



Continuity of learning for newly arrived refugee children in Europe

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Erasmus+

ABOUT US

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INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding the efforts made by EU Member States in recent years, third-country nationals continue to be placed at a disadvantage regarding employment, education and social inclusion compared to EU citizens (OECD/European Union, 2015). For refugees, and people with a migration background at large, education is key for socio-economic success and for overcoming disadvantages in European societies. Education fosters social inclusion, economic growth and innovation. While the education of migrants may have higher costs than for non-migrants in a short-term perspective, it is a social investment in the long term (Bonin, 2017). This is true from the perspective of receiving societies of the EU but also from the perspective of building peace and stability in the countries of origin of refugees. Considering that some refugees will eventually return to their countries of origin, the education and skills they acquire in EU countries are tools they can apply for transformation processes in the concerned countries.

Enhancing education for migrants requires coordination of different policy areas and multi-stakeholder involvement (Bonin, 2017). EU Member States have been facing challenges in providing decent opportunities in education for newly arriving refugees and integrating them into mainstream education. These challenges have intensified since 2015 with the arrival of larger numbers of refugees and asylum seekers.

This paper aims to provide an overview of the existing approaches of policies and initiatives for ensuring continuity of learning for refugees and asylum seekers, especially in Belgium (Flanders), Finland, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom (UK), and Italy¹. The paper starts off with an overview of policies and legal frameworks for refugee education on the international level, the EU level and the level of Member States. The second section elaborates on the processes of arrival and transition from education in reception centres and camps into mainstream education, particularly in regard to school arrangements from reception to mainstream schooling, quality of teaching, additional support, housing arrangements and segregation, information and connections with prior education, and funding. The third section is dedicated to the inclusion of refugees into vocational, higher and adult education, and the fourth section to the cooperation of multiple stakeholders involved in the education of refugees. Each subsection identifies the strategies that function in the countries analysed. The final section provides an overview of the identified obstacles and challenges for the continuity of learning for newly arrived refugee children.

The paper is based primarily on the work of SIRIUS – Policy Network on Migrant Education, in particular on the national and comparative reports of the SIRIUS ‘Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe’ undertaken in Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria², Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK between 2016 and 2017 (Tudjman et al., 2016, Ravn et al., forthcoming, Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, forthcoming, Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming, Koehler et al., forthcoming), which provide the basis for comparison, and on the SIRIUS Network Policy Brief ‘Refugee children in education in Europe. How to prevent a lost generation?’ (Crul, 2017). It further draws on the paper ‘No lost generation: Education for refugee children. A comparison between Sweden, Germany, The Netherlands and Turkey’ (Crul et al., 2016), on the Eurocities (2017) report ‘Cities’ Actions for the Education of Refugees and Asylum Seekers’, on the ‘EDINA Country Report – Finland’ (Dervin, et al.), on the Fundamental Rights Agency (2017) report ‘Current migration situation in the EU: Education’, and on the study ‘The Journey of Hope: Education for Refugee and Unaccompanied Children in Italy’ (Grigt, 2017).

¹ In some cases, the author relies on *Eurocities* reports, therefore, some of the countries are covered more as cities.

² Bulgaria is covered partially because the national report is still in preparation.

1. POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR REFUGEE EDUCATION IN RECEIVING COUNTRIES

International conventions and strategies

Education is a human right and an instrument for realising other human rights. The right to education for all, including refugees and asylum seekers, is documented in several international agreements, such as:

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948, states that ‘everyone has the right to education’. The ‘development of the human personality’ and the ‘strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’ shall be core elements of education (United Nations, 2015a, p. 54). Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966, equally recognises the right of education with the same understanding as Art. 26 of the UDHR and makes provisions for free and compulsory primary education for all and the general availability and accessibility of secondary education to all (OHCHR, 2016b). The Refugee Convention of 1951, Article 22 makes provisions for the access of refugees to elementary, secondary, higher and other education, and for the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, financial support for education and the quality of teaching (OHCHR, 2016a).

The application of the above rights to children is further emphasised by Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, with particular emphasis on regular school attendance, the reduction of dropout rates, and ‘access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods’ (OHCHR, 2016c).

The UNHCR Education Strategy 2012-2016 further calls for receiving countries to promote the inclusion of refugee and stateless children in national education systems or to develop responsive, quality education opportunities where this is not possible (UNHCR, 2012). In addition, Goal 4 of the United Nation’s (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets education and instructs states to ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ (United Nations, 2015b).

EU directives and frameworks

At the European Union (EU) level, a number of policies are in place to ensure the education of refugees and asylum seeking children and youth.

Article 14 (1) of the Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (replacing Directive 2003/9/CE) provides that children of asylum seekers and minor asylum seekers should be granted access to the education system ‘under similar conditions as nationals of the host Member State’, while Article 27 of the Council Directive 2011/95/EU provides that minors granted refugee or subsidiary protection status should be granted access to education ‘under the same conditions as nationals’. It also provides that adults granted international protection should be allowed access to the general education system, further training or retraining, under the same conditions as legally resident third-country nationals. Article 14 (2), Directive 2013/33/EU further requires that children entering a Member State should be included in education within three months and that ‘preparatory classes, including language classes, shall be provided to minors where it is necessary to facilitate their access to and participation in the education system’. The proposal adopted in 2016 to revise the Reception Conditions Directive maintains these guarantees, and is further strengthened, as the rules under Qualification Regulation will be directly applicable.

The European Agenda for Migration, with its relocation and resettlement framework, emphasizes inter alia the necessity of integrating into EU societies those refugees and asylum seekers who are eligible for protection (European Commission, 2015).

In extension of the Agenda for Migration, the European Commission adopted the Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals in 2016. The Action Plan provides a framework for Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies and the Commission's support for these efforts; a special focus is placed on responses to the challenges of refugee integration. In education, Member States are encouraged, inter alia, to provide language learning and prevent educational segregation, ensure that teachers have the skills to manage diversity, to promote the recruitment of teachers with a migrant background, to promote the participation of migrants' children in early childhood education and care, to enable access to vocational training, and to assess, validate and recognise skills and qualifications of third country nationals (European Commission, 2016).

Furthermore, the recently adopted Commission Communication on the protection of children in migration confirms the Commission's commitment to prioritise safe access to formal and non-formal education, reducing the length of time that the education of minor asylum seekers is disrupted. It also underlines that early and effective access to inclusive, formal education, including early childhood education and care, is one of the most important and powerful tools for the integration of children, fostering language skills, social cohesion and mutual understanding and hence is crucial for ensuring durable solutions (COM 211 final, 2017).

National frameworks

While some countries in Europe guarantee access to the same educational opportunities as nationals to migrants including refugee and asylum-seeking children (e.g. Spain, UK, Norway, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Malta), other countries grant them differentiated access, with their legal status used as the main argument and criteria for differentiation (e.g. Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Germany, Sweden) (Centre for the Study of Democracy, 2012, p. 57-58).

The right to access compulsory education is usually guaranteed by law in EU countries (Crul, 2017, p. 5). However, the European regulation that requires that children entering a Member State should be included in education within three months (article 14 (2) Directive 2013/33/EU) is not fully put in practice in some EU countries due to prolonged procedures (multiple relocation, time lag in finding a school place, etc.). It may take up to six months for children to enter a stable school setting (Eurocities, 2017) and in some cases even longer than that. Meanwhile, some countries' laws mandate a shorter waiting period. In Sweden, for instance, refugees must start attending school within one month of their arrival (Rydin et al. 2012, p. 193). Similarly, in Bulgaria, procedures must be completed within 24 working days of the asylum application (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 10).

In some countries, for example the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium, education is compulsory for all school age children regardless of their status, whereas in other countries, for example Sweden and Germany, some groups of refugee children (in Sweden refugee children whose asylum procedures are still ongoing or who do not yet have a residence permit, in Germany children in reception centres, children from 'safe countries of origin', and unaccompanied children in preliminary care) are under no obligation to attend school (Rydin et al. 2012, p. 191; Bourgonje 2010, p. 47, in: Crul et al., 2016, p. 6, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 7-8, Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, 2017). In the absence of obligatory school attendance, schools have the right to reject refugee pupils. Although language courses are often offered, and are in some cases obligatory for refugee children who are not obliged to attend school, in the majority of cases the amount of schooling considerably lags behind regular schooling (Crul et al., 2016, p. 6). While regulations on compulsory schooling mainly apply on the national level, it is usually up to the municipalities to provide the infrastructure and spaces needed to comply with compulsory school attendance (Eurocities, 2017, p. 10).

