



Foster Educational Inclusion
of Newly Arrived Migrant Children

2.3. Final framework of the two good practices for the partner organizations

KMOP



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Introduction

It is widely known that migrant children, apart from the mere migration process which is often traumatic and the frequent inability of the socioeconomic context to provide adequate resources for them, experience a series of obstacles also when it comes to their inclusion in the education systems and schools of the host countries. Problems faced include inappropriate grade placement, language provision that is not adapted to their mother tongue, insufficient learning support and teachers' difficulty in handling diversity which all result in migrant students' lower educational achievement and poor retention in the education system. Data from Eurostat¹ show indeed that in 2019 the rates of foreign-born early leavers from education and training were very high in the countries of Italy (32.3 %), Spain (31.1 %), Greece (26.9 %) and Cyprus (23.3 %). Moreover, the largest discrepancies between percentages of foreign-born and native-born early leavers from education and training (with higher rates for foreign-born individuals) were recorded in Greece (24.0 percentage points), Italy (21.0 points), Cyprus (18.5 points) and Spain (16.7 points), while Austria also recorded double digit point differences.

These data suggest that new policy responses are required for the education systems across Europe. Since 2017 the European Commission's Education and Training (ET) Working Group² has not only identified the main challenges for the inclusion of newly arrived migrants into education, but also ways to address them. The specific challenges include problems in assessing migrant children's prior learning, adequately responding to their educational gaps, and last but not least, adapting general learning approaches and needs to individual ones. To address these difficulties the group has proposed the provision of assistance to teachers, as well as a number of measures such as mentoring, support for the acquisition of language and recognition of prior learning, encouraging the utilisation of existing resources, including good practices and peer-learning activities.

Background

Migrant students' inclusion and participation in education is of paramount importance not only to ensure the children's rights and combat discrimination, but most importantly in order to promote the well-being of children and of society as a whole. The FEINAMC Project (Disseminating and scaling up good practices to Foster Educational Inclusion of Newly Arrived Migrant Children) aims to address some of the challenges described above regarding the inclusion of migrant students in education through the replication of two means that have already been identified and implemented as good practices. Those are a mentoring programme and a prior learning assessment tool, which both incorporate the aforementioned experts' suggestions.

The Mentoring Programme was developed in the framework of the project "Promoting Meaningful Integration of 3rd Country National Children to Education - IntegratEd-Project number: 776143" for newly arrived migrant children. It was launched during the academic year 2018-2019 and was implemented also during 2019-2020 by three project partners (InteRed, CESIE and KMOP).

¹ See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migrant_integration_statistics_-_education&oldid=529663 for more information

² See https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/2017-report-migrant-integration_en.pdf for more information

A total of 15 schools (5 per partner country: Italy, Greece and Spain) have participated so far, 25 mentor-mentee pairs have been formed (50 students per school and country), while 150 teachers have been trained in intercultural skills and diversity in the participating countries (50 per partner country: Italy, Greece and Spain).

As for the Prior Learning Assessment Tool, it is part of the intervention “InClusion of Refugee Children in Education- CIRCLE – 2018-3027/001-001” elaborated by KMOP which will train the rest of the partners in this good practice for its subsequent application in Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Austria. Therefore, the implementation of the prior learning assessment tool is new for most organizations participating in the FEINAMC project (Südwind, CARDET, CESIE and InteRed) and its implementation will be carried out for the first time in a total of 20 schools across partner countries.

Objectives

The objective of FEINAMC is to replicate and upscale those two good practices so as to foster the inclusion of newly arrived migrant children in the formal educational systems in the countries of Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain and in the European Union in general. What is meant by replication of good practices is to transfer them to a wider scale, a different context and implement them at a systemic level. During the next phases of the FEINAMC project the two good practices will be implemented in 20 schools in participating countries (4 per partner country: Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Austria) to promote the inclusion of migrant students in education. It is expected that a total of 160 - 200 students (80 - 100 pairs of mentors and newly arrived migrants-mentees), 40 teachers (2 per school) and 20 heads of schools (4 per partner country) will participate in the mentoring programme, while the prior learning assessment tool will be used with 80 - 100 newly arrived migrant children. Moreover, those two good practices will be scaled up in 6 schools (2 in three partner countries: Italy, Greece and Spain) which will include them in their Educational School projects and incorporate them in their schools’ educational policies.

Apart from migrant students who are the main target group of the project, indirect target groups include the student communities of participating schools, teachers and education staff in general as well as the migrant students’ families. It is estimated that the 20 schools involved in the project will gather more than 20.000 students as indirect target groups. The two good practices will not only promote the inclusion of migrant students in education, but also add value to the educational teaching quality of the school, and benefit migrant families as a whole. Last but not least, policy recommendations for the inclusion of newly arrived migrant students in partner countries’ schools ensures that the future students will also get to benefit from these good practices in the long-run.

