network with family, friends, peers and teachers. All children mentioned that not having friends, being discriminated against or excluded and bullied could make them feel sad.

TEACHERS

The children mentioned that what made them happy at school was when their teachers were involved both emotionally and intellectually. They particularly mentioned that feeling loved by their teachers and receiving encouragement made them happy and motivated. Teacher guidance at all school levels, even at University, was important to setting goals for the future, achieving better results and having success in life. More specifically they said that all of the above will help them "to be someone in the future".

DISCRIMINATION

The discrimination and bullying that migrant and refugee children faced at school was manifested through accusations by others, being left out, or being laughed at. Some of the causes mentioned for discriminatory behaviour by others was black skin, having a different nationality, jealousy of being a "good student and handsome." Children needed the sense of belonging through a teachers-peers-friends network in order to be happy and perform better at school. Racist attacks enlarged their fear of being seen as different and thus affected their mental health.

Migrants and refugees from Albania in particular have experienced discrimination and racism over the past three decades, and children at school were still bullied because of their Albanian origin. One indication of the existence (or the absence) of discrimination in schools was the social and political climate that shaped attitudes toward migration during certain periods. In addition, the (positive or negative) migratory policies that developed over decades in the host country also played an important role and could affect children's integration at school. The provision of and access to social, civil, and political rights for non-natives also provided an indication of the environment that children faced in schools and throughout their educational life,

since the provision or not of certain rights or the access to them, could marginalize them, affect their physical and mental health, or encourage perceptions of them as "second class citizens."

Second-generation migrant teenagers mentioned racist incidents in public school by peers, teachers and school principals. Discrimination and bullying among peers took the form of making fun of someone because of their name, being called "Albanian", "feeling like a ghost", not having friends, or being seen as foreigners. Children felt discriminated against when they were not actively participating in the class and when they were ignored. Furthermore, a child mentioned that a school principal was racist during a public speech at school.

The discrimination that children face was both visible and invisible. Visible discrimination was not only expressed through ad hoc incidents but was also institutional. Consequently, the social anxiety that the children mentioned was very well justified as they felt that the school system did not usually protect them. The invisible discrimination that the children experienced was related to their perception of their own identity in addition to the perceptions of native children and their parents about non-natives.

Children mentioned that the teacher's involvement and protection was important in addressing racist incidents. There were certain teachers that would take a stand and address the issue directly with students who exhibit racist behaviour so that relevant mechanisms were put in place requiring the student to change school if they did not conform.

Discrimination, racism and incidents of violence were mentioned. One girl said that, "people might attack you because you look like you are not from this country, if you don't know the language", which was an extreme scenario among the ones that were reported. In Greece, it is a reality that some persons (in the city of Athens and elsewhere) of the far-right might talk to foreigner-looking persons in order to see if they speak Greek and if they assume that they are not Greek, they would hit them. There were incidents which could be characterised as micro-aggressions, such as "someone laughing at you because you do not know the language", as was reported by another girl. In more serious examples of racism, a girl said that some persons she met in the street were fascists. She said that "someone makes bad faces towards you when you are standing next to you in the street looking you in a weird way and make you feel bad and they make you feel that they do not want to stand next to you".

Children suggested that it was important "to promote peace and solidarity through school." This would help in creating a school environment more tolerant to diversity from the early stages of children's educational life.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Children mentioned that they need more free time. They wanted to do sports and play games within the school program. Within the school environment, children needed breaks and food, since these affected their physical health. They also mentioned that hanging out with their friends was how they chose to spend their free time.

LANGUAGE SUPPORT

All refugee children mentioned their inability to speak in the language of the host country as their main barrier to integration and the feeling of loneliness that this entails. Another important indicator of children's wellbeing was language competence and educational achievement. It was mentioned that tests and exams stress them or make them unhappy. On the other hand, educational achievement also functioned as a motivation for children's school performance. Children believed that if they managed to become good students, they would feel better in school, and they noted that they did feel better when they were motivated and had goals for the future. Knowledge in general helped the children feel better about themselves.

Children felt better when they had language and other auxiliary school support, since they said that they often needed "to ask someone that knows better" and "explain whatever we don't understand and help us." They suggested that school support through language lessons one-on-one would be helpful for them.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Children who lived with their family said that the parents' role was very important as they could "help in everything" and affect their children's lives and future. All children mentioned that they needed teacher and family support, motivation, and hope in order "to be someone in the future".

Another consideration in addition to age at the time of migration and time spent in the country of resettlement, is unaccompanied status. The unaccompanied boys who were interviewed were living at an Open Reception Accommodation Facility which is a camp with housing units (prefabricated houses) within the city under the management Ministry of Civil Protection (former Ministry of Migration Policy). At the time of the workshops, the unaccompanied boys were under the care of relevant NGOs who were their legal care-takers and responsible for their education as well.

The fact that they did not have family support created more barriers for them, because the sense of loneliness, social isolation, and cultural dissonance were greater than for those children living with their family. For unaccompanied children (UAC), all aspects of their social lives have been constantly changing for several years. As a result, such children reported lower self-esteem, an intense feeling of uncertainty, and low expectations for their performance at school, which becomes associated with bad feelings. Unaccompanied children needed more encouragement, acknowledgement by the teacher, and social support in order to feel happy.

SELF-IMAGE

Teenagers focused more on their competencies and efforts in order to be able to feel better about their life, than the younger children. Resilience and personal capacities were necessary in order for the child to achieve his/her goals. They mentioned that they "feel junior at school because you are not quite psychologically or physically ready." Setting goals for the future indicated that the teenagers felt engaged and happy in their lives. Children themselves mentioned that they should develop their resilience and skills with regards to studying and concentrating. At university level, the children felt they needed to have built very good skills for studying hard so that they could achieve their goals.