Policies on the education of refugees and asylum seekers in EU countries usually pursue three core goals: 1) acquisition of the national language; 2) integration into mainstream education; and 3) integration into vocational education. Multiple measures are targeted at reaching goal (1) as fast as possible and as a facilitator for reaching goal (2); some measures take account of the fact that continuous language support is necessary for educational achievements after the acquisition of basic language skills and within the process of reaching goal (2). While goal (2) applies to all school-aged refugees, goal (3) applies to older refugees but is also relevant as a long-term goal for those in secondary schools.

In many cases, administrative procedures represent an obstacle to smooth processes of integration; for example, when access to education depends on migrants' legal status or reaching a certain stage of the asylum process. In some countries, for example Belgium (Flanders) and the UK, apart from some basic conditions and rules on reception education, there is no coordinated central policy approach and no high relevance for reception education (Koehler et al., forthcoming). Greece is currently developing an action plan for the care, education and training of refugees in the hotspot facilities (Workshop, 2016), and the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has set up a steering group to develop short-term and long-term measures to deal with the education of the increasing number of refugee students (Workshop, 2016).

Notwithstanding the fact that there is not much recent national legislation with concrete provisions for enabling the continuity of learning for newly arrived refugees, a promising example is the Swedish law on assessment of pupils' knowledge and the concept of introductory classes that came into force in January 2016. Within two months of the arrival of a pupil at school, it is obligatory to map her/his previous schooling as well as level of knowledge and skills in literacy and mathematics. On this basis, the school decides on the grade to place the pupil in and on the support the school will provide, allocates teaching time for subjects, and makes mapping materials available in order to assess the prior knowledge of the pupil. So far, mapping materials are available for biology, physics, chemistry and technics. The maximum period for attendance of an introductory class is two years. Within this time, the pupil should also hold a place in a mainstream class where she/he will attend lessons according to assessed educational level. After the termination of the introductory class period, additional support is provided for mainstream schooling if needed (Ministry of Education and Research Sweden, 2016).

National education authorities in Italy recently started ad hoc initiatives targeting the education of asylum seeking children and Unaccompanied Minors (UM). A recently approved law enforces some aspects of the right to education for UM in Italy. In particular it makes provisions for UM to be able to obtain a school leaving certificate even if they reach the maximum age for the specific course before completing it (Grigt, 2017, p. 14).

Policies and curricula in Finland stand out with a strong focus on multiculturalism, societal participation and internationality. One cross-curricular goal of education includes 'Cultural identity and knowledge of culture providing students with opportunities to build their cultural identity by means of their native language, analysis of the past, religion, artistic and natural experiences and other aspects that are meaningful to them'. Teacher education is increasingly addressing multiculturalism, social justice and similar issues, aiming at preparing teachers for working with migrant students (Finnish National Board of Education, 2003, p. 23, in: Dervin et al., 2017, p. 5-7). Nevertheless, work is needed to ensure these goals are properly taken up in strategies for their translation and implementation in pedagogical processes and actions (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 11, 16-17).

2. ARRIVAL AND TRANSITION PROCESSES: FROM EDUCATION IN RECEPTION CENTRES AND CAMPS INTO MAINSTREAM EDUCATION

Interviews conducted for the SIRIUS project ‘Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe’ revealed that many refugee and asylum seeking children and young people are highly motivated and ambitious; they see education as their main chance of succeeding in the receiving country (Koehler et al., 2017). This is backed by the findings by Bunar (2017, p. 7) that the ambition of newly arrived migrant students (NAMS) to succeed in school in Sweden is ‘one of the largest opportunities for the education system’. He identifies in NAMS a ‘great enthusiasm for learning the language and hope for a bright future in Sweden.’

The process from the arrival of young refugees in EU member states, their first encounters with education, and through their integration into mainstream education, is characterized and influenced by a number of different factors. A comparison between several EU countries reveals the following as particularly relevant: information and connections with prior education; housing arrangements and segregation; school arrangements from reception to mainstream schooling; additional support; quality of teaching; and funding.

Information and connections with prior education

Refugee children arrive in Europe with a multiplicity of prior education and schooling. Children of the same age cohort are found to have completely different prior education experiences. At one end of the scale, there are children and young people who had little exposure to school in their countries of origin, whereas on the other end of the scale there are those who attended school without interruption until their departure and in some cases have already attained educational qualifications. Integrating these children and young people into education that builds up on their prior schooling requires the connectivity of the existing systems with the prior education of NAMS, structures to identify the level and type of their prior education, and the provision of transparent information about the receiving education system and educational opportunities in order to enable informed choices.

In Belgium (Flanders), newly arrived families can get information about the education system from the local Integration Centre, from the reception centres and from NGOs working with refugees. Some schools organise ‘network days’ within reception education in order to enable connections among students, parents, principals, teachers and follow-up coaches. Nevertheless, refugees often feel that they are not well informed about the education and labour market system. At some schools, there is a lack of targeted and individual guidance for NAMS, especially during and after the transition from reception to mainstream education, whereas other schools manage to provide individual guidance and information (Ravn et al. 2016). In Leipzig, Germany, an educational advisory service offers monthly group and individual study sessions for asylum seekers where they learn about the German education system and opportunities with a particular focus on further education. In Malmö, study advice is being offered to around 3,000 NAMS in their own languages (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11).

For the assessment of prior education, cities have started to develop different methods: the city of Stockholm has been implementing the ‘START’ project where city staff, an interpreter and a mother-tongue teacher meet the entire refugee family to assess the student’s knowledge in the core subjects (math, English, native language). The city of Munich has made plans for a central ‘assessment and assignment centre’ to assess NAMS’ knowledge and needs and support them in finding the appropriate type of education (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11). In Hamburg, all minors are presented to the Hamburg Institute for Vocational Education (HIBB) in order to assess their prior education. The teachers of the ‘learning groups’ in reception centres

recommend the children to certain types and levels of schooling. The first step is a consultation at the School Information Centre (SIZ), which then assigns the students to the schools according to the regional availability of places. The families can normally not ask for a place in a particular school. The preparation classes later assess the appropriate school level for the transition to mainstream education. In Bamberg and other cities of Bavaria, the welfare organization that is assigned to running the refugee accommodation units assume the role of facilitators in identifying a school. They contact the schools that are either the ones responsible for the neighbourhood of the centre – in the case of primary and lower secondary schools – or the most suited ones according to the level of German language and general academic skills. In general, however, the ability of schools in Germany to connect their teaching with prior learning of refugee students and provide individual support to them are quite limited (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

The Finnish model of integrating NAMS into mainstream education provides that within the first year, an individual curriculum is designed for each student tailored to his/her needs and based on their previous school history, age and other factors affecting their school work (e.g. being an Unaccompanied Minor (UM), coming from a war situation). The individual curriculum is set in cooperation between the teacher, the pupil and the family (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 5, 15). In the Netherlands, some schools apply a similar strategy of assessing the prior education and social and family conditions of each child, together with the parents or caretaker, and design an individual learning schedule. Schools are encouraged to give parents regular updates on the learning progress of the child in order to ensure continuity and avoid class repetition (Tudjman et al., forthcoming). Similarly, in the UK, an individualized learning plan is designed for each refugee student once they enter school. It remains a challenge, however, for families and students to acquire the necessary information about schools and social services in the UK, in the absence of a coordinated system to provide relevant information to newly arrived refugees (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, forthcoming).

The following approaches appear to be successful in informing refugees about education opportunities and enabling connections with their prior education

- Group session or ‘network days’ to inform refugees about the education system (as in some schools in Belgium (Flanders), in Leipzig, Germany, and in Sweden);
- Parents, teachers, city staff, students and interpreters together assessing students’ prior knowledge (as in Sweden); and
- Designing individual curriculum or learning plans for each student (as in Finland, the UK, and in some schools in the Netherlands).

Housing arrangements and segregation

During the first months upon arrival, education is often arranged in an improvised manner, in temporary facilities, therefore, the integration into a school setting is often delayed. In some cases, access to education is limited due to unstable and unfavourable housing arrangements – no space to study hampers the learning of the new language and the adaptation to the new school environment (Crul et al., 2017, p. 5; Koehler et al., forthcoming). Especially during the course of the large numbers of new arrivals since 2015, refugees have frequently been moved from one location to another. Accommodation in these temporary arrangements is prolonged by lengthy asylum procedures (Eurocities, 2017; Koehler et al., forthcoming).