The FEINAMC Project WP2-A.2. Analysis and exchange of institutional learning of the good practices identified entails the upscaling of the two good practices (Mentoring Programme and Prior Learning Assessment Tool), as well as an exchange of related institutional learning through the implementation of four activities:

1. A.2.1. An initial framework of two good practices (i.e., background, lessons learned from experience, the rationale behind the selection of these tools, methodological approach, etc.)

2. A.2.2. An International Training Meeting to engage in the analysis and exchange of institutional learning of the good practices with the participation of partner members during which the organisations that have already implemented the good practices will train the rest.
3. A.2.3. A final version of the two good practices framework which will consolidate the work done during the aforementioned meeting.
4. A.2.4. An Inter-partner Training for implementing the Mentoring Programme in Cyprus and Austria for the first time in which KMOP will introduce partners to the programme.

The present document presents the final framework (A.2.3.) of the two good practices for the partner organizations which is based on the work done in the International Training Meeting following the exchange of experiences between project partners (A.2.2). This is an internal document of the consortium which includes the elements that need to be considered for the implementation of the two good practices in schools and it will facilitate the implementation of the project's activities at national level. What is more, the framework analyses the lessons learned from previous experience with these practices in order not only to consolidate the good practices, but also to critically evaluate them and incorporate partners' feedback to improve them.

Mentoring Programme

Definition/contextualization

The first good practice selected is the Mentoring Programme ("Promoting Meaningful Integration of 3rd Country National Children to Education - IntegratEd-Project number: 776143") which aims to promote the inclusion of newly arrived migrant students through mentoring, that is through the active involvement with their peers and the development of relationships between them. Mentoring is a valuable tool that can make the inclusion process of young migrant students easier by providing them with guidance and support. Having a peer as reference point enhances a smooth inclusion of the students both in the school context and in groups of peers as the mentor-mentee relationship allows students to create a positive relationship with other students with whom it is easier to talk to and express themselves. At the same time, mentors benefit as well from their participation in the mentoring process which is precious in terms of personal development and acquisition of important soft skills and abilities. In addition to the former, the mentoring programme, by establishing a peer support structure, greatly facilitates educators in their teaching in which they are no longer by themselves, but have the support of mentoring students, something that encourages student participation and cooperation.

It is relevant to highlight the intercultural component of the mentoring programme as it is described in the [Mentor's Guide](#)³ elaborated in the framework of the IntegraTed Project. Therefore, cultural sensitiveness and mutual respect must be a constant element of the mentoring programme. Intercultural skills such as being open-minded, prone to dialogue, respecting others' ideas and ways of living must be key elements on which mentors build their relationship with the mentees. Avoiding

³ See [Mentor's Guide](#) (p. 7) for more information

stereotype-induced ideas and presumptions not only will help mentors to make feel their mentee more comfortable, but also will give them the chance to get insights of another culture. Mentors should be ready to change their own point of view and start their relationship with the mentee keeping aside any kind of pre-existing cultural assumptions.

Mentors' and Mentees' description and roles

Before describing the mentors' role and tasks, it is important to also clarify the mentees' background. The main beneficiaries of the programme are newly arrived students who are about to start or continue their schooling in the host country. This group of students is not homogeneous and often differs in terms of nationality, age, cultural background, learning practice as well as life experiences and language spoken.

Nevertheless, some similarities are present within this population especially in terms of barriers and challenges they face in their education. Lack of language skills is a common challenge for many of those students. The fact that they usually do not speak the host country's language fluently enough has an impact on their educational experience, but also on their ability to form friendships and be part of the new school community. Thus, finding their place within the class and school community is challenging for them; especially the ones that do not yet speak the language used at school face additional barriers and may end up feeling confused and isolated. Another challenge is that migrant students' often hold different cultural norms such as eating habits, religion, codes of behaviour and so forth. Newly arrived migrant students may have difficulty understanding and embracing both the new ways of being and the educational practices in the host country and could end up feeling isolated and confused. Moreover, if not efficiently capitalised, their cultural perspectives may lead to misunderstandings or racist behaviours, something that could negatively affect their inclusion in the new community. Most importantly though, this group of students may have been through stressful and/or traumatizing experiences in their home country or during their journey to the host country (e.g., war, conflicts, violence, insecure conditions etc.). Students affected in that way need to be approached in a delicate and empathic manner by the school community and may also need professional support within the school context. However, especially due to their background, newly arrived students offer to the school's community a great opportunity to widen its horizons, enrich its knowledge and enhance its skills. That is why they are expected to play a key role in this process.