TIME SPENT IN HOST COUNTRY AND AGE OF ARRIVAL

The majority of boys and girls participating in the workshops had recently arrived. They were asylum seekers and international protection beneficiaries from Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, Democratic Republic of Congo, and other countries, as well as second-generation migrants from Albania who were born in Greece. Some of the children interviewed who were recently arrived in

Greece were enrolled in formal education, while others were not. The second-generation migrants had all been enrolled in school since the first elementary class or even in kindergarten.

Refugee and migrant teenagers, depending on the time spent in host country, had different priorities in what made them happy or sad, as they had a different level of cultural dissonance and had developed different coping mechanisms. Teenagers who had spent only a short time spent in Greece had to overcome difficulties with language and communication, which becomes a larger gap to bridge the older the child at time of arrival. Consequently, age at the time of migration played an important role in their wellbeing.

Second-generation teenagers (children whose parents have migrated to Greece but themselves were born in Greece) mentioned social acceptance and social anxiety as the major challenges that they faced, which stemmed from the discrimination that they and their parents have experienced in Greece for several years.

CULTURAL SIMILARITY

Children mentioned that they felt better when they had classmates of the same origin or with similar migratory experiences in their school. They felt that they could talk more easily about their identity. Some children suggested that they needed to be with children of similar background. This sense of belonging was important for them as it boosted their self-esteem. Children's mental health was highly affected by their image in society and whether they felt accepted or not. However, some children mentioned that even though they had a low sense of belonging, they preferred to be with children of the host country in school, because it helped them learn the language and become familiar with the Greek culture. Trying to understand the culture was mostly associated with good feelings. It was observed that classes where the children learn their mother tongue could boost their confidence as they became more culturally aware.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

High school children discussed the fact that financial conditions were very important in someone's life, because having met their basic needs, they could concentrate on studying. Children needed to have their own space so that they were able to concentrate, which is not a

given for unaccompanied minors or children with lower financial status, since they might need to work to earn their living or cohabitate.

Children suggested that they could also be provided with financial support, since some families do not have the necessary means for sending their children to school. At university they would need financial support because they might not have the budget to study and need to work in order to earn their living.

CURRICULAR DEFICITS AND SUPPORTS

Children said that adjusted school curricula for non-native children was needed, along with a slower pace of learning, especially for teenagers. They believed that they could be helped by auxiliary school classes and a friendlier school program. One girl said that she might have a headache if she studied hard. Therefore, it seemed that the physical health of children might be affected by the school program and the demands of the curriculum. Children particularly mentioned that "the school curriculum is not organized." Children said that they wanted to be able to go later in the morning at school and to have a better school schedule. They said that "the lesson needs to be more substantial" and that "knowledge has to be not only theoretical but also practical".

A better school environment and a quieter class helped children to concentrate. A behavioural framework at school and within the family helped children build their social skills. They also mentioned that they needed language support and used technology within the class. They also needed better school equipment so that they could do experiments at school in the context of some classes. Lastly, children liked to use technology in class for research purposes and for personal purposes during breaks. They wanted to be able to send messages through their mobiles

Children over 15 years old had limited opportunities for accessing formal education through institutions such as the General Public High School, Vocational Education High School and Second chance school, which do not actually suit their profile. As a result, the education system was not adjusted to the needs of foreign children, and therefore they were easily discouraged and discontinued their studies. The children mentioned that they did not have access to school or

that they have attended only one or two times. Nevertheless, one of the children acknowledged that the educational system in Greece was better than the system of their country. The problem was, as they said, that the school curriculum was not suitable for their needs.

4.2.2 Micro level – parents' data

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The majority of parents whose children attended Greek school from the elementary level did not face any language or communication issues at school. One parent said that she knew other parents who were told that there were not enough places at the public school for their children and that "children want to go to school so badly that they cry every day about it. These children, five to seven years old, have already caught up Greek through TV or friends." One parent said that they had to hire a teacher to visit them in the house twice a week so that their children learned Greek. Another parent said that she had a friend who had been trying to enrol their children in school for over a year now, but this was not possible. It was clear that the right to access education for children in Greece was not being met in practice in several cases. This happened either because the children did not have access to the schools nearest their residence or because the curriculum was not meeting children's needs (curriculum not adapted for non-native children).

DISCRIMINATION

Syrian children who attended school from their early years faced discrimination because of their origin, as do many migrants in Greece according to their testimonies. These children spoke both Greek and Arabic as their mother tongue. At home with their parents they speak Arabic, but they are ashamed to speak Arabic in front of their classmates or at school because they feel stigmatized by their peers. Parents said that their children often experienced discrimination from their peers, their teachers, and the school system in general, but they mentioned that this was not always the case.

Some parents seemed to understand how native parents thought with regards to the discrimination that their children faced at school and believed that the parents were responsible

for the ideas and beliefs that the children brought to school. For example, they said that "…they (Greeks) also are right; there are murders, thefts and things like that committed by migrants, that's why. So they say, 'don't go with him he is Syrian, don't go with her she's Albanian'." Some parents said that their children faced discrimination from a teacher who taught the religion class (Christian Orthodox) within the public school according to Ministry's curriculum. It seemed that having a different religious orientation may have stigmatized children at school even though they were Greek or spoke Greek and were integrated at a social level.

