

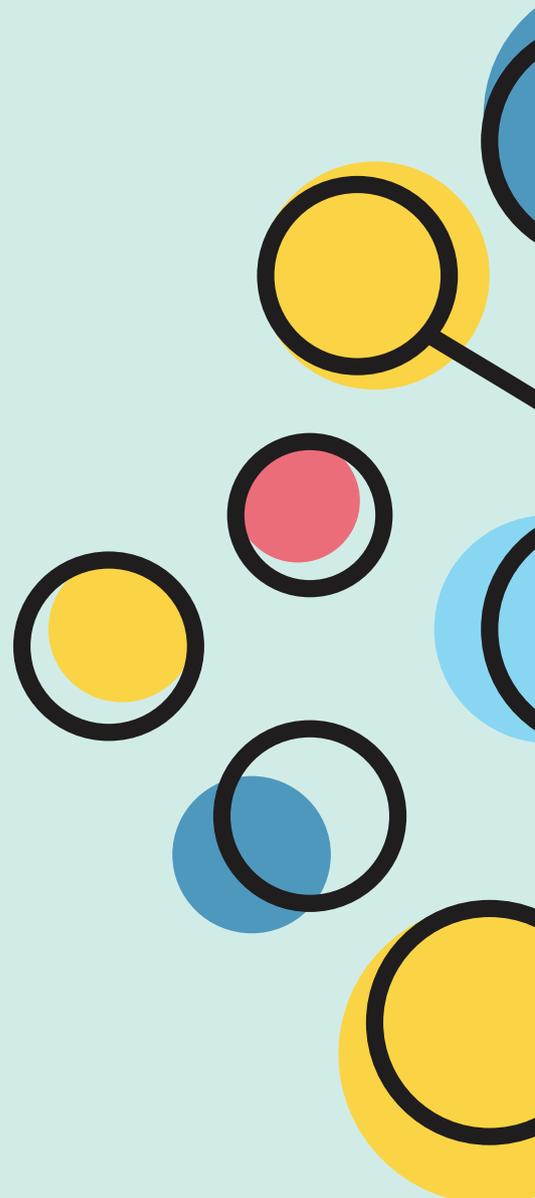
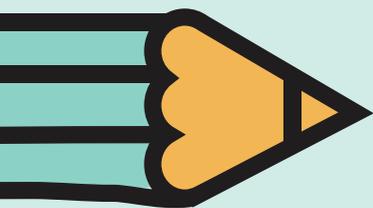
**Foster Educational Inclusion  
of Newly Arrived Migrant Children**

# **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*to foster educational inclusion  
of migrant students*



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## Project framework:

Disseminating and scaling up good practices to Foster Educational Inclusion of Newly Arrived Migrant Children- FEINAMC6221545-EPP-1-2020-1-ES-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN

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## Date:

January 2023

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The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. [Project number: 621545-EPP-1-2020-1-ES-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN]

# 1. Background

These policy recommendations have been drafted within the framework of the project “Disseminating and scaling up good practices to Foster Educational Inclusion of Newly Arrived Migrant Children” (FEINAMC)-621545-EPP-1-2020-1-ES-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN and is the result of the learning that stems from its development, in addition to dialogue and exchange with different actors involved in the educational inclusion of migrant children in the five countries where the project has been carried out: Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain.

The aim of the project has been to replicate and disseminate good practices to foster the educational inclusion of migrant students; more specifically, a peer-mentoring programme and prior learning assessment tool for migrant children. Therefore, schools have also collaborated in the five countries mentioned, with the proposed good practices carried out in these places. Throughout the process, the input and suggestions of teachers and pupils alike have served to enrich and contextualise practices from each country, as well as spotlighting the challenges that remain to guarantee the educational inclusion of these children.

Furthermore, meetings have been held in the five countries with the education authorities and institutions in charge of guaranteeing the educational inclusion of these students. The meetings, as well as presenting the two forms of good practices, represented the chance to nurture spaces of exchange and dialogue on the advances and challenges still present in each context so as to guarantee the educational inclusion of migrant students.

Despite advances at a European level, and in the countries where the project has been carried out, major challenges remain at different levels and require a reflection and exchange of good practices to continue advancing towards educational inclusion.