Newly arrived students that will be enrolled as Mentees will be the ones who expressed their need and will to be mentored. With the approval of their parents, they will commit themselves to:

- Attending the meetings with the mentor
- Attending the meetings with teachers
- Attending the trainings and workshops organized during the process by the partners' organisations
- Providing feedback on the process

Moving on to the description of the mentors' role, it consists of providing support to migrant students in their inclusion process within the school community as well as to help them face challenges related to the new education system, the different language, educational methodologies and so forth. What is also required from mentors is to develop an actual relationship with mentees that will enable the

latter to reach out for help and feel comfortable and supported. Moreover, mentors' responsibilities entail keeping in touch with mentees, teachers and partner organisations to discuss potential issues and the overall progress made with mentees. In specific, the activities that mentors need to plan are:

- Meetings with mentees (at least 1 every two weeks)
- Meetings with teachers (at least 1 per month)
- Training workshops organized during the process by the partners organisations

Other optional activities that mentors and mentees could do together are:

- Educational support activities
- Social inclusion support activities (educational support and social inclusion support activities were not actually implemented in Integrated because their implementation was very difficult)

It is evident that the appropriate selection of mentors who are able to successfully engage in their roles and responsibilities is crucial. Mentors are selected on the basis of the following principles:

- Age: mentor's and mentee's age difference would better not be more than 2 years of age so as for them to feel they can relate to each other. Thus, mentors should be selected among older secondary school students or university students (aged 12 and up).
- Background: even though it is not a necessary precondition, mentors can have a minority, migratory background so that mentees establish a strong connection with them right away. Similar background can be helpful in terms of removing language barriers and knowing both the home and host country cultural norms and ways of acting.
- Empathy: mentors need to have empathy towards mentees and be able to support them in a considerate manner.
- Ability to communicate: since it is difficult to find perfect mentor-mentee matches in terms of culture/language, it is necessary for mentors to have at least some ability and willingness to communicate. It may be useful if mentors can speak at least one widely used language (e.g., English, French, etc.).
- Reliability and commitment: since being a mentor involves a great degree of responsibility and time investment, mentors should be fully aware of the responsibility they are taking on and commit to the whole process.
- Motivation: in order to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge, mentors should engage in a learning and training process that will help them gain related skills and experiences.

Partners' role and responsibilities

With regard to the partner organisations' role in the implementation of the mentoring programme, the following key points may be useful especially for those who are launching the programme for the first time. Partners' responsibilities include:

- Identification of schools
- Signing the agreements with each school
- Project presentation to the school's staff: schools heads and teachers
- Planning project activities in each school
- Communication with the school heads and focal points teachers in each school

- Project presentation to the families (each partner will decide how to do this presentation: individual meetings, meetings with all the families involved in each school, letter with the most relevant information etc.)
- Gathering consent forms from families. Parental consent is required so as for minors to participate in the process (if necessary for the use of the images as well). InteRed will provide the relevant templates.
- Design and implementation of the trainings for teachers, mentors and mentees:
 - Teachers: at least 3-4 workshops with the two focal point teachers about the main objective of the mentoring programme: social and educational inclusion of newly arrived migrant students. The topics that can be addressed in these workshops are among others: inclusive education, interculturality and global competence.
 - Mentors and mentees: at least one workshop every three months (from September 2021 to June 2022) which makes it a total of three workshops. The methodology used for the workshop could combine parts of the work only with mentors and parts of the work with mentors and mentees together. Each partner organization will develop the workshops' methodology and structure.
- Monitoring meetings with teachers, mentors and mentees:
 - Teachers: once a month (these meetings can be online or face to face meetings)
 - Mentors and mentees: every two/three months (face to face meetings if possible)
- Coordination and implementation of complementary activities:
 - 3.2. Exchange workshop with newly arrived migrants and mentors (role models) in each country (national level)
 - 4.1. Workshop to exchange experiences with teachers participating in the implementation of the good practices

The activities 3.2. and 4.1. aimed to students and teachers (separately) were decided to be developed simultaneously.

- 3.3. International Exchange Seminar with mentors (role models)
- 4.2. International Exchange Seminar with teachers involved in the mentoring programme

The activities 3.3 and 4.2. aimed to students and teachers (separately) were decided to be developed simultaneously.

Programme implementation

The mentoring programme in schools takes place in four distinct phases:

1. Presentation phase

The first stage involves the presentation of the programme to the schools' faculty and heads in order to become acquainted with it. Following this presentation, two referee teachers with whom the mentoring programme will be organised in collaboration with one staff member from each partner organization are assigned in each school. Teachers are responsible for proposing to these students whom they consider to possess the appropriate characteristics to apply as candidates. Later on, teachers along with partner organizations decide on the final selection of mentors. Furthermore,

during this phase a meeting takes place with mentees' and mentors' family/guardians in order to inform them on the mentoring programme and ask for their permission and involvement.

2. Inception phase

The inception phase includes three stages: application, selection and matching. The first step, however, is for project partners to present the program in detail to focal point teachers and school heads and agree on a working plan with them, while partnership agreements are also to be signed with each participating school. The application procedure will follow next. Mentors should voluntarily apply for this role by filling in the relevant application form assessing their age, background, knowledge of foreign languages and other critical information (**see Annex A for the application form of the IntegratEd project**). The application is provided as a reference point and partners are to modify it according to their local context (e.g., they could create an online one). Some key changes to be made is not to ask personal details of mentors since it is teachers who will actually recruit them and already know their contact details. In addition to that, knowledge of foreign languages is not a prerequisite, but what is required is the ability and willingness to communicate, while some questions can be asked in a simpler way to be understood (e.g., "Do you have friends or family from other countries? Which ones?" instead of "Do you have previous intercultural experiences?").