Poor child protection mechanisms within school systems discouraged integration of migrant and refugee children. Participants mentioned that one girl had to stop attending school for two and a half months because of the racist behaviour of one of her teachers. The teacher was using the word "Syrian" as intimidating on several occasions in the classroom. The parents of the girl reported this to the NGO who accommodated them and the social worker intervened, pushing for a solution. The school management agreed to apologize but the situation in the class did not change and after some weeks the teacher continued exhibiting discriminatory behaviour. The refugee girl was not able to change school, because all children are assigned to the schools near their residence. It was observed that institutional discrimination prevented a sense of belonging on the part of children, parents, and communities of migrants and refugees.

TEACHERS

Participants counted on the teacher's involvement and role within the class and valued them highly. They believed that teachers were responsible for creating a harmonious atmosphere within the class and was the one who communicates with the family, if any issues arose with their children. All parents, including the newly arrived refugees, had established communication with the teachers directly, although the newly arrived refugees in the beginning got social and interpretation support by the NGOs who provided them with accommodation. The level of parents' engagement in the school life of their children was an important indicator that showed the integration of all family members. School could be a great medium for parents to integrate, as well. Mechanisms established by schools to facilitate communication with foreign parents also showed the level of parents' and students' integration.

Syrian parents focused a lot on the role of the teacher and how teachers were or were not supported by the system. They said that teachers who had to be in schools where the majority of children were from countries other than Greece had a harder job to do, but they were paid the same. They suggested that teachers in multicultural environments should have a financial motive for performing better in the classroom.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

Parents mentioned that they wanted to be involved in the school life of their children. Sometimes they wanted to support their children at school, but they were usually unable to, because they did not know the Greek language well. Some parents mentioned that they wanted to follow Greek courses, but they had to pay for them. They said that there used to be classes at the municipality, but not anymore. Therefore, access to language classes for parents affected the integration level of children and lack of financial resources of parents may have limited opportunities of learning the language and achieving highly at school.

WORKLOAD

Another issue that the parents brought up was that their children were very much over-burdened with homework and the many books that they carried to school. Children in high school attend school only because it was obligatory since all native and non-native children were expected to learn through private education (after-school classes). Many teachers encouraged the practice of not learning at school, because the same teachers provided private classes after school hours. Parents complained that they could not afford this cost.

4.2.3   Meso level

ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

According to the participants, the most important problems facing children's integration in school concerned teenagers. While access to education was facilitated by the recent establishment of afternoon preparatory classes for primary school students (see country level information), registration in junior high schools and high schools was very difficult due to lack of sufficient places. The participants agreed it was impossible for children to learn Greek if they were not

enrolled in formal education. Non-formal education did not work very well, because migrant students did not have the chance to interact with Greek students. Language learning was also more difficult for teenagers. Afternoon preparatory classes were not provided in junior high schools and high schools. Another problem was the lack of interpreters at schools, which rendered communication with parents impossible. Regarding asylum-seeking children, there was no provision for school absences when the children had to present themselves at the asylum service for registration of asylum application, interview, renewal of cards, notification of decisions, etc. The long waiting periods on the islands due to geographical restriction and the subsequent frequent changes of residence depending on the capacity of the accommodation schemes were additional obstacles to children's integration in schools.

TEACHER TRAINING

Teachers had not received any integration training, and they were not provided with relevant tools in order to facilitate integration. They also lacked knowledge regarding children's background (e.g. absences during Ramadan). While the Ministry of Education had organized some train-the-trainer events for principals, they could not transmit this knowledge to teachers because teachers were hired on annual basis and posts were filled by different professionals every year.

Due to the above-mentioned problems in schools, children were often discouraged, frustrated and lost their motivation. This also affected the professionals who felt that their work did not end in the desired results. Parents were also angry because of this situation and caused more stress to their children. Professionals also mentioned the difficulties in the asylum procedure and lack of reception conditions as negative factors for integration at school.

UNCERTAINTY, LEGAL STATUS, AND ACCESS TO WORK

The participants mentioned the uncertainty that children experienced regarding their future, especially unaccompanied children. The major factor that created uncertainty was legal status, followed by accommodation status, and finally education. For children who had very recently become adults and had not yet finished school, there were no ready solutions for continuing their studies. The most common practice was to go to a second chance school. However, if they did not have good level of Greek, then de facto they were not able to continue studying. They usually

preferred to learn a profession through a technical school in order to work, earn their living, and become autonomous. Accessing the job market though was very difficult without good or proven language skills (M.D. Marouda, Saranti, Koutsouraki and Rossidi, 2014).

Another issue that young adults faced was leaving the shelter for minors and living on their own. This was almost impossible considering their level of maturity, possible health status, and other factors such as school, work, and other family obligations. The integration process was therefore difficult for both the children and the professionals, because the procedures were not enabling progression. Non-formal education provided skills, however it could not provide the necessary certificate which would grant access to work.

Some children were out of school for many years and were not used to school culture, which created an additional barrier in the learning process.

OVERBURDENED SYSTEM

Professionals who provided support to children were playing multiple roles, i.e. parent, social worker, psychologist, lawyer, doctor, friend, etc. This happened because the support system was broken for many different types of services, which children did not understand. Children needed the right type of support irrespective of the profession of their supporter. Multiple roles confused the child, prolonging procedures and exposing the child to multiple traumas.