In nine EU Member States (Austria, Finland, France, Bulgaria concerning pre-removal detention, Denmark, Hungary, parts of Germany, Greece except for informal activities by NGOs, Sweden) out of 14 covered by a FRA survey, children in immigration detention have no access to any form of education. Three of the Member States surveyed (the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia) provide education in detention facilities immediately

after arrival, even if children stay only for a short time. Alternative cases are ‘family locations’ in the Netherlands, where families can move around freely within the municipality. This gives children in some locations the possibility to attend a regular primary school nearby. In Spain, asylum-seeking children are not detained, except for the temporary reception centres in Ceuta and Melilla, Spain (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 2, 6-7). In Italy, UM are by law not detained alongside adults. However, there are significant numbers of UM who are detained in ‘hotspot’ facilities together with adults. According to a two-phase accommodation system introduced in 2015 and amended in 2017, UM should not stay in ‘short-term’ accommodation structures longer than 30 days. However, due to the lack of ‘long-term’ accommodation places, their stay in ‘hotspot’ and other ‘short term’ facilities is often extended over weeks or months. During this time, they have no access to education and training. Furthermore, since significant proportions of UM in Italy aim to reach other EU countries, many of them ‘disappear’ from accommodation facilities to continue their journey. This phenomenon is intensified by the fact that many UM appear to be not aware of their rights of family reunification or relocation to another EU country. This situation exposes UM to considerable risks and prevents them from exercising their right to education (Grigt, 2017, p. 16-18).

The same FRA survey discovered that asylum seekers and refugees in reception facilities in some parts of Germany, Greece (concerning asylum seekers) and Hungary have no access to formal education; the only education available is provided by volunteers or NGOs (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 7-8). In Germany, refugees are housed in reception centres or apartments in social housing after the first few months of reception until their cases have been processed and a residency permit has been issued – which may take years. Because of the provisional and temporary nature of this form of accommodation, it is impossible to establish and maintain fixed groups of children. Therefore, some municipalities, such as Hamburg, installed ‘learning groups’ in reception centres (classes of up to 15 children and adolescents, roughly divided into age groups, who receive German language lessons and partly alphabetization in Latin writing). In principle, attendance at the learning groups is obligatory for all young people under age 18, but absenteeism is high. The teachers for the groups are frequently free-lancers or former teachers who have retired; they are coordinated and accompanied by neighbouring schools. These schools also assess the school level of the children to smooth the allocation and transition to the next educational steps, especially once families or UM have been assigned to more permanent accommodation (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

A similar situation is found in Belgium: refugees are frequently moved between different accommodation centres during their asylum procedure. The fact that the different regions in Belgium have different official languages contributes to the hardships refugee students face and slows their integration. In the refugee centres, they share small rooms with many people which hampers their ability to focus on studying (Ravn et al., forthcoming).

In some countries, such as Belgium, many reception centres are located in distant or rural areas where schools are not well accessible. As a result, some refugee children do not attend school and absenteeism is increasingly a problem, others attend rural schools that are not able to divide the newcomers in different classes according to their prior schooling level and have no experience with reception education and refugee students. Similarly, in Italy and the UK, refugees in distant accommodation centres face the challenge of transportation to a school. There is a shortage of places in schools located near accommodation centres in Italy and schools tend to be hesitant to accept large numbers of refugee pupils (Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, 2017; Koehler et al., forthcoming).

Segregation is a result of different factors, for instance housing patterns and school selection. Natives tend to prefer schools with low shares of immigrants. Hence, their school choices reinforce segregation patterns. Evidence indicates that desegregation contributes to equity and efficiency: segregation inhibits equal opportunities and has negative effects on school performance of native and immigrant students and can

have personal and social effects such as xenophobia, social exclusion, radicalization and violence. Measurements of the Duncan index – an index for the segregation of immigrants and natives in specific schools – indicate relatively high levels of segregation (0,52 – 0,71) in Hungary, Latvia, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal and Finland (De Paola and Brunello, 2017, p. 1-2). In Belgium (Flanders), school segregation is a result of early tracking, freedom of school choice, and the freedom of schools to reject students who do not match their profile (Ravn et al., forthcoming). School segregation often features in cities, for instance in large cities of the UK (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, forthcoming). In Italy, refugee students are overly represented in Centro Provinciale di Istruzione per Adulti (CPIA) courses. While they were initially developed for adult learners (native and migrants), they have over time turned into institutions that are normally attended by refugee, especially UM students who are 16 years or older. This limits their peer contacts considerable; concerns of ‘ghettoisation’ have been expressed by several stakeholders (Grigt, 2017, p. 24-25). Housing arrangements for refugees and in some cases their segregation, with the attendant effects on education, seem to represent a challenge in many EU countries.

Based on the available information, the following approaches appear as good practices of accommodation arrangements for refugee children:

- ‘Family locations’ as alternatives to detention facilities where families can move around freely within the municipality of the location and children in some locations being able to attend a regular nearby primary school (as in the Netherlands);
- No detention of asylum-seeking children (as in Italy and Spain);
- Where recourse to detention facilities cannot be avoided, provision of education in detention facilities immediately after arrival (as in the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia).

School arrangements from reception to mainstream schooling

In most EU countries there are provisions to smooth refugee children’s’ entry into mainstream education through special language courses, different types of immersion classes and additional support. Among the countries surveyed by the Fundamental Rights Agency and by SIRIUS, different forms of immersion classes to help refugee children follow or join regular classes are in place in Austria, Germany, Finland, France, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands and Poland. In some of these countries (Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, Hungary, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands) refugee pupils attend school in separate classes for one, or in some countries up to two years, until they are ready to join mainstream classes (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8-9; Koehler et al., forthcoming). Arrangements for these classes (e.g. in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany in a nearby school or in some cities a school or special classes on the premises of the asylum seekers centre) and names (e.g. ‘immersion classes’ in the Netherlands, ‘reception classes’ in Belgium (Flanders) and ‘preparation’ or ‘welcome classes’ in Germany) differ across countries. Common features of the classes include a focus on quick acquisition of language skills and a general orientation in the host society and culture (Crul et al., 2016, p. 7 – 11; Koehler et al., forthcoming; Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8). Often the range of subjects is broadened stepwise.

In some Member States (Austria, Italy, parts of Germany, Greece, Sweden and Poland) refugee students may enrol directly in mainstream classes. At the same time, they benefit from introductory classes and language support (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8). In Italy, no preparation classes are foreseen on the national level, but due to school autonomy, schools are free to organise preparatory courses in order to ease integration into mainstream classes (Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, 2017). Challenges in Italy appear to be the fact that some schools reject enrolment of refugee children and that they are often

assigned to classes that do not correspond to their age. This is partly the result of some schools not being aware of respective guidelines, not being able to assess competences independent from language and not feeling equipped to meet the needs of refugee children, e.g. those who are illiterate. Whereas there is no system of preparatory classes in Italy, refugee pupils are subject to additional linguistic support in small groups and to individualised educational learning plans. However, due to the lack of resources, the full schedule of language support often cannot be provided and teachers often teach extra hours without payment (Grigt, 2017, p. 20, 28-29). In Bulgaria, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom, children are enrolled in regular classes immediately without the option of an immersion stage. Additional support in these countries is limited to NGO-run language classes and tutoring. In the UK, students are allocated to classes based on their age and individual learning support and guidance is provided (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 8, Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, forthcoming).

In Greece, since the beginning of school year 2016/17, refugee students living in accommodation centres have been able to attend classes at Reception School Annexes for Refugee Education. These additional support classes were opened up as part of existing schools in school districts where accommodation centres are located (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 10-11).

In Germany, due to the federal system, institutional and curricular requirements and teaching methods are not uniform across the country but vary between the federal states (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming). In Belgium (Flanders), schools can request to open reception classes during the entire school year instead of only at its beginning; this enables flexible responses to rising numbers of newcomers. Furthermore, in reception education in Belgium (Flanders), different ability groups are organized in order to enable teaching based on students' prior education and abilities. Coaching teachers (in secondary education) prepare students for the transition to mainstream education, guide and support them and follow-up with them after their transition to mainstream education. Coaching teachers further initiate exchange with mainstream schools and coach the teachers of former reception class students. The Flemish Ministry of Education allocates resources for 0,9 teaching hours per reception pupil which amounts to 175 coaches in school year 2016/17 (Ravn et al., forthcoming).