Once applications have been submitted, they are reviewed with regard to the aforementioned key criteria (i.e., age, background, empathy, ability to communicate, reliability, motivation). The two focal point teachers are responsible to do the matching. It goes without saying that the selection of mentors is crucial, since it will affect the rest of the programme. Even though it is the teachers who will decide and suggest the best strategy for mentors' selection in each school, the partners will also support the final selection of both mentees and mentors. After mentor-mentee couples have been formed, a first meeting takes place between them to get introduced to each other. Afterwards, teachers meet with both mentor and mentee to have their feedback, thoughts and feelings, while they also organise frequent follow-up meetings at least during the first month in order to track early possible difficulties.

3. Implementation phase

The mentoring programme takes place throughout the whole academic year. Partner organizations begin with the implementation of a **training workshop** involving 8 to 10 participating students (4 to 5 mentors and equal number of mentees) in each school which aims for them to understand what mentoring is and how to properly engage in it in given the diversity of the student population. Mentors are expected to support their mentees in terms of their educational needs as well as of their social inclusion in the school community through, for example, inviting them to school events, introducing them to other students and finding out what they like.

During the academic year different training workshops will be carried out by partner's organizations, the frequency of which will be decided by each partner organization with the participating schools. At least 3 workshops or training meetings will be developed during the process. The aim of these meetings/workshops will be to strengthen the intercultural competences of the students, to monitor the programme and guide the students. At the end of training, mentors earn a certificate attesting their acquired expertise.

A logbook (see **Annex B**) is also provided to them for the registration of meetings, while mentees engage as well in recording their reflections on the meetings with mentors (see **Annex C** for the Journal Template). Both these templates from IntegratEd are provided as a reference point and partners are to modify them according to their local context. For example, suggestions to improve them include using an online, easier and shorter format, such as entailing emojis and minimal text. The mentor-mentee meetings should take place frequently at least once every two weeks so as to support mentees' educational needs and social inclusion the best way possible. The meeting schedule template included in **Annex D** is helpful towards planning these meetings and can also be modified according to partners' needs. After each meeting, mentors and mentees may fill the aforementioned templates in an online or paper format to provide information to teachers and partners' staff who use in turn this information to keep in touch with mentees' family/guardians and communicate with them about their children's inclusion and progress.

Apart from mentees, mentors have to meet regularly also with teachers (at least once a month) to talk about the mentees' progress in terms of learning and participation in the school community. Teachers are kept updated on the status of newly arrived migrant students in their classes and exchange ideas and techniques with mentors on how to better support mentees especially in the case of particular difficulties. It is important to note that mentors and teachers support each other throughout the mentoring programme: teachers motivate mentors and let them know that their role and work is valuable and appreciated in the school community, while mentors support teachers in managing diversity at school something that has a positive impact on the wider school community.

As a part of the mentoring programme, training workshops and meetings will also be held with teachers. The aim of these training activities will be to strengthen their implementation skills regarding the mentoring programme and the educational inclusion of migrant students and to reinforce their intercultural and global competences. Teachers will be responsible for the monitoring of the mentoring programme, working closely with mentors and mentees to follow up the implementation. At the same time, they will have meetings with partner organisations to develop the process of the mentoring programme. In specific, focal teachers will participate actively in the following project activities organized by partner organisations:

- Exchange workshop with newly arrived migrants and mentors (role models) in each country (national level) (Act.3.2. WP3).
- Workshop to exchange experiences with teachers participating in the implementation of the good practices (Act.4.1 WP4)
- International Exchange Seminar with mentors (role models) (Act.3.3. WP3)
- International Exchange Seminar with teachers involved in the mentoring programme (Act.4.2 WP4)

4. Evaluation phase

The final phase of the mentoring programme entails its evaluation. Evaluation and assessment are key since they allow the partner organisations to improve the programme taking into account their overall experience and lessons learned in it. There are two evaluation tools used for this cause: the questionnaire addressed to students and teachers and the previously mentioned logbook addressed

to mentors. Follow-up meetings between project coordinators, teachers and mentors also take place in order to analyse and evaluate the process and the achieved outcomes.

Evaluation and systematization of the experience

In this section follows the evaluation of good practices and challenges per phase of the mentoring programme, while suggestions for improvement are also made based on the work done in the International Training Meeting Framework between Project partners (A.2.2. WP2).

During the inception phase, meetings with teachers and schools for running the programme worked well and so did the provision of clear information regarding the characteristics of the target groups (mentors and mentees). What was deemed helpful was the **planning of the mentoring programme** at the end of the academic course prior to the programme's actual implementation in schools. Even though the mentoring programme can be adapted to the needs of participating schools, planning ahead in summer is important so that all stakeholders are aware in advance.