RESILIENCE AND FAMILY

In cases where children were resilient and had a concrete life-plan, this was helpful to them and their supporters. The level of resilience played an important role for coping in a new environment. Resilience was not necessarily connected with external factors and experiences but rather stemmed from the love and acceptance created within the family, their first experiences, and self-esteem. Children who had care responsibilities for other family members faced even more difficulties, as they have adult responsibilities very early on in their lives. Such children did not receive any additional support and therefore could not earn a living, become independent, and integrate. In such cases, they preferred to leave the country and live with their (extended) family in another country. All professionals agreed that family reunification for minors should be

quicker, as extended time in application processing created a limbo situation for both the child and the professional and did not facilitate education or integration.

BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

The subject of refugee and migrant children who faced bullying at school was set brought up by the participants. Teachers usually did not have the expertise needed or the time to support children within the school framework. Wearing a hijab had a stigmatizing effect for girls from different religious or ethnic backgrounds. The participants reported that teachers who decided to hold a discussion in class in order to resolve discrimination issues usually had no result, and the family decided to change schools. However, changing schools was not always possible, so the children end up dropping out of school for several months. The participants focused only on the negative reactions of parents and teachers towards the child. It was usually the child's burden to adapt to society, and there was no intercultural dialogue developed. Gender issues between children, particularly those from Middle Eastern countries, needed a great deal of discussion with parents and children in order to adapt. Students dropping out of school due to gender perceptions was more for female students. The participants noted that gender roles in middle eastern societies were very different than those in Europe.

4.2.4 Macro level

LACK OF DATA AND INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES

The Ombudsman for Children highlighted the fact that the exact number of migrant and refugee children present in Greece was not known and there was no monitoring mechanism regarding school registrations. Furthermore, the number of afternoon preparatory classes was insufficient and did not provide children with a certificate allowing continuation of studies. The insufficient number of teachers and the lack of psychologists at schools, as well as the lack of support and relevant training to teachers, were also significant obstacles. The lack of reception facilities for families and unaccompanied children, homelessness, accommodation in Registration and Identification Centres (mostly hotspots on the islands) and remote accommodation facilities (mostly camps in the mainland) prevented access to school for refugee and migrant children. For teenagers over 15 years of age, school enrolment and integration were highly problematic. Those

who wished to register in evening schools must provide evidence of working legally and dispose a legal guardian in order to issue a VAT Registration Number. Unfortunately, this was possible only in a small number of cases, and in all other cases, registration in evening schools was not allowed.

INCLUSION VS. INTEGRATION

The Head of the Department for the Coordination and Monitoring of the Refugee Education noted that there was a difference between the terms "integration" and "inclusion in education". The Head of the Department believed that Greece was among the EU and Council of Europe countries with the friendliest legislation with regards to the right of children to access education. This meant that in Greece, children had the right according to Greek Law L.4547/2018 (a specific chapter for refugee children is included) to access school even if they did not have any documentation (i.e. not even birth certificate).

Problems with integration process therefore commenced after children accessed school. The education system had failed (as a whole) due firstly to lack of educators/teachers and psychologists and secondly with regards to the inclusion of foreign children, because Greek society was not ready to embrace them. To achieve inclusion, the system needed democratically competent teachers and staff in schools, as well as democratic policies and legislation. Currently Greek society, including teachers, was not ready to integrate foreigners. Teachers were citizens and parents at the same time, which meant that teachers were themselves part of society. There were various examples where civil servants of the Ministry of Education (MoE) acted in direct contradiction to integration policies. For example, there were specific schools, (Municipality of Filipiada, Municipality of Oropos, Municipality Samos), where local inhabitants, including headmasters, did not want refugee children in schools, even though the children were following specific classes (DYEP –reception classes) during afternoon hours. Such practices have been reported and reached the Supreme Court of Greece. The Court decided in favor of the children's rights, however, the headmaster of Oropos still complained to the Ministry that they did not wish to accept refugee children in his school.

During the refugee crisis that started in late 2015, there were people who showed strong solidarity with refugees and people or groups who completely opposed their integration. There

were schools and Headmasters who supported reception classes in the morning hours, which was best practice, because the children began to socialize from the first day. Reception classes were a transitional model for refugee children and local communities; children learned how school works and local society becomes accustomed to the idea of hosting new members in their community. This model worked well in remote areas, and it introduced both communities to one another.

The Head of the Department felt that the reason integration was not achieved was not necessarily that teachers lacked adequate theoretical knowledge and teaching methods. It should be taken into account that the contemporary education model taught in universities was relatively progressive, based on inclusive attitudes and values. However, it seemed that many teachers were not willing to embrace such positions and values within their class and teaching. On the other hand, there were teachers who lacked experience, but managed very well to integrate foreign students in their class. Consequently, it was the willingness of the teacher that played an important role in achieving inclusion within the class. The crisis in values in Greece during the past ten years was the hidden cause behind such xenophobic, non-inclusive attitudes.

UACs and other children who remained outside school for five or six years found it very difficult to integrate. Better residences and support provision (foster families and SIL) would be beneficial for them. Good living conditions were very important for the children in order to be able to go to school and perform.

Social inclusion should be a two-way process, according to the participant. Both parties should be willing to get on with each other. However, UACs usually did not wish to stay in Greece for various reasons, such as family reunification in another EU country or working in EU, and therefore no matter what policies were implemented, this would not work.

RESISTANCE TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Another systemic problem was unionism in Greece. The political associations that teachers and school education professionals join, plus the political parties that are connected to them, opposed policies that would enhance the education system's functionality. To be more accurate, teachers with additional qualifications should have been capitalized on by the Ministry of

Education, but they were not, because a certain amendment in the new law did not pass due to old syndicate practices. Teachers who had expertise, skills and qualifications, were not supported by middle-management mechanisms; their expertise was not acknowledged, assessed or promoted by the system. The teachers who were being hired in reception classes were not assessed and chosen based on their specific qualifications and expertise.