Generally, the transition to regular classes is not only the main goal of the preparatory classes, but also seen as the crucial point of "integration" for refugee youth. Yet at the same time, it is also difficult to achieve. Two goals seem to contradict each other: the rapid integration into regular classes and the provision of optimal language support. The attendance of regular education may not offer enough time and space for the provision of sufficient teaching in the national language. This is less a problem in primary schools than in secondary education because pupils are not only older and less able to simply "pick up" the new language, the formal requirements are much more demanding and strict, and the subjects to be learned more complex and extensive. Therefore, some stakeholders, for example in Germany, are drawn between a position that pleads for longer periods of time in preparation classes (i.e. mostly separated from the regular classes) in order to offer better chances for learning the national language, and the emphasis on an early integration into regular classes and a mixing of the pupils, so that social integration and the application of the newly acquired language skills is facilitated as soon as possible. Others plead for a mixed system that would bring NAMS and their age peers in regular classes together in all subjects in which language is not necessarily as central, such as sports, arts, religion, maths and science (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

After preparation classes, refugee students in Germany change to a regular class in general education. For those in primary education this is mostly the same school they have already been attending. For those in lower secondary education this may imply a change of school. Ideally, there are never more than five former preparation class students per mainstream class (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming). A similar system is in place in the Netherlands, Belgium (Flanders) and Finland, where NAMS attend a preparation class at a specific

school for one year before transferring to a mainstream class (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 4-5; Tadjman et al., 2016; Ravn et al., forthcoming).

It seems that inclusion into regular classes in primary schools is widely unproblematic. However, the school systems of most EU countries are characterized by a hierarchy of different streams or tracks, separated by ability level and grade averages from the secondary level on up. As a rule, late and less selective tracking offers more opportunities for higher secondary and academic education. Among EU countries, Germany tracks the earliest at age ten, followed by the Netherlands, Greece and Belgium (Flanders), each at age twelve. In the scenario of early tracking, refugee children generally have low chances of making it to a higher secondary school after primary school. Those who arrive late during their educational career are disadvantaged because they have missed the entry exams or grade averages for entering an academic secondary path. Much also depends on the previous education and knowledge of the parents.

Students who have the cognitive and intellectual skills to follow the academic track are often advised to enter the vocational track because of their insufficient language skills, or because school advisors may make misjudgements at the end of primary education (Koehler et al., forthcoming). Entering a lower secondary path effectively means that a student is channelled towards vocational training and has little chance of switching to an academic path. Policies of those countries that particularly target vocational careers for refugees sustain this system; for example, they may present lower secondary schools as the 'normal path' to refugees, while at the same time the majority of native students attend higher secondary schools. Hence, disproportionately high numbers of refugee students attend the vocational tracks of secondary schools in the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium (Flanders). This comes not only with limited educational chances but also with low social appreciation. That said, the apprenticeship systems in the aforementioned three countries are well developed and do indeed offer realistic chances for labour market entry (Crul et al., 2016, p. 15-17; Koehler et al., forthcoming).

In Sweden, which takes the opposite approach, tracking only takes place at the age of 15 and the general goal is to get as many students as possible, including refugees, into academic education. While this system does offer better chances for a higher education path for refugees, the disadvantage is that those who do not manage to succeed in this path find only limited chances within the vocational sector (Crul et al., 2016, p. 15-17). Late tracking also takes place in Finland, where at the age of 16 students choose between a vocational and an academic track (Dervin et al., 2017). The UK does not apply a system of tracking at all; the different schools that are available at secondary level are open for all ability levels; differentiation instead takes place within each school (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, forthcoming).

In Italy, data suggests that early childhood and upper secondary education are the most difficult for refugee children to access. Most UM attend CPIA courses. The courses allow those 16 years and older to attain a lower secondary school degree and are experienced in assessing skills and teaching migrants and people who are illiterate. But at the same time they are criticized for directing course participants away from mainstream education, not meeting the particular needs of UM in regard to psycho-pedagogical approaches and practical arrangements (e.g. teaching alongside adults), and not providing them with opportunities to integrate into society. This is partly because they were initially designed for adult learners and lack staff and resources to appropriately cater for the needs of UM. Provisions for CPIA to adapt to the changing needs were made in 2015/16 but are yet to be implemented. For UM who are qualified to enroll in an upper secondary school, systemic barriers often hinder their access when they reach the age of legal majority, as schools often reject UM who do not have a residence permit (Grigt, 2017, p. 21-24).

In Germany, when entering the education system after primary school, the vast majority of refugee children are allocated to preparation classes at lower secondary schools. Only small numbers of preparation classes exist at medium and higher secondary schools (Crul et al., 2016, p. 7- 11). Since this system has been in place

for several years, the drastic increase of new arrivals in 2015 represented less a conceptual challenge than a challenge of magnitude. Schools had no space for additional classes and there has been an immense shortage of qualified teachers. Some secondary schools in Hamburg operate with a longer and more intensive preparatory system aimed at facilitating the transition to the upper secondary track for high-potential students. In these longer courses pupils stay two years in the preparation class, repeat 10th grade at upper secondary school (in order to smoothen the transition and get extra support for adaptation) and then move on to higher secondary education with reasonably good chances for graduation after another two years. Further facilitating this is by recognizing the most common origin languages of migrant students (Turkish, Russian, Arabic) to meet the obligatory second foreign language requirement, and as a main subject in their final exams. In other German federal states and in some other countries, for example the Netherlands, there is generally not much attention paid to native languages. The Land Bavaria tries to keep the time spent in preparation classes as short as possible in order to hasten the educational integration of refugee children within the regular system. This has the advantage that pupils are confronted with the full range of subjects from the very beginning. However, lacking German language skills and a lack of appropriate teaching methods represent major obstacles (Koehler et al., forthcoming).

In Belgium (Flanders) and other countries, large gaps are often found between the skills and knowledge NAMS acquire in reception education and the expectations in mainstream education. In the majority of cases, they are in need of extra support in language acquisition and on a socio-emotional level (Koehler et al., forthcoming). In order to ease transition from reception classes to regular classes, the Senate of Berlin set up additional 'bridge courses' as a step between the two systems, particularly providing language support (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11). In Germany, Belgium (Flanders) and the Netherlands, second language support is often continued after integrating refugee students in mainstream primary school classes, whereas secondary schools often do not provide extra language classes. Since language instruction is considered as an additional subject, there are no standardized provisions on quality and quantity of teaching (Crul et al., 2016, p. 7 – 11, Eurocities, 2017, p. 10; Koehler et al., forthcoming).

Age is a barrier to attaining a school certificate for refugees who missed out on education for years. If they are over 18 years, their chances of entering a preparation class and attaining a secondary education degree are limited or non-existent, for example in the Netherlands (Tudjman et al., 2016). In Germany, refugees aged 16 or 17 are often not offered any schooling, this applies particularly to unaccompanied minors (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 10).

Sweden has a policy (formally legalised in 2016) of integrating children as quickly as possible into mainstream classes; hence the time they spend in immersion classes is usually rather short, sometimes only a few months. In order to facilitate the process of transition from immersion to mainstream classes, immersion class pupils already hold a place in a mainstream class where they attend some classes according to their competences. After final placement into mainstream classes, additional support is provided. This includes additional language classes and the fact that Swedish is offered as a second language with complete teaching syllabus, instruction and trained teachers at all levels of school; the subject can also be counted as an entrance mark for university (Crul et al., 2016, p. 8-11; Ministry of Education and Research Sweden, 2016, p. 1-2).

Success factors for school arrangements that facilitate the process from reception to the integration into mainstream schooling appear to be:

- Late or no tracking (as in Finland, Sweden and the UK);
- Additional language support after entering mainstream education (as in Sweden);

- The option to enrol directly in mainstream classes while benefitting from introductory classes and language support (as in Austria, Italy, parts of Germany, Greece, Sweden and Poland);
- Coaching teachers facilitating the transition from preparation to mainstream classes (as in Flanders);
- The option to enrol in certified courses and tests for the national language as second language (as in Sweden) and for the native language as a second foreign language (as in some schools in Hamburg, Germany); and
- Facilitation of the entry into higher secondary education through a prolonged and more intensive preparatory system (as in some schools in Hamburg).

Additional support

In all EU Member States surveyed by the Fundamental Rights Agency, refugee children benefit from the same services as national pupils once they are enrolled in a mainstream school. However, additional support is necessary for refugee children not only for cognitive matters but also in order to respond to their particular situation, e.g. experiences of trauma, loss of relatives and other psychosocial issues. Most countries attempt to meet their respective needs in schools, e.g. through financial, education or material support (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11).