Nonetheless, an issue that came up during the inception phase was that an extra motivation session had to be organised in schools to involve the mentors. Moreover, in order to organise and promote the inception phase, many meetings had to be held with the coordinator teachers in the schools, something which required a lot of time and effort. Therefore, it is likely that the programme should be made more attractive to students. One way to do this is by highlighting the impact students are making and instilling a sense of belongingness during this **extra motivation session**. Some further agreements made by partners are the following:

- Create a **mentoring certification** and add the hours dedicated to it so that students can use in their CVs
- Create a short **video** to motivate potential mentors featuring project partners who will present the programme to students. The video should be projected before the actual selection of mentors takes place in schools and can be uploaded on the project's Facebook page. The video may be both in English and in partners' languages.
- Create close relationships with **focal point teachers** (engage at least 2 coordinating teachers) and the school heads involved in the programme.
- Create clear instruction **documents** (templates) for mentors, mentees, teachers and families with details on the kind of involvement, time required, duration, roles, tips etc. With regard to families, we need to present the programme to them and, if possible, arrange meetings as communication with caregivers and their commitment is crucial. We also need to create consent forms asking their permission for their children's participation, taking photos etc. As for schools, agreements will need to be created with them for the mentoring programme implementation.

Other possible suggestions/ideas to make the programme more attractive to mentors are the following:

- Organize an excursion or another activity with the mentors and mentees (ask teachers and schools for permission). Even though partners cannot take responsibility for going outside with students, the teachers involved may be able to do so or plan other related activities. The feasibility of this idea is also directly linked to the budget of the project.
- Clarify that it will not require extra time after school and they will not get "less education"

- Highlight that the mentoring programme can help make friends
- Give extra credit for participation. Even though giving extra credit is not possible in all partner countries, informal extra credit (just like informal mentoring certifications mentioned previously) is usually at teachers' discretion so it is an idea for partners to consider.
- Another suggestion was to produce a poster about mentors to recognise the work done and engage them further. The poster is a good idea in terms of feasibility as its creation does not require extra effort and costs.
- Another suggestion was to create as well a newsletter and send it via email (2-3 newsletter for the whole school) summarising the activities that mentors and mentees engaged in (once or twice a year) as motivation.

Moving on to the **implementation** phase, what worked well was the initial training webinar with mentors and the close work with teachers to follow the regular meetings. In addition, the list of contents developed for the monthly **workshops** with mentors and mentees were beneficial and the school newsletter addressed to mentors and mentees also helped the students involved in the project to develop a sense of belonging. This **list of contents** to be addressed in the training workshops (at least 3 of them starting in September 2021) will be shared with partners who can subsequently make necessary adaptations to fit their context. Even though the workshops previously took place every once a month this can be more flexible depending on the schools and the situation. However, partners have agreed that at least 1 **follow-up/monitoring meeting** every 2 to 3 months should take place. What is deemed important is to keep communication (even via Zoom/phone) at least once a month with teachers and mentors so as to be in touch.

Moreover, although the implementation of **exchange groups** between all mentors (via Telegram/Teams/Facebook - depending on their age) at local/national/international/ level may too ambitious, it would also be inspiring and helpful for all people involved. This practice could be further enhanced through the **Facebook page** of the project. Students' creation of content (pictures, videos, mentors' and mentees' testimonies of their experience etc.) that will be shared on the project's Facebook page would help them understand that they are part of something bigger and maybe gathering instead all the stories in one newsletter would be nice.

With regard to the tools described in the Annexes (Logbook and Journal Template) it has been decided that they were quite difficult for students to complete. A suggestion made is for these tools to be optional or else to design instead **easier online tools** that students may complete using their phones or digital devices. This adaptation is to be decided by each partner according to their local context and can also be discussed at the beginning of the mentoring programme with the groups of mentors.

Other helpful elements in the mentoring programme included scheduling **frequent meetings** between the mentors and mentees during the academic year, **teacher trainings**, providing regular information to the families, working closely with the school coordinators and the regular presence in schools. In general, it has been proposed to use more **dynamic methodologies, focused on practice** for students and teachers and also to incorporate **a session with teachers to analyse their Education School Projects** or similar frameworks to include the mentoring programme as part of them or as part of the identity of the school and the organizational culture (for KMOP, CESIE and InteRed).

As far as the final phase of **evaluation** is concerned, meetings with the school worked well in it. On the other hand, the simple evaluation questionnaires aimed to the targets groups that had to be filled

once at the end of the programme did not seem to work well as they were rather long and complicated in IntegratEd. It is proposed for the evaluation questionnaires to be used in the FEINAMC project to include instead both quantitative and qualitative elements (e.g., open questions, reflective, not too long, use of language that is appropriate for young migrants, respectful of different schooling situation in each country etc.). For example, evaluation and comparison via google forms could also help students to have access to their results. Südwind will support the lead partner to design this **evaluation form** and has already elaborated a general on-line form⁴. Provided that this questionnaire is general and can be adapted to each activity, the logbook previously used may no longer be necessary in the framework of FEINAMC. Another idea for partners' consideration is to conduct an evaluation talk or workshop with the aim of assessing the impact of mentoring on students involved. At that session, students could use their logbook/journals to look back and evaluate the benefits gained from or the difficulties faced throughout their participation (pre- and post-programme questionnaires may as well be helpful in this process of evaluating outcomes).