The Head of the Department believed there was a paradox in Greece; schools were "a closed community". Schools did not embrace civil society and non-formal education practices. Education of refugees, on the other hand, demanded "an extrovert school", open to non-formal education and civil society, because different tools were needed to make refugee education work. Non-formal education actors (NGOs) opened doors to refugee children to access school, because they provided motivation and then support, i.e. "home school support", so that children could cope with their classes at school. NGOs in Greece which provide education services were required to file their education program at the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP), which granted the necessary approval. However, the MoE did not supervise the non-formal education projects implemented regionally all over the country.

The MoE worked closely with NGOs and through ESWG,[26] UNICEF and non-formal education actors so that they could frame children's education. NGOs whose mandates were not in education, such as *METAdrasi* who provided with interpretation services, were very valuable. Learning the mother tongue was also an important service and tool provided by NGOs for non-native children, because it enhanced their learning skills. The Department, MoE, and Municipality of Athens at some point created the "open schools" project for schools to remain open during the afternoon and provide classes and other non-formal education activities for children irrespective of their background. Unfortunately, this project was not supported after the change in the political scene following the elections of summer 2019.

TEACHER TRAINING AND ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

Tools and methods for learning Greek language as a foreign language were taught at the universities and some tools could also be accessed through the IEP website. However, universities needed to update their taught programs and provide further training of teachers in

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[26] ESWG: Education Sub-Working Group- a coordination mechanism for education of refugees (and migrants) at national level.

intercultural education, according to the Head of the Department. Psychologists and social workers were also needed in order to support educators who cannot be made responsible for everything. Decision-making, dispute resolution, crisis management and anger management were themes that should be included in training and learning programs of professionals.

Refugee access to tertiary education was non-existent in practice. Universities in Greece should include courses taught in English.

Other systemic failures of the education system included non-capitalization of teachers' experience in intercultural skills, non-assessment of relevant qualifications of teachers, the mechanism of teacher substitutes, administration inflexibility (such as curriculum for natives, online application "My school", duplication of registrations, absences mechanism, name of foreign students translated in Greek, mobility of refugees, and over-concentration in some regions), lack of continuous training, and capacity building of teachers.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The participant from UNICEF felt it was very positive children have the right to access education and school is guaranteed in Greek legislation, even though refugee and migrant children have faced some difficulties in practice. The legal status of a child was of no importance when it came to accessing education. The only document needed in practice was the registration paper issued by the Police or any other relevant authority, such as RIS. The child then needed to have completed the Greek vaccination program and to have accommodation. It was important to focus on each child, and whether she/he was integrated and included in the school and in the class. This was a question of the quality of education provided.

A difference was noted in access among various locations in Greece. Access on the islands was much more limited than on the mainland. This was due to practical obstacles, such as geographical restriction on the islands (effective administrative procedures with regards to the entrance of third country nationals in EU). This meant that many school aged children were concentrated in a much smaller geographical space. For example, in Samos there were 1,500 school aged refugee children, while the native children numbered less than 600, which meant that there were no more than 600 school places available in Samos. All relevant public services such

as hospitals, police, and Civilian Support Offices, provide services to a specific number of beneficiaries. Between the mainland and the islands, a controversial phenomenon arose as to where the procedure of reception and identification took place. The policies and practice put in place were meant to be short-term, while on the other hand, state laws set out a long-term solution with regards to education, which was the inclusion of all children in school. Therefore, the location or the type of accommodation affected access to education and level of integration. In urban areas, for example, in the center of Athens where there was a high concentration of the refugee population, there was also a high number of students. The same applied to "Emergency Hotels" (accommodation funded by IOM), which do not enable access to school. The types of accommodation that created the biggest barriers to accessing school for newly arrived asylum seekers were the islands of the North Aegean and the "Emergency Hotels". According to data provided through the Education Sub-Working Group,[27] the percentage of refugee children who accessed school per accommodation type was:

- 76% of children living in Open Reception Facilities (sites/camps/hotspots)
- 80% of children living in ESTIA Accommodation (accommodation funded by UNHCR in the urban areas of Greece[28])
- 67% of children living in UAC Shelters
- 16% of children living in Emergency Hotels

Inclusion of children in education was the result of two variables, society's readiness to accept new communities and teachers' knowledge of democratic values and intercultural education. For example, differentiated teaching was a necessary method for teachers to use within the class.

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[27] ESWG is a coordination body chaired by UNICEF at national level where national stakeholders take part, including authorities, representatives, NGOs all working in formal and non-formal education.

[28] ESTIA Accommodation Programme as of November 2019, has capacity of approximately 25,000 places for asylum seekers arriving in Greece after 01.01.2016. It is funded by DG Home (EC) and it is managed by UNHCR and local NGOs. There are approximately 14,000 places in Attica (Athens), a total of approximately 22,000 places in the mainland (including Crete- not a point of arrival) and only 1,500 accommodation places in the islands. The occupancy rate in the programme exceeds 97%. See UNHCR data portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/72189

LACK OF MID-LEVEL SUPPORT

According to the UNICEF participant, the main obstacles to provision of quality education for all children were systemic. Within the education system, over the last three years at least (2015-2018), education was supported top-down. According to UNESCO report, education in Greece was operating in a paradoxical system where senior management supported inclusive policies, but there was no middle-management to support and follow the effective implementation of such policies. For example, education consultants, continuous training, and education, etc., would either support the headmasters and teachers or limit them. Education consultants had a very big number of schools under their supervision and therefore their work could not be effective. When the system was left to its own devices to be supported bottom-up, we observed that it did not work, because it was based solely on the values of the front-liners. However, the value system was not strong enough to support the whole pyramid. Teachers associations could have played an important role in mentoring and coaching, life-long education, and training such that that front-liners were empowered within their own community.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