Migrant people from third countries represent 5.3% of the population of European Union countries, according to EUROSTAT’s data from 2021, a percentage which is increasing every year. According to data compiled in the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, the parents of 10% of young people aged between 15 and 34 born in the European Union are of foreign origin.<sup>1</sup>

Wars, conflicts, the search for better living conditions, the demand for labour and now also demographic transition and global climate change are push-and-pull factors which impact migration.<sup>2</sup>

We are currently facing a changing reality which raises ongoing challenges and calls for a fast response capacity from governments to ensure access to and respect for the human rights of all people.

Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, in 2022, more than four million people have applied for protective measures and asylum in Europe. These measures should also ensure that Ukrainian children have access to education and, therefore, are integrated into the countries in which they arrive.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, cases of discrimination on Ukraine’s borders have been reported towards non-Ukrainian citizens, also fleeing war and looking for protection in the European Union.<sup>4</sup>

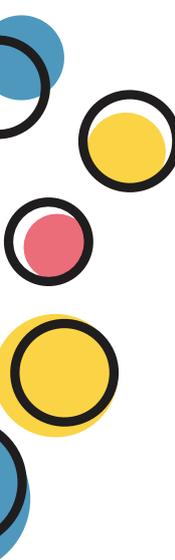
Policies addressing the migration phenomenon must also consider that inclusion spans different interconnected fields: economic and social policies, health policies, education, youth, culture and sport, as highlighted in the European Commission’s document on the inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education.<sup>5</sup>

As both the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027<sup>6</sup> and the Thematic Fiche: Inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education<sup>7</sup> stress, inclusion in the education system is a key factor for ensuring children and young people are integrated into and participate in the



society of arrival and for the school to be a privileged space from which to foster the inclusion of students and their families.

The 2019 Eurydice report<sup>8</sup> verifies that when the process of inclusion in the education system is carried out properly, it fosters students' integral academic and social development. Yet as this report reflects, students from migrant backgrounds come up against a series of challenges that may affect their learning and development, highlighting: 1) issues related to the actual migration process; 2) to the socioeconomic and political context; 3) to students' participation in education. In fact, the average rate of young people from migrant backgrounds dropping out of school is 26% as opposed to 8.4% among national students.<sup>9</sup>



## 2. Policy recommendations to foster the educational inclusion of migrant students

These policy recommendations are mainly addressed to policy makers at national, regional and local level. However the collaboration and commitment of other key actors in the educational system from each country are also critical to achieve this goal.

From the experience attained in developing the project, in dialogue with key actors, education authorities, teaching staff and managers from schools, as well as with students, the following recommendations are set out to address the key aspects which can foster and drive forwards educational inclusion for migrant children:

1. Articulate and align the legal framework regulating access to the basic rights of the migrant population. To guarantee access to education for migrant children they must have the rest of their basic rights guaranteed, and absence of these rights would hinder their access to education under equal conditions.
2. Strengthen collaboration and articulation between different bodies which render services or have support and guidance programmes for the migrant population. This requires a global vision given that a number of factors have a bearing on the educational inclusion of migrant students. For instance, the socioeconomic situation of families is a key factor, but a response cannot come from education centres.
3. Develop awareness-raising campaigns to denounce structural racism rooted in our societies and to grant visibility to the enrichment that migrant population brings at different levels of society
4. Guarantee enough human and economic resources in order to ensure the medium-term sustainability of programmes and strategies that promote educational inclusion for migrant children in education centres.
5. Encourage the involvement and commitment of management teams, so that they can ensure the implementation and sustainability of initiatives and strategies that promote the inclusion of migrant children in schools. Also encourage the commitment of teachers and provide them with sufficient human and material resources for the creation, coordination and monitoring of activities.
6. Involve the whole school in the welcoming process in schools as it is crucial for the inclusion and participation of these students and their family in the school.



7. Provide adequate prior learning assessment tools, considering the following recommendations:

- Explore the option of carrying out an initial prior learning assessment from group rather than individual methodology, involving and sharing classes, stressing not only cognitive learning but also being aware of and challenging students' skills. In its general scope, this innovation could empower students.
- Focus children's initial assessment on socio-emotional aspects, in addition to the curriculum.
- Include the native language of newly arrived students and take into consideration cultural differences.
- Incorporate aspects such as images and icons in learning materials and assessments which will favour inclusion of newly arrived children.

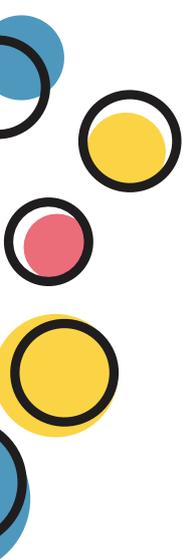
8. Incorporate methodologies such as peer-mentoring as backbone of assistance and support among peers, which also affects students' self-esteem and self-concept and has a positive impact on their learning.