In Bulgaria, the Ministry of Education and Science, school principals and teachers of refugee students exchange information with NGOs and the UNHCR in order to identify students' specific needs. This may include transport, school materials or legal aids. An online platform is being developed to facilitate this exchange. Financial support for school materials and other items is provided to refugee parents in a number of countries, e.g. in the Netherlands, Austria and Slovakia (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11-12).

In countries where there is no obligation to assign a support person, for instance in Germany, Belgium (Flanders) and the Netherlands, the type and quality of support varies (Crul et al., 2016, p. 13; Koehler et al., forthcoming). In some cases, a teacher or a school mentor takes up this role, but in most cases the support person is not particularly trained for the needs of refugee students and deals with heavy workload. This often results in a situation where the needs of refugee students cannot appropriately be met and crisis and intervention support cannot be provided (Crul et al., 2016, p. 13). In Italy, schools try to provide as much support to refugee and UM pupils as possible, but there is a lack of trained staff to teach in multicultural classrooms and to respond to psychological needs as well as a lack of linguistic and cultural mediation, also in order to communicate with parents (Grigt, 2017, p. 26-27). The survey by the Fundamental Rights Agency identifies trauma and uncertainty about the future as particular impediments for refugee children's integration in education in Hungary, Greece and Germany. In four of the surveyed countries (France, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Sweden) there is some sort of support for traumatised children. However, this support often does not target refugee children and might therefore be inadequate for their needs (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11-12). In Belgium (Flanders), follow-up coaches are assigned. However, they understand their task as being limited to the school and rarely reach out to non-school actors (Ravn et al., forthcoming). In other countries, for example Sweden, schools are obliged to assign a particular support person for students who have attended an international class. The support starts once students enter the mainstream class and can be arranged individually or in groups (Crul et al., 2016, p. 13).

Helsinki has started to use the Finnish national support for L1 language instruction to provide additional L1 support in school subjects during the school day, provides funds to hire additional teachers and to purchase teaching material for refugees, and provides diverse types of assistance and support for schoolwork (diversified activities, learning in groups, guidance counselling, remedial teaching, special needs education,

and student welfare services). The city makes provisions to ensure that parents are aware of these offerings and have the opportunity to meet with the providers (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 6, 11-12).

Feeling welcome facilitates the integration of newly arrived students into a new school environment. For this reason schools in some countries, for example Belgium (Flanders), Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, have set up certain rituals or programmes to welcome refugee students. Some schools in Germany have installed rituals, giving small presents to new students, or asking older pupils to act as guides for the first months at school; ideally, those will be pupils with the same mother tongue, and they receive a certificate at the end of the school year. In the Netherlands, some schools pair NAMS with a student of the mainstream group who will then act as a guide for the newcomer at school (Tudjman et al., 2016, Ravn et al., forthcoming, Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming, Crul et al., 2016). Schools in Stockholm and Malmö follow a particular action plan or guidelines for welcoming newcomers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7). A school in Palermo is developing a systematic concept of 'welcome culture' through a 30-hour training programme with the support of linguistic-cultural moderators to a team of ten administrative staff and teachers. They will acquire linguistic and relational competences and will be tutored by a team of external professionals in order to support teachers' communications with the family and the development of individualised learning plans. The programme will also include workshops with pupils in order to help develop NAMS' linguistic competences and promote cultural exchanges and diversity (Grigt, 2017, p. 31).

Some specific support systems have been set up to accommodate the needs of UM. In Leeds, for instance, a 'virtual school head' was appointed whose responsibility it is to make sure that all children in the care of the local authorities are in appropriate education, and additional transition classes were opened for UM (Eurocities, 2017, p. 11).

In Italy, there appears to be a lack of specialised staff to provide psychological support for UM. Some schools in Italy also point to the inadequate training of their administrative staff who, as the first contact point of newcomers, have a special function for their integration into the new school. Schools lack time and resources to train administrative staff to deal with refugees and with the management of project funds that they have to apply for in order to implement integration activities for refugees (Grigt, 2017, p. 25 - 28).

The following factors appear to be successful for the provision of additional support to refugees:

- Obligatory assignment of a qualified support person in each school (as in Sweden);
- Diverse types of assistance and support for schoolwork (as in Helsinki, Finland);
- Cooperation among multiple stakeholders for the identification and meeting of refugee students' needs (as in Bulgaria);
- Rituals and programmes for welcoming new students at school (as in Belgium (Flanders), the Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Sweden); and
- Particular support mechanisms for UM (as in Leeds, UK).

Quality of teaching

Teachers should be able to meet the diverse needs of all students and foster tolerance, respect for diversity and civic responsibility. Whereas most European countries already faced challenges in matching teaching methods and quality with the needs of diverse classrooms, the challenges intensified with the arrival of large numbers of refugee students and their particular needs. According to the OECD (2014, in: Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p.12) working with multicultural and multilingual students is one of the areas that teachers feel the least prepared for.

In several EU countries, for example Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, the UK, Sweden, Finland, Italy and the Netherlands, many teachers are not trained or have no experience with general issues of migration and diversity, to work with refugee students and their particular needs, to teach the national language as a second language, to provide psychosocial guidance, and to enable connections with students' prior knowledge (Crul et al., 2016 et al., p. 11; Koehler et al., forthcoming, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11, Grigt, 2017, p. 27-28).

In Belgium, frequent changes in class composition due to students being moved between locations contribute to the difficulties. An integrated and personalized approach that enables connections with the different life domains and prior knowledge of newcomers is often missing and special teachers who are trained to deal with the increasing number of unschooled and illiterate students are lacking (Ravn et al., forthcoming).

Similarly, in the Netherlands, due to refugees being moved around frequently, municipalities are often not prepared for new arrivals and lack appropriate facilities and staff. Emergency reception centres have been opened up in municipalities that had no prior experience in teaching refugees, which compromises the quality of teaching. There are no national laws or guidelines in the Netherlands on how to acquire additional teaching skills for teachers of NAMS (Tudjman et al., 2016). In Bulgaria, there is a lack of teachers who are qualified to teach Bulgarian as a second language (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 16).

In Italy, the insufficient training of teachers is often linked to the difficulties of schools in integrating refugee and UM pupils. There is a lack of teachers to teach in multicultural environments, to evaluate pupils' competences independently from language skills, and to teach Italian as a second language. A new law ('La Buona Scuola') that was introduced in 2015 made provisions for progress in recognising academic qualifications to teach Italian as a second language in teacher recruitment processes. However, none of the 500 teachers who qualified in 2016 as teachers of Italian as a second language had been assigned a school by the end of 2016 (Grigt, 2017, p. 27).

In Germany, there are no modified sets of teaching methods and tools for classes with non-native German speakers among the students. Teachers rarely use other languages in class than German – not even English – to ensure that all students understand and can follow. Peer learning and tutoring are not incorporated in any systematic way, so that it is widely up to the students (and their families) to manage their ways and find help. Teachers complain that only exceptional students are able to fulfil all requirements for the academic track and access to higher education, but it seemingly does not lead to re-conceptualizations of teaching methods and other structural aspects of dealing with increasingly heterogeneous student populations (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

In Finland, teacher education, including programmes on multicultural, intercultural, social justice or global teacher education, prepares teachers for working with migrant students, and are among the core values of the department of teacher education. At the same time, the lack of a coherent national agreement on the meaning of multicultural education for teachers and students leads to different ideological teaching approaches that may indirectly lead to new forms of social injustice, for example in discourses that create othering (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 6-8, 17). This relates to the finding of the Public Policy Management Institute (2017, p. 103) that clear definitions of specific competences and guidelines for ITE programmes and a combination of theory and practice in ITE are necessary to effectively prepare student teachers for diversity.

Generally, schools in cities are more experienced and more open towards the specific needs of refugees than schools in rural areas (Koehler et al., forthcoming).

Several European countries set policy goals to better prepare teacher students for diversity (Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p. 37). Diversity is conceptualised differently in EU Member States, this refers

to the operationalisation of diversity (e.g. linguistic or multicultural aspects, ethnic or national minorities) and the view of diversity. The deficit view sees diversity as a challenge to be dealt with whereas the potential view sees diversity as an asset and educational opportunity (ibid, p. 30). Policies of the Member States are informed by the different conceptualisations. An analysis by the Public Policy Management Institute (2017, p. 102) found that countries increasingly recognise the benefits of cultural, linguistic, religious and social diversity for schools. Nevertheless, in many countries approaches informed by the deficit view prevail. At the same time, the study found that policies for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) systems in numerous EU countries have adopted a more inclusive approach and that support measures have been implemented in many countries for ITE systems to adjust to the needs of classroom diversity (ibid, p. 104).