With regards to intercultural education and integration, the UNICEF participant felt that the multicultural school model was much better than the reception class model. Reception classes were the option with the best value for money and the best logistics option. The newly instated reception classes were not supported by the IEP to perform at their best. The general public school of the neighborhood was the best model for achieving inclusion. It has been observed over the last three years that children who access public schools have developed better language skills and have improved their performance.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

UACs have had to overcome more barriers than children who live with their families. First, they needed a guardian to be appointed by the state in order to get registered at school, which is a time-consuming legal procedure. They lacked support to cover their basic physical needs. For example, children in Safe Zones and Shelters did not get enough food portions. Because of their journey, they faced more mental health issues. The majority of UACs are 15+ years old, which is

when education becomes non-obligatory in Greece. Such children have general knowledge gaps because they were out of school for many years. When they arrive in Greece, these children were registered in school and placed in classes based on their age, which was a problematic criterion, as they could not overcome their knowledge gaps. The education systems in their countries of origin usually had a very different approach to education and emphasised different types of knowledge, including vocational training. Living in Shelters or Safe Zones with many children and with only one social worker to follow up on all of their needs, not having private rooms, being subjected to illegal practices, etc., combined to ensure they did not have the support they needed to become good students. Different accommodation modalities such as foster families, if they existed in Greece, would be better suited to enabling their integration.

The current living and legal situation of UAC children is putting them at a significant disadvantage in the school environment. Issues identified by research participants include some UAC children being unable to cope in the school environment and becoming marginalized. There can be tension between teachers and Head Masters and UAMs who are often categorized as 'difficult cases' leading to stigmatization and higher rates of school drop-out. There is also a gap in practice and knowledge in relation to UAMs experiences and motivations in relation to education in Greece. Some of the research respondents report that for some of the UAMs their motivation for being in Greece is to access work in Central Europe rather than participate in the Greek education system. Also reception classes offer only language skills and are not meeting the UAMs needs. Math, physics, art, PE, are not included in the school curriculum for them. In conclusion, UAMs children face a multi-level exclusion.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation programs in Greece do not enable asylum seekers to exercise their rights in full. It is often observed that "access to education" is sacrificed for the right to "access to health". This means that, children who live in the city center might be able to have access to accommodation and health services but they cannot access school, because of the high concentration of children population in the city center schools and the lack of places in schools.

Accommodation programs were based on the idea of "transit".[29] However, education and integration cannot be based on this notion. School communities cannot change very easily. The mobility aspect of refugees and asylum-seekers within the country (from the islands to mainland) is in contradiction with school's policies and practices which are organised to accommodate sedentarism.

ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY

Access to University in Greece is possible but not enabled. It is necessary that the person has a residence permit and must have finished secondary education in Greece or in another country. They need to present these documents and apply at MoE during June-July in order to enter in the first year of Greek Universities. Within the first year the student must obtain B2 level and within the second year C1 level. At the same time there are some private Universities provide scholarships for refugees and asylum-seekers, but to a very limited number. The problem is who assesses that the candidate has the relevant qualifications for entering University. In Greece, access to University it is a "hot potato", because it is considered of very high social importance and therefore policies should include not only the migrant and the refugee, but also the under-privileged or poor local student.

THE ROLE OF UNICEF

UNICEF's main role in the refugee response was to co-ordinate the *Education Sub-Working Group* which assisted in the monitoring and co-ordination of education activities across the country and especially the non-formal education. UNICEF provides education and protection services in 13 open reception facilities with IOM's co-operation. UNICEF and MoE have signed an MoU with regards to their co-operation. UNICEF supported the Ministry in administrative and operational activities including, trainings and information material.

One of the challenges faced as UNICEF is that International Organizations need to adjust very quickly in the legal and local context of each country and specifically in Europe, where even emergency situation, requires very delicate interventions due to its complexity. However,

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[29] ESTIA Accommodation programme when it began in 2016, use to accommodate only asylum-seekers in the process of family reunification with their members in another EU country. Therefore, the services included in the program did not include the integration aspect.

following the three years of refugee influx, the adjustment has been achieved. The problems faced in Greece are the same among EU countries. UNICEF currently plans to include all children under the umbrella of its activities. "Akelius" platform is also a new pilot project implemented by UNICEF that provides classes through tablet and provides an additional tool to the teacher for supporting the student.

4.3 Results from Other IMMERSE Partners

In addition to the fieldwork conducted in Ireland and Greece that focused on psycho-social wellbeing, there were workshops conducted by IMMERSE partners in Spain, Italy, Germany, and Belgium using similar methodologies but focusing on different themes. Fieldwork conducted in Spain and Italy focused on multilingualism and interculturalism, and fieldwork conducted in Germany and Belgium focused on gender. The full details and findings from these workshops can be found in the reports authored by their research teams (see IMMERSE D1.2 *Report on Interculturalism and Multilingualism* and IMMERSE D1.4 *Report on Gender Issues*). In this section, we relate findings relevant to psycho-social wellbeing that were found in these other workshops. The data from Spain, Italy, Germany, and Belgium had much in common with the data from Ireland and Greece, such as the importance of friendships with peers, problems of language and translation, and experiences of racism. In order to avoid redundancy, we focus here on those findings that were unique to or manifested differently in the other IMMERSE partner countries.