9. Bolster ongoing training for existing and new teachers so they are equipped with the tools and competences. Furthermore, special emphasis must be placed on anti-racist and intercultural approaches.



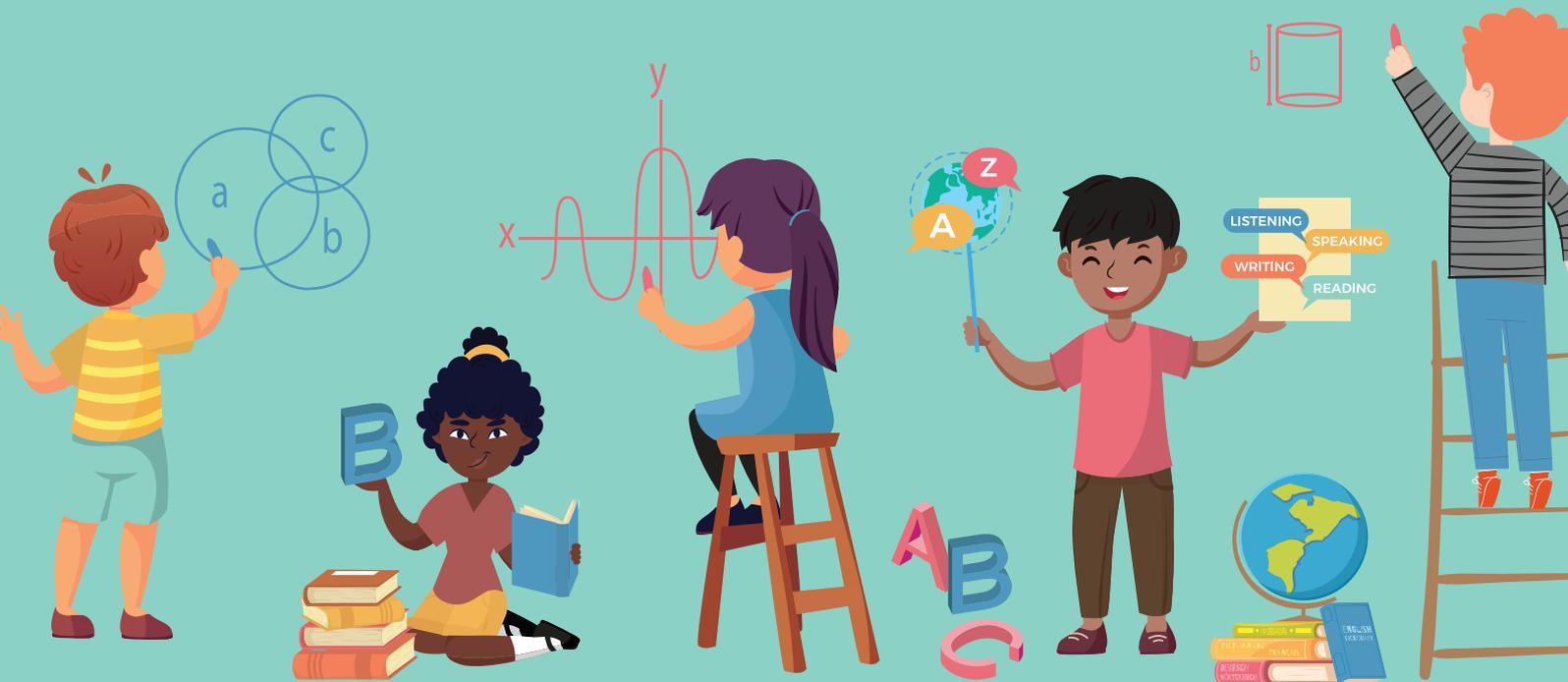
## Endnotes

- 1 Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, European Commission, p. 2.
- 2 Thematic Fiche: Inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education, p. 9.
- 3 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Report on Migration and Asylum. COM (2022) 740 final, p. 2.
- 4 Statement of the African Union on the reported ill treatment of Africans trying to leave Ukraine | African Union (au.int)
- 5 Thematic Fiche: Inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education, p. 9
- 6 Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, European Commission, p. 10–11.
- 7 Thematic Fiche: Inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education, p. 17
- 8 Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe, p. 9.
- 9 EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum, 2021.





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