The Teacher Training Institute in Hamburg is a good practice example for the training of ‘intercultural mediators’ and ‘cultural actors’ which contributes to diversity competences of schools. Similarly, in Malmö, staff were trained for intercultural competences to facilitate their work with pupils and parents (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7-8). The National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO) in Norway conducted the project ‘Education for newly arrived youth’ in 26 municipalities in seven countries. Goals included the increase of competences of school managers and teachers to deal with newly arrived youths (Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p. 75).

Greece has developed education materials in the most common languages of immigrants, has organised in-service training programmes for teachers and has declared intercultural education as a compulsory course for most pedagogical departments of universities (Workshop paper Greece).

Projects developed by the Ministry of Education in Italy foster teacher training and school-based inclusion initiatives for awareness raising of issues of migration and human rights, and for linguistic and cultural mediation (Grigt, 2017, p. 14-15.)

Belgium (Flanders) and Spain have introduced self-assessment tools for trainers and teachers: An online screening instrument on diversity in teacher education enables ITE providers in Belgium (Flanders) to screen their policies. Another online tool in Spain enables teachers to review their perspectives on diversity and provides practical resources for diversity in schools (Public Policy Management Institute, 2017, p. 79).

The following factors appear to be successful in how the quality of teaching can contribute to the continuity of learning for refugee students:

- Training of teachers for migration and diversity issues and for the particular needs of refugee students, especially regarding language teaching, responding to psychosocial needs and enabling connections with prior learning (as done in Greece, through the Teacher Training Institute in Hamburg, the city of Malmö, by the NAFO project, and by online tools in Belgium (Flanders), Italy and Spain);
- Establishment of standard requirements for teachers to teach classes of NAMS;
- Adoption of a more inclusive approach in policies for ITE; and
- Implementation of support measures for ITE systems to adjust to the needs of classroom diversity.

Funding

In the process of the high numbers of new arrivals since 2015, the education systems in several EU countries reached their performance limits. The need for additional resources was met in some cases. In most countries, governmental support is available for NAMS who are in possession of a residence permit. Usually

this includes funding for increased costs, including education, for the first two years after the residence permit was issued (Eurocities, 2017, p. 8).

Many EU countries increased their budgets for education in response to the increased numbers of new arrivals in 2015/16. In many countries, additional funding is provided for opening up classes for NAMS and hiring additional teachers. However, challenges may arise when this funding is directly related to the number of refugee students: in the Netherlands, where there is high fluctuation of refugee students because of them being frequently moved, schools are hesitant to hire additional teachers, open up new classes and purchase extra materials when student numbers are high because they cannot rely on the numbers to remain high. In the event of a sudden decrease of student numbers they would be left with the additional expenses (Koehler et al., forthcoming, Tudjman et al., 2016).

In Belgium, in some cases the regional governments (for example Ghent and Antwerp) provide additional funding to cities that can be allocated according to their needs, for instance integration programmes, additional language courses, and additional classes for NAMS with extra teaching time. In Finland, Germany and the Netherlands, federal funds support the municipalities in the provision of extra staff for NAMS. The city of Leipzig, for instance, used these funds to allocate staff to analyse the particular needs and existing offers in the field of education for refugees; The Hague hired additional teachers and social workers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 9; Dervin et al., 2017, p. 3-4). The Ministry of Education in Italy made additional funds available that schools could apply for in order to provide language classes for NAMS and linguistic, psychological support for UM and other activities for the inclusion of NAMS and UM (Grigt, 2017, p. 14).

Finland allocated additional funding for integration training for asylum seekers who have received residence permits, and for apprenticeship and work-based training for those granted international protection (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15-16). Finland also channels a large amount of funds into L1 language teaching. *The Finnish National Board of Education* funds 86 % of the L1 teaching of every language that is represented by at least four pupils. In Helsinki this reflects in the instruction of 47 different languages. In addition, Helsinki has started to use this L1 support for additional support in school subjects rather than L1 instruction (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 6). In Germany (e.g. Leipzig) and Sweden (e.g. Gothenburg, Stockholm, Malmö) new schools, new classrooms and new classes were set up (Eurocities, 2017, p. 8). In Malmö and Stockholm schools that receive NAMS receive additional resources (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 16). In the UK (e.g. Leeds), extra funding, training and support programmes were provided to meet the newly emerging needs. In Helsinki, funding was used to set up *the Helsinki Skills Centre* (Eurocities, 2017, p. 8) and funds are provided to hire additional teachers or purchase teaching material for refugees (Dervin, 2017, p. 11-12). Overall, however, there is a shortage of funds for a coordinated approach to integrating NAMS (Koehler et al., forthcoming).

In some countries the increase in resources was not sufficient, e.g. in Greece and Italy. Budget in Greece only supports the costs of additional human resources for refugee education, material and management in camps but are almost non-existent for formal education. The foreseen additional language support can often not fully be provided to refugee pupils in Italy due to the lack of funds. Funds are also lacking for trained teachers and support staff to respond to refugee and UM students' needs. The 'funds for risk areas' are primarily the only structured annual funds for integration activities in schools for UM and refugee pupils in Italy. However, schools deplore that these funds are not sufficient and that they depend on additional external project funds. At the same time, many schools lack the resources to implement additional projects (Grigt, 2017, p. 27-30). In other countries (Slovakia, Denmark and Hungary), there was no increase in funds. All relevant activities in Slovakia are covered by NGOs. Public schools in Hungary must rely only on EU programmes and initiatives. The Danish Union of Teachers is concerned about decreased and insufficient budgets in municipalities (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15-16).

Successful funding mechanisms in the analysed countries include:

- Flexible funding that allows municipalities and schools to allocate funds according to the contextual needs (as the regional governments in Belgium);
- Provision of funds for additional classes and teachers and support staff (as in Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK); and
- Provision of funds for L1 language teaching (as in Helsinki, Finland).

3. INCLUSION OF REFUGEES INTO VOCATIONAL, HIGHER AND ADULT EDUCATION

The EU 'Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals' encourages Member States to support fast integration into the labour market of newly arrived migrants, e.g. through combined language and on-the-job training, to remove obstacles for effective access to vocational training for refugees, to assess, validate and recognise skills and qualifications of third country nationals as soon as possible, and to encourage entrepreneurship (European Commission, 2016, p. 10-11). The Council of Europe (2017a) further stresses the need for competences in the host country's language for any occupational field and any level of qualification. In this regard, it underlines the challenges of different needs for language training. Whereas general language training and key competences are appropriate for work purposes of low-skilled non-native speakers, targeted and specific training is necessary for highly skilled non-native speakers and those with particular work-related communication needs.

Access to and transition into vocational, higher and adult education is related to the age at which compulsory education ends, the recognition of educational attainment from the countries of origin, language requirements, and the policy goals regarding professional opportunities for refugees, related information and support mechanisms.

In some countries, for example Germany and the Netherlands, policy goals for the professional development of refugees are rather limited to a short term, vocational training oriented perspective. Hence, support mechanisms focus on the transition and immersion phase. A combination of the effects of the early tracking system and the provision of information and support mechanisms that focus on vocational development leads to the majority of refugees entering or aiming to enter the vocational sector after compulsory education in both countries. In contrast, Swedish policies aim to give refugee students the same educational opportunities as to native students, which means to reach higher education (Crul, 2017).

Many countries surveyed by FRA report difficulties with the education of refugees who are above the compulsory school age. This is particularly the case when they have not yet achieved the skills required by secondary schools (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 13). In Sweden and Germany, compulsory education ends at age 16, in Greece and Austria at age 15, and in the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK at age 18. Regulations and the resulting opportunities for refugees to continue their education after compulsory education vary among countries and among regions. In Greece, for instance, children above the age of compulsory education are not subject to compulsory education frameworks. When they are not in possession of a lower secondary school completion certificate, they cannot access general or vocational upper secondary schools. Alternatively, they can enter the labour market but barely have the chance for a job without a lower secondary school-leaving certificate. Public services for Early School Leavers so far do not include refugees (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 13-14).