At the micro level, children and parents in the Spanish and Italian workshops expressed more ambivalence towards their host countries than the participants in Greece and Ireland. Children missed not only the friends and family they had left behind, but also things like culture and food. Parents were not always at ease with the host country and its values and educational style, particularly in cases of forced migration and if the family was not in as prosperous a position as they had hoped when they moved. This was true for both newly arrived families and families that immigrated decades before. Participants in Germany and Belgium also noted the influence of socio-economic status on children's wellbeing.

Participants from the meso and macro level commented on the challenges migrant and refugee children face in terms of their identity and sense of belonging to the host country, which was often frustrated by difficulty gaining citizenship status. In the German and Belgian workshops,

participants noted that legal status and housing issues can have significant negative consequences for educational continuity and achievement and children's wellbeing. In Italy, even second-generation migrants are not automatically entitled to citizenship, creating intergenerational cultural dissonance. Indeed, cultural clashes were a source of tension for children in the 9-11-year-old group when the values and beliefs held by the family were very different from what the child was experiencing at school and with their new friends. The older children expressed fewer concerns with this tension, either because they had found ways to cope with it successfully or because they feel more independent from their parents and families, sometimes because of prolonged separations. The older children also felt more confidence in themselves and their futures, which was tied to belief in the host country as a place of opportunity. The adolescents in the Italian workshops were confident in themselves, but wary of Italian society in general because of the difficulty they saw in overcoming socio-cultural and economic inequalities.

The data from all four of these countries indicated a need for more careful attention to the trauma that many migrant and especially refugee children have suffered and how trauma translates into behavioural issues, a point particularly emphasised in the German and Belgian workshops. Meso and macro participants agreed that the education and healthcare systems and the asylum process are in general too poorly resourced and educated to assess and cope with child trauma and help prevent it from becoming worse or prevent new issues from arising due to resettlement in the host country. There is a need for better and more frequent coordination across assistance networks and greater communication amongst professionals who are responsible for service provision. In order to bolster these efforts, systematic data collection is necessary in order to better determine the needs of migrant and refugee populations. This is especially true for unaccompanied minors and other particularly vulnerable groups, who face unique stresses and worries, such as securing access to both education and work, managing their way through the asylum process, and day-to-day survival.

5 Conclusions and Implications

The findings from the Greek and Irish workshops and interviews had much in common and point to critical factors affecting integration. Based on these findings, we identified seven particularly

salient themes connected to migrant and refugee children's educational integration for each country, five of which overlap. Where we identify different themes for each country, this does not mean that these themes were not present in both countries' data, but that they were not equally prominent in both countries.

- **Confidence and self-esteem –** confidence and issues related to self-esteem were identified as important for migrant children's successful integration. Some of the parents also linked competency in the host language with improvements in their children's confidence. Meso level participants noted the link between academic success and mental health outcomes including self-confidence and self-image.

- **Friendships** – positive relationships and interactions with peers. To develop a strong sense of belonging, friendships with children from the host country and children from similar backgrounds were significant, as was access to friends outside of school/school hours. Access to extra-curricular activities were therefore also considered important. The opportunity to develop friendships affected not only migrant children's sense of belonging, but also their happiness, identity, self-esteem, and language competence

- **Relationships with teachers** – positive relationships and interactions with teachers for both children and their parents. Both children and parents appreciated teachers' emotional as well as intellectual investment, commenting on the caring and supportive attitudes they had observed. Teachers who adopted an inclusive approach in their classrooms contributed to children's sense of belonging, trust, happiness, motivation, and academic achievement, whereas teachers who were discriminatory made children feel isolated or targeted and mistrustful.

- **Language** – support for host language, home language, and linguistic diversity. Children and parents appreciated extra supports for learning the host country language, which was crucial for academic achievement and developing friendships, though parents were sometimes frustrated with the lack of information on how to obtain such supports. Children appreciated opportunities to retain their home languages and keep that part of their identity and to see multiple languages represented in school. Meso and macro participants agreed that language acquisition becomes more difficult the older the child at age of arrival in the host country.

- **Bullying and racism** – negative and often race-based interactions with peers, teachers, parents of native-born children, the education system, and people in the community. The younger children knew what racism was, but it was the older children who had experienced it in (and out) of schools. The incidents reported ranged from 'soft' instances, such as exclusion, verbal abuse, and unfair disciplinary practices, to more extreme examples, such as physical violence and targeted harassment. Such incidents had significant negative impacts on the children's sense of belonging, trust, and self-esteem.

- **Ireland - School climate, policy, and curriculum** – visible diversity in the school and policy/curriculum to support it. The children appreciated being able to see diversity in their schools and a school orientation where difference was 'built in', as it were. Meso and some of the macro participants were critical of the inflexible curriculum, the Catholic orientation of most Irish schools, and the tedious bureaucratic procedures that stood in the way of securing adequate supports for their migrant students. Policymakers, on the other hand, were optimistic about the shift in direction for policy and curriculum in Ireland toward a more flexible design but acknowledged that there are no supports directed specifically at migrant students, except for EAL resources.

- **Greece – Access to education and academic achievement** – adequate availability of school places and the opportunity to succeed academically. The Greek education system was overwhelmed and did not have enough places available for all migrant children, some of whom ended up on waiting lists for months or even years. This delay in entering school affected language acquisition and competence, the ability to develop friendships, sense of belonging, academic achievement, and happiness. Academic achievement became more important for the older children in the focus groups and more tied to successful integration. Being able to perform well academically gave them higher self-esteem and a greater sense of happiness and hope for the future.