Resources available

The resources available for the implementation of the mentoring programme are the following:

Resource	Location
Educational Support Model document-Point 2 of the document a description of the mentoring programme and its phases, developed by CESIE	EducSupportModel Doc
Mentor's Application and Selection Procedure Guide document, developed by CESIE	Mentor's Applic SelecProceGuide
Mentor's Guide, developed by CESIE	Mentor'sGuide
IntegratEd e-learning modules developed by CESIE List of themes and strategies developed in the context of IntegratEd for the monthly workshops with mentors and mentees. Also, example of contents for teachers (e.g., inclusive education, interculturality and global competence) and of the new contents programme developed for schools in the framework of the FEINMAC. These will serve as the basis for the training process with students and teachers. Nonetheless, designing the workshops' methodology and structure will be undertaken by each partner organisation.	E-learningModules

Other additional resources available:

⁴ See [FeedbackParticipant for more information](#)

Resource	Location
IntegratEd Community video of the work developed in the schools in Spain	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQVxEVNIsE
Example of the newsletter send to the schools in the framework of IntegratEd	AdditionalDoc
FEINAMC's presentation developed by InteRed for schools	Project Presentation
Template of Agreement with Schools	AgreementSchools

Prior Learning Assessment Tool

Definition/contextualization

The second good practice selected for the needs of the FEINAMC project is the prior learning assessment tool which was initially developed in the framework of the project “InClusion of Refugee ChiLdren in Education- CIRCLE – 2018-3027/001-001”. The CIRCLE project aimed to create a prior learning assessment tool and validation mechanisms in the education systems of Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain in order to ensure the continuity of learning for newly arrived migrants and refugees. Provided that migrant students often hold no documentation of their previous school attainment and there are no tools available to evaluate their knowledge, assessing prior learning is a quite difficult task for the majority of the European Union countries.

In most countries where there are no specific tools to measure migrant students' prior learning, the tool helps in measuring and evaluating it in an appropriate manner regardless of children's linguistic competence. Therefore, the prior learning assessment tool is useful to teachers as it helps them track the learning gaps and needs of migrant students and therefore enhances teaching quality by providing a new methodological framework for measuring learning which does not rely on language ability or linguistic competence in the host country language.

With regard to migrant students themselves, it is of paramount importance to recognise their former qualifications and prior learning so as for them to build on their existing knowledge. Research shows that migrant students' school enrolment at a level usually lower than their real potential is one of the main reasons of increased early school leaving rates. Thus, the accurate assessment of prior learning paves the way for accessing equal opportunities in education and represents a qualitative leap that safeguards the right to a quality and inclusive education for the target group. Getting the initial prior learning assessment right allows the social inclusion of migrant/refugee children and youth and facilitates both their access to education and related future employment opportunities. Last but not least, it should be mentioned that the aim of the CIRCLE Project was to design the Prior Learning Assessment Tool which, however, was not implemented in schools. Therefore, the tool's actual implementation in schools will take place during the FEINAMC project for the first time.

Description

The diagnostic tool aims to help teachers validate the prior knowledge of migrant, refugee and/or newly arrived TCN students with minimal language (host country or English) skills and interrupted education. It is designed for primary and secondary school-aged children and entails different exercises and activities (oral, written, visual) tailored to address the specific challenges faced by these students. Since the process of evaluation may be intimidating, the diagnostic tool takes the form of a student-friendly, playful booklet. What is more, the prior learning assessment tool avoids written instructions and text and mostly incorporates an imaged-based methodology which facilitates the understanding of the exercises even if students do not possess the languages skills of the host country. Visual measures (e.g., symbols, images, illustrations) not only help deal with the language barrier and facilitate the assessment process, but also minimize translation costs and ensure greater transferability of the material.

Another main principle of the diagnostic tool is its alignment with the curriculum. The exercises included in the tool for primary and secondary education were created based on a detailed mapping of the common learning objectives of school curricula in partner countries. The tool measures the curricular competencies of Mathematics, Geometry, Geography, ICT Skills, Physics, and elements of English, but also extra-curricular competencies such as the social and communication skills of newly arrived migrant children. The type of exercises included in the tool range from simply recognising the correct answers to problem-solving and task-oriented activities in which the student has to follow instructions to produce a specific result (e.g., ICT).

Tool implementation

The prior learning assessment tool may be delivered using the following method:

1. Students complete an initial interview questionnaire.
2. Their competences in the selected topics are assessed through the exercises provided in the booklets.
3. Results are evaluated based on the attainment of specific objectives and according to students' levels of competence they are placed in the appropriate school year. With regard to the process of evaluation, a scale of 1 to 3 is being used. The lowest value of the scale is 1 which means that the child could not complete the exercises and has not acquired the general competence, while 2 is the value representing that the child has some difficulties in the exercises but has some knowledge of the general competence. Finally, 3 is the highest value of the scale on which the student is able to complete the exercises and is considered to have acquired the general competence.