Sweden provides unlimited access to adult education and university education and there have been different measures to facilitate entry into the vocational sector. In the Netherlands, students who do not have at least a temporary residence permit at the age of 18 are not allowed to continue their education (Crul, 2017), Kakos and Sharma-Brymer. In Belgium (Flanders), students formerly enrolled in reception education above the age of 18 are mostly referred to the public employment service of Flanders which guides them towards employment or further training. However, interviews indicated that these offers generally target adults whereas refugees who are not much older than 18 years need a rather protected environment. This might be a reason why currently these young adults often do not participate in offers after they turn 18 (Ravn et al., forthcoming).

An attempt has been made by the city of Hamburg to identify which trajectory is best suited for each young refugee after the end of compulsory schooling. International preparation classes (IVK) assess the potential of each adolescent in choosing between an academic and a vocational trajectory. If a potential for higher education, or at least a good middle secondary school diploma, is identified, the person is sent to a special IVK that prepares them for the middle diploma exam and for the transition to higher secondary education (and finally tertiary education) in the mainstream school system. If the potential or the interest of the young person is instead identified in the vocational sector, the aim is to integrate her or him into the apprenticeship-based vocational system (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

Vocational education

Article 26 of Council Directive 2011/95/EU provides that employment-related education for adults and vocational training should be offered to beneficiaries of international protection under the same conditions as nationals. According to a survey by FRA, a core barrier for labour market entry of adult refugees is the recognition of diplomas. This is particularly the case for Austria, Greece, Slovakia and Spain (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 14). In this light, and in accordance with the EU 'Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals' (European Commission, 2016), vocational training has a central role for the integration of refugees in Europe.

In Germany, vocational education is generally open for asylum seekers but those from countries that are classified as 'safe countries of origin' are excluded from vocational education in most *Länder*. A variety of measures since the beginning of 2016 aim to equip young asylum seekers and refugees within a short time with the skills and competences that enable them to enter vocational training and to connect them with potential employers, for example through internships and in cooperation with key labour market actors as part of the training measures. A model that has become common is 'international work-entry classes' in Hamburg or 'vocational integration classes' in Bavaria. They target refugees who have come to Germany around the age of the end of compulsory education but have not attained a formal school qualification. Many of these students have not attended school for a long time or have breaks in their educational biography. The classes place an emphasis on preparing for and facilitating access to vocational training or directly to work, combined with German language training and internships. Vocational schools in Bavaria admit people between the ages of 15 and 21 and in some cases up to 25 years. Classes last two to three years; for those in need of more support, the two-year programme can be extended to three years. On completion of the class, students are awarded a general education school-leaving certificate.

Hamburg created a new training and apprenticeship preparation programme ("work preparation in the dual sector for migrants"): the adolescents stay two years in the programme (30 hours of school per week and three internships in a company in the course of two years). The internships comprise three days in school and two days practice per week. The programme provides the possibility of obtaining a secondary school leaving certificate that gives access to a regular apprenticeship position. The teaching is oriented towards

practical aspects of professional life and vocational training. Besides German language, the subjects include Math, English, social aspects of life in Germany, sports, and work related activities. In the preparatory classes in vocational schools especially, the class composition can be very mixed. Often youth in need of alphabetization in the Latin alphabet are mixed with those with good Latin writing skills. Even fewer teachers than in general secondary schools have second language teaching qualifications. Due to the strong specialization of mainstream vocational students for their future profession, it is hardly possible to mix them with language learners of preparatory classes in vocational schools. Access to an apprenticeship position is often difficult. Even if a refugee youth does a very good job in the practical tasks of the company, having problems in the vocational school subjects can severely jeopardize the completion of the certificate (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

Actors who provide vocational preparation measures for refugees include vocational schools, adult education schools, employment agencies, and welfare organizations. Because of a variety of measures and the lack of a systematic overview, refugees and those counselling them find it hard to identify the most suitable measures. In some cases, apprenticeship contracts cannot be concluded because of difficulties in obtaining the permission by the responsible authorities, which is a reason why some employers hesitate to offer positions to refugees in the first place. In cooperation with the economic sector, Hamburg has therefore installed a temporary residency permit for those adolescents (and their families) who have found an apprenticeship position. This is independent from their previous legal status and meant to allow them to find such a position, and to create more planning security for the companies that want to offer apprenticeship places to refugee youth (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

In Finland, Helsinki's city administration founded a 'Skills Centre' which combines vocational education, employment and language training services for refugees over 17 years who are in need for additional skills in order to enter vocational training or employment. In Tampere, asylum seekers have access to the city's vocational training college with a special training department for adult immigrants. In Vienna, a 'youth college' provides basic education courses for asylum seekers between 15 and 20 years (Eurocities, 2017, p. 12).

In Sweden, a 'fast track' programme initiated by the government aims to help asylum seekers access the labour market through general and professional language training, assessment of skills and education, validation of education, trainee jobs and job matching (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15). Stockholm launched a three-year project, partly financed by the European Social Fund. The project develops a method of combining language teaching with vocational training for students with limited prior formal education. By enabling students to begin their vocational training before completing their Swedish language courses, their time spent in education is reduced (Eurocities, 2017, p. 12).

In Bulgaria, the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is implementing an employment and qualification programme for people with recognised international protection status. The programme includes professional training and language courses. After completion of the course, the participants will be employed in subsidised positions (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15). In Italy it seems common for UM to be enrolled in short training courses in the Regional Vocational Education and Training system. CPIAs in Trapani are in the course of developing professional training workshops as electricians and chefs for migrant pupils completing the lower secondary degree. They aim at encouraging pupils to continue their education on upper secondary level, interact with teachers and students and become familiar with new structures. The training materials will be made available on an online platform and will be used to identify good practice (Grigt, 2017, p. 22, 32).

The city of Vienna is currently engaged in the EU project CORE. The project aims to start implementing measures to prepare asylum seekers for labour market integration as soon as asylum procedures have

started. The Hungarian Association for Migrants has begun cooperating with different Hungarian companies in order to encourage them to train refugees (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15).

Some refugee youth come with higher education access diplomas and certified partially completed higher education courses from their countries of origin and can also validate them for access to universities in Germany. However, the language barrier can be significant. In this regard, vocational education can offer an intermediate step by apprenticing in a related practical profession. Many technical university careers have a related practical counterpart among the apprenticeship possibilities. It is quite common in Germany to first complete an apprenticeship before entering higher education. Hence, this intermediate step represents rather an asset than a disadvantage; it especially allows gaining better language skills and knowledge of the labour market (Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming).

Higher education

According to Article 28 (1) (c) of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Member States are to “make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means” (OHCHR, 2016c). The survey by FRA finds that the impossibility or complicated procedures for recognising diplomas from asylum seekers’ countries of origin are key obstacles to their access to tertiary education and employment. A further key barrier for university admission are language requirements, especially in Denmark and Greece (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 14). In this regard, the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (2017) project finds that ‘unrealistic language requirements can hamper migrants’ integration.

In the Netherlands and Germany, high language requirements – at least B2 (and German for University Entry (DSH) in Germany) –and lack of information often represent barriers for access to university (Crul, 2017, Koehler and Schneider, forthcoming). Some attempts have been made to facilitate access to higher education. In Germany, the foreign qualifications advisory and support service advises people with foreign degrees on the recognition of qualifications in Germany. Some scholarship programmes have been developed in Berlin in order to support the higher education of refugees and asylum seekers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13), and some universities in Germany have started to offer free language courses for refugees, organised by students (Crul et al., 2016, p. 19).

The Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland has started a project in 2016 to strengthen the role of Finnish higher education institutions in integrating refugees. Refugees receive information about Finnish higher education institutions and the recognition of previous education is fostered. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development in France has initiated a programme for Syrian students in France. For Syrian students in Lebanon who wish to study in France, the French Embassy in Lebanon has initiated a support programme (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 15). Italy was the first EU country that adopted the ‘University for Refugees’ initiative proposed by the EU Member of Parliament, Silvia Costa. The initiative aims to create educational corridors for refugee tertiary students and researchers. Scholarships were also provided by the Italian government and national organisations to facilitate access to higher education programmes for students granted international protection (Grixt, 2017, p. 15).

Some universities have opened up their courses to refugees, avoiding strict regulations and preconditions. A promising example is the University of Ghent, where anybody with official refugee status can enrol in classes without proof of previous diplomas; a preparatory programme enables the smooth integration into the university system. The programme is managed by a contact point for refugees created in 2016. The Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm allows free entry to some of their courses for refugees and asylum seekers who already have a degree in engineering. Efforts to facilitate university entry for refugees have also been made in Madrid and Amsterdam: in Madrid, agreements between the city and universities aim to assist

refugees to continue their university studies. In Amsterdam, bridging classes aim to facilitate the integration of refugees into the university system (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13). In Italy, 15 universities have developed actions to improve refugees' access to higher education in Bari, Naples, Rome, Teramo, Siena, Bologna, Turin, Pavia, Verona and Trieste (Grigt, 2017, p. 15).