- **Ireland - Housing policy** – direct provision (DP), lack of data, and admissions policies. This concern was not raised in the micro-level workshops, but the meso and especially the macro participants spoke about it at length. The DP system in Ireland for those in the asylum process was heavily criticised for being detrimental to children, with poor housing conditions that are often isolated and far from schools and peers. Shortages of up-to-date

data has led to capacity issues in schools, with migrant children left disadvantaged by admissions policies that favour longer-established families.

- **Greece – School resources** – adequate staff and physical resources in schools. Participants at all levels felt that schools were under-resourced, beyond the lack of places available. The children, even the children in the youngest age group, were concerned with the lack of or poor quality of school equipment and technology. They viewed technology and being technologically literate as particularly important for their future success. Parents, meso participants, and macro participants felt that schools did not have enough teachers and psychologists and that what teachers were present did not have adequate support, training, and knowledge of the children's backgrounds to facilitate integration. Meso participants thought that the Ministry of Education had made inadequate efforts to improve any of these problems, which often resulted in children being discouraged, frustrated, and losing motivation, parents feeling angry and stressed, and professionals thinking their work was not doing any good.

The findings from each country were not only highly aligned with each other, but also with the existing research literature reviewed earlier in this report. The importance of **feelings of belonging** highlighted in Correa-Velez et al. (2010) were echoed by all the children's groups when they talked about their friendships and the pain of social isolation. Research indicates that a sense of belonging in school is protective for students and supports the psychosocial and academic wellbeing of students (Feinauer Whiting, Everson, & Feinauer, 2018). Motti-Stefanidi et al. (2008) and others stressed the vital role of teachers and school climate in helping migrant and refugee children to integrate and succeed academically, a prominent theme from the children's and parents' workshops. Language and support for language learning, a central concern in integration research, was unsurprisingly a significant topic here, as well. Parents and children reported that incidents of bullying and racism had multiple negative impacts, as has been documented in numerous studies (Priest et al., 2014; Manyena & Brady, 2006; Mohamed & Thomas, 2017). Indeed, discussion from all three levels of participants reinforces Hart's (2009) caution that schools can be supportive, stabilising, integrating environments for migrant children, but they can also be sites of isolation, silencing, and discrimination.

Based on these findings and the existing research literature, we recommend the indicators listed in the tables below. These are separated into outcomes, demographic information, and determinants, first listing those that emerged from our qualitative data, then listing those we derived from the research literature that did not already appear in the qualitative data. The demographic information and the majority of the outcomes would be measured at the micro level, but many of the determinants have meso and macro dimensions.

Table 1A. Outcomes emerging from qualitative data

Outcome	Micro	Meso	Macro
Sense of belonging	X		
Confidence/self-esteem (inc. sense of hope/future orientation)	X		
Happiness	X		
Sense of identity	X		
Knowledge and retention of home language	X		
Acquisition of host language	X		
Friendships (within and outside of school)	X		
Good relationships with teachers	X		
Academic achievement	X		
De jure and de facto access to education	X	X	X

Table 1B. Demographic information emerging from qualitative data

Demographic information	Micro	Meso	Macro
Age	X		
Age at arrival in host country	X		
Whether arrived with family or unaccompanied	X		
Legal status	X		
Languages spoken on arrival/at home	X		
Country of origin	X		
Parents' country of origin	X		
Length of time in country	X		
Previous education	X		
Parents' level of education	X		
Parents' languages spoken	X		
Socioeconomic status/parental occupation (now and in country of origin)	X		

	Micro	Meso	Macro
Current living/housing situation	X		
Educational/future career aspirations	X		

Table 1C. Determinants emerging from qualitative data

Determinants	Micro	Meso	Macro
Supportive family environment	X		
Parental involvement in school	X		
Multicultural and representative curricula		X	X
Ethnic heterogeneity of school population		X	
Intercultural school policy/climate		X	X
Intercultural training/CPD for teachers		X	X
Availability of language supports for acquiring host language		X	
Availability of supports for retaining home language		X	
School resources – staff		X	X
School resources – equipment and technology		X	X
Equitable school admissions policy		X	X
Availability/accessibility of extra-curricular activities		X	X
Incidents of racism/race-based bullying (either personally experienced or presence in school/neighbourhood/region)	X	X	X
Neighbourhood characteristics – facilities and amenities		X	
Neighbourhood characteristics – population		X	
National policy/resources supporting integration			X
National leadership supporting intercultural values		X	X
Equitable regional/national housing policy		X	X
Data collection on migrant population		X	X

Table 2A. Outcomes emerging from research literature (not already listed above)

Outcome	Micro	Meso	Macro
Physical health	X		
Mental health	X		
Opportunity to acquire citizenship			X
Access to tertiary education		X	X

Table 2B. Demographic information emerging from research literature (not already listed above)

Demographic information	Micro	Meso	Macro
Reasons for migrating	X		

Known physical or mental health issues	X
Known learning difficulties	X
Members of household	X

Table 2C. Determinants emerging from research literature (not already listed above)

Determinant	Micro	Meso	Macro
SES heterogeneity of school population		X	
Financial support to pursue tertiary education		X	X
Access to healthcare		X	X
Access to mental healthcare		X	X

It is important to note that the data shows that the factors affecting integration are highly interrelated, particularly indicators of wellbeing. In a way, wellbeing is both an outcome affected by all the other outcomes and a determinant that affects all the other outcomes. It's relationship with the other outcomes is mutually reinforcing. For example, the data indicates that self-esteem and happiness can affect academic achievement and language acquisition, but that the reverse is also true.

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