The next step once values have been assigned to each objective, is to average the results so that one single value is assigned to each general competence. Then, an average is produced to get students' final scores according to their knowledge levels. It is the final score that guides the positioning of students to each of the target age clusters: 1. Primary education 2. Lower Post-primary education and 3. Upper Post-primary education. The validation table for upper-post primary found in Annex E exemplifies the above information.

4. As it has been mentioned, the scores can subsequently be used to facilitate the procedure of students' classification in the formal education system in primary and secondary education of

the host country. However, this always depends on the national context, legislation and local regulations of the education systems in each partner country which may be different to each other. Nonetheless, the prior learning assessment tool can also be used by educational authorities and institutions in order to develop educational materials that actually address students' needs and gaps. This is why a **peer review group** has been established in each country to validate the diagnostic tools, review them and provide recommendations on their effectiveness and responsiveness to migrant students' actual needs.

Resources available

The resources available for the implementation of the prior learning assessment tool are the following:

- Booklets for primary, lower post-primary and upper post-primary education
- Validation guides for primary, lower post-primary and upper post-primary education
- InteRed has the evaluation tests that one of the participating schools is using

Evaluation and systematization of the experience

In this section follows the evaluation of good practices and challenges using the prior learning assessment tool, while suggestions for further enhancements are also made based on the work done in the International Training Meeting Framework between Project partners (A.2.2. WP2). Data regarding this tool are more limited as compared to the mentoring programme as it is quite new.

What has been emphasised is that the tool is valuable as not many tools are available in order to assess migrant children's prior learning. Therefore, the tool is rather novel and irreplaceable. Also, regardless of whether or not results are being officially used by partner countries' educational authorities, they are valuable for teachers' unofficial assessment of migrant students' prior knowledge. What is also appreciated is the fact that the tool is translated in several languages (Greek, English, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese), something which is very useful when working with migrant populations. Furthermore, the prior learning assessment tool is valued greatly for its very clear guidelines, attractive templates used, and the fact that it tests lots of information and topics.

However, some difficulties and issues are also present within this tool. For example, the tool does not take into account the different cultures of the newly arrived migrants who may be used to a different medium of learning or other tools. Therefore, it is suggested to learn about the migrant students' **way of learning in their home country**, while great caution should be taken to **respect their cultural background** and to not deliver stereotypes within the assessment tool. An additional suggestion that has been made is to **translate the tool in more languages** that migrant students may be speaking (e.g., French, Farsi etc.).

Moreover, it is not as clear where and how teachers can and should collect all the information together. Thus, creating an **easier template** which would summarise and systematise all the results of the tool would be useful. Project partners have agreed on simplifying the tool by having just **one "guiding" document** instead of two. It has also been decided by project partners to concentrate **on secondary school level** where tools would be even more useful, especially when translated in several

languages. For this reason, the lower post-primary and the upper post-primary tools created in the CIRCLE Project will be **merged in one**.

With regard to the **process of validation**, the tool could be **validated during a workshop** with teachers and/or school heads in order for them to give their feedback on adequacy, appropriateness, possible changes and adaptations of the materials etc. However, there are **two alternative time frames** in which to proceed with the validation of the prior learning assessment tool. The first option is to start off by sharing the tool with teachers and asking them for their feedback first in order to elaborate and implement the final version of the tool with all the suggested recommendations and improvements. The second option is to present the tool to the teachers in each school and go ahead with its implementation without changes made. Following this phase, feedback and suggestions from students and teachers could be gathered. Then, a meeting with teachers would be necessary in each school in order to present the feedback obtained and decide jointly which of the suggested changes could be incorporated in the final version depending on their feasibility. The same two alternatives also apply with regard to the process of **cultural validation** of the tool.

Last but not least, it has been proposed that **mentors and mentees** should be assigned **first** and the evaluation with the **prior learning assessment tool** should follow **next**, while **two different groups should be created**: one for the mentoring programme and one for the prior learning assessment tool. Thus, newly arrived migrant students other than mentees should be testing and validating the prior assessment tool. The goal is to test the tool with at least 5 students in each participating school.

It is also to be decided by partners what will happen with the implementation of both the mentoring programme and the prior learning assessment tool in the case of further school closures due to the **pandemic**: the most likely scenario is to adapt the practices so as to implement them online.

Resources available

The resources available for the implementation of the prior learning assessment tool are the following

Resource	Location
Booklet for primary	https://circle-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Primary_EN.pdf
Booklet for lower post-primary	https://circle-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Lower-Post-Primary_EN.pdf
Booklet for upper post-primary	https://circle-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Upper-Post-Primary_EN.pdf
Validation guide for primary	https://circle-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Validation_Guide-Primary-EN.pdf

Validation guide for lower post-primary	https://circle-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Validation_Guide-Lower-Post-Primary-EN.pdf
Validation guide for upper post-primary	https://circle-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Validation_Guide-upper-post-primary-EN.pdf

Conclusions

Migrant students face a lot of difficulties with regard to their adaptation to their new school environment and to the, often, unfamiliar learning processes and inadequate educational policies of the host country. Issues like disrupted education, inappropriate grade placement, inadequate learning support can jeopardise migrant students' educational achievement and retention in the education system. Yet, the Paris Declaration⁵ on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education has highlighted the importance of ensuring inclusive education for all children in a way that combats racism and discrimination, geographical, social and educational inequalities, while ensuring the acquisition of social, civic and intercultural competences by disadvantaged children and young people.

Hence, specific measures have been identified to holistically support migrant students, teachers and education systems, such as the provision of related tools and resources to educators, the implementation of a needs assessment to identify the current needs of educators and newly arrived migrant students, the incorporation of non-formal learning in existing teaching methods and, finally, the dissemination of existing practices. To our perception, the FEINAMC project by disseminating and scaling up the two good practices of the Mentoring Programme and the Prior Learning Assessment Tool has the potential to influence the educational community as a whole and can become a benchmark for education systems across Europe.

Following the exchange of experiences and feedback between project partners in the International Training Meeting and the work done during the previous stages of the project, the present report has set the final framework for the replication of those two good practices to a wider scale and their implementation at a systemic level across partner countries. The framework has presented the resources to be used, the lessons learned from previous experience, a critical evaluation of the practices as well as considerations and guidelines for their future use in schools that will facilitate the implementation of the project's activities at local, national and international level. It is our firm belief that the FEINAMC project by scaling up those two measures can both deepen the understanding of the challenges faced by the target population and significantly contribute in successfully tackling them, while it has the potential to support the inclusion of newly arrived migrant children and teachers' work with this student population in line with European ideals.

⁵ See https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf for more information

Annex A - Mentor Application Form

IntegratEd		
Mentor Application Form		
Name:	Surname:	E-mail: Phone:
School/University enrolment:		
Age:		
Nationality:		
Residence details		
Region/state:	City/town:	
Address:	Postal Code:	
Spoken languages		
English fluency: <i>give three options e.g. basic, advanced, fluent</i>		
Second language fluency*: <i>give three options e.g. basic, advanced, fluent</i>		
Other languages: <i>e.g. Arabic, Chinese</i>		
Please answer the following questions		
Cultural background: do you belong to an ethnic minority?		
Yes, please specify		
No		
Do you have previous intercultural experiences?		
Yes, please specify		

No
Why do you want to become a mentor?
What do you think that being a mentor entails?

**To be adapted to the national contexts. For instance, in Italy, it would be French because of a high presence of communities from former French colonies.*

Annex B - Mentors' Logbook Template

**The following table should be replicated after each meeting with the mentee or whenever the mentor is in need of keeping note of his/her path.*

Name, Surname:

School:

Date:

Meeting n.:

Outline topics covered during meeting:
(both on educational and social inclusion issues)

Which progresses have been achieved on the issues discussed:

Do you think that the meetings with the mentee are going well? Yes/No

Why?

My learning path

Which of my previous experiences/skills are relevant in my role as mentor?

Which skills/competencies have I gained and developed so far? What have I accomplished so far as a mentor?

How can I improve to better support my mentee?

Have I had difficulties in communicating with my mentee(s)? How can I improve that?

Do I feel supported by my teachers?

How is the mentoring programme going?



Notes

Annex C - Mentee's Journal Template

**The following table should be replicated for each meeting or whenever the mentee is in need of keeping note of his/her path.*

Name, Surname:
School:
Mentor:

Date:

Kind of meeting:	
Distance meeting: <input type="checkbox"/> Whatsapp <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> Phone call <input type="checkbox"/> Other If Other, please specify:	Face to face: Place: Length:

Topics addressed during the meeting
--

Reflection on the meeting

What have I appreciated of this meeting?

What have I not appreciated of this meeting?

Which difficulties have emerged?

How have I dealt with these difficulties?

How my mentor has supported me in dealing with these difficulties?

What are my next objectives/steps?

How is the mentoring programme going?



Notes

Annex D - Meeting Schedule Template

Mentor:				Mentee:			
<i>Month</i>							
1st Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM							
PM							
2nd Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM							
PM							
3rd Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM							
PM							
4th Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM							
PM							

Mark in green your availability for meetings.

During the weekends, you can arrange leisure activities such as going to lunch or dinner together, going to watch a movie, helping with courses, etc.

Annex E - Validation Table

General Competence 1	Specific competence 1.2	Outcome x	Average of results $x e z$	Final Average Corresponding to all skills assessed
	Specific competence 1.3	Outcome z		
General competence 2	Specific competence 2.1	Outcome x	Average of results $x e y$	
	Specific competence 2.2	Outcome y		

Note - The information regarding the evaluation of these tests it's **only for professionals**. The children performing these tests must be aware that the objective is to assess their skills and competences to enter school.