Adult education

Adult education is another pathway for refugees, especially for those who arrive after the period of compulsory education, to acquire skills that enable them to enter labour markets in Europe. Its relevance for refugees depends, among other things, on the general position and recognition adult education has in a country. Adult education is a rather flexible and less regulated area, where cities, the private sector, NGOs and voluntary organizations often cooperate (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13).

In Sweden, adult education is a more mainstream institution than in other countries and has a long tradition of facilitating entry into the education system for migrants, for example, an adult education diploma can be used to enter higher education. This tradition has enabled Sweden to tailor the system of adult education to the needs of refugees (Crul et al., 2016, p. 19). However, adult education in Sweden can only be accessed by recognised asylum seekers. For this group, the adult education sector also offers vocational education and language courses, and in the city of Gothenburg, language classes adapted to certain highly-educated professionals, for example, health care, technicians, engineers and teachers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13).

In Germany, a variety of adult education programmes include language courses, school qualification courses, and the partly obligatory integration courses (newly arrived migrants are obliged to participate in an integration course if they have a residence permit or a recognised asylum status). Except for integration courses which are nearly free for those whom they are obligatory for, the lack of information and costs for the courses often hinder the participation of refugees. Some adult education institutions have started to offer free courses on a basic level to refugees; in some cases, the government takes over the costs (Crul et al., 2016, p. 19).

Similarly, in the Netherlands refugees also lack information about adult education programmes, but here, adult education is rather marginal (Crul et al., 2016, p. 19). Whereas the participation in an integration course is obligatory in Germany, in the Netherlands newly arrived migrants have to prove on the basis of a test that they are integrated into society. This is partly the reason why some cities, for instance The Hague, cover some costs for adult education for refugees. In Ghent, undocumented adults can participate in private training courses offered by NGOs (Eurocities, 2017, p. 13).

In Italy, the 'System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR)' project is a network of local authorities that implements reception projects for adult refugees and asylum seekers. The main objective of the projects is to design personalised programmes to help refugees '(re)acquire self-autonomy, and to take part in and integrate effectively into Italian society' (European Association for the Education of Adults, 2017).

Minimum requirements of the national language are often preconditions for the right to a long-term residency or citizenships. Many EU countries provide and fund language courses for adult migrants. The Council of Europe (CoE) points out the importance of tailoring such courses to the particular needs and learning patterns of adult learners (Council of Europe, 2017b). The Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT), funded by the Irish government, followed the respective recommendations of the CoE and developed a language teaching programme that is tailored to the needs of adult refugees in Ireland. Core elements of the programme include the active involvement of learners in the classroom, and giving them ownership of the learning process, reflection and assessment. Separate modules were developed for learners newly

arrived in Ireland, learners who had been living in Ireland for some time before starting the course, and for learners moving towards work or mainstream vocational training (Little, no date).

Successful approaches for the inclusion of refugees in vocational, higher and adult education include:

- Targeted measures of preparation for vocational training with strong practical and labour market related approaches (as in Germany, Helsinki, Finland, Vienna, Austria and Sweden) and with subsequent subsidised employment (as in Bulgaria);
- Cooperation with companies in order to encourage them to train refugees (as by the Hungarian Association for Migrants);
- Identification of the optimal trajectory for each student by qualified agencies (as in Hamburg, Germany);
- Combining vocational training and language teaching (as in Stockholm, Sweden and Germany);
- Temporary residence permits for refugees who found apprenticeship positions (as in Hamburg, Germany);
- Vocational training or adult education as an intermediate step towards higher education (as in Germany and Sweden);
- Informing refugees about higher education in the receiving country and facilitating prior degree recognition (as in Finland and Italy);
- Free (preparation and language) courses and free entry at university for refugees (as in Amsterdam and Ghent, the Netherlands; Stockholm, Sweden, and Germany);
- Free or nearly free integration and basic adult education courses (as in Germany and in some cities in the Netherlands);
- Language courses for adult learners that are targeted to the learners' profile (as in Ireland); and language courses for highly skilled professions (as in Gothenburg, Sweden).

4. MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION

In most countries, different stakeholders interact, especially at the local level, but coherent coordination of their activities for effective support and integration of newcomers is largely lacking. The city administration often plays a key role in coordinating the cooperation of stakeholders such as training institutions, governmental agencies and schools. In the absence of their involvement, the cooperation is often compromised (Eurocities, 2017, p. 5).

Some cities have already established structures for cooperation: the city of Ghent set up a taskforce for refugees, including a working group on integration with education being a main part of it, which coordinates the collaboration between different city services, the public service for social welfare, local NGOs and volunteers (Eurocities, 2017, p. 5). The city of Munich established a *Masterplan on Education* that involves all municipal actors, employment agencies, apprenticeship organizations, labor market actors, and social actors. Other cities – Nuremberg, The Hague, and Antwerp - are in planning stages; they have been conducting coordination meetings with relevant actors. In large cities like Berlin, coordination happens at district level; each district has a coordination unit that coordinates issues of refugees and their schooling (Eurocities, 2017, p. 6).

Even before the large numbers of newly arrived refugees, it has been crucial to cooperate with volunteers and NGOs, mainly to fill gaps that could not be serviced by governments and cities immediately. This has been the case particularly for language learning, the provision of general orientation and information in

reception centres, and for basic education for asylum seekers who, due to their status, do not have access to the mainstream education system. Cities often coordinate activities of volunteers and NGOs. In some cases, for example Antwerp, Ghent, Gothenburg and Hamburg, cities formally establish the cooperation with volunteers and NGOs and provide material support. Helsinki developed a pilot scheme to purchase integration and education services from NGOs (Eurocities, 2017, p. 6).

In Finland, besides governmental support for municipalities for education, many government-funded NGOs contribute to education for newly arrived migrants (Dervin et al., 2017, p. 3-4). In Bulgaria, cooperation is taking place between the Ministry of Education and Science, school principals, teachers, NGOs and the UNHCR in order to identify and meet the specific needs of refugee children (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 12). The UNHCR is also cooperating with the Ministry of Education in Italy where they signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop joint activities for the sensitising of all pupils about refugees' journeys and rights. A website ('Vioggi da imparare') provides materials for this purpose for secondary school teachers (Grigt, 2017, p. 14).

In Belgium (Flanders), schools and non-school actors work separately; little is being invested in education and learning outside of school. Pupil guidance centres play a key role in providing guidance, information and advice for parents, teachers and pupils about learning and studying, school career, preventive health care and socio-economic development. Some pupil guidance centres are funded, others are subsidised by the government. While they work closely with external services, such as the welfare and health institutions, there seems to be a lack of cooperation with the follow-up coaches at schools. Schools appear to cooperate little with other actors who are relevant for education and integration, for example youth care and employment agencies (Ravn et al., forthcoming).

In the UK, a coherent approach and cooperation among NGOs, policy bodies of the government, schools and refugee families remains a challenge. More clarity amongst local authorities could contribute to the effective addressing of integration issues of refugees (Kakos and Sharma-Brymer, forthcoming). Similarly, in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Italy, communication and cooperation between different stakeholders remains a challenge (Tudjman, forthcoming, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017, p. 11, Grigt, 2017, p. 19). There is an inclusive legal framework for the education of migrants and the integration UM in Italy and many schools have developed functioning practices of integrating UM. However, a coordinated mechanism at national and local level seems to hardly exist. In particular, the framework is not supported by resources and guidance, and clarity about rights and duties and mechanisms to mainstream good practices are lacking. Teachers and schools seem ambitious in meeting UM's needs but feel that they do not receive the necessary support. This constitutes a structural limit to the effective implementation of the legal framework (Grigt, 2017, p. 19).

Trade Unions in Italy have been particularly active in establishing funds for schools in 'areas at risk'. The education union 'UIL Scuola' has particularly become involved in the promotion of the right to education for migrant children. They collaborate with the 'Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL) and 'ITAL-UIL' in publishing a brochure in several languages to inform parents of NAMS about administrative procedures of school enrolment. On World Refugee Day 2016, three unions in Italy issued a statement on UM, urging national and EU authorities to establish 'humanitarian corridors' and offer protection and integration opportunities to UM (Grigt, 2017, p. 31-32).

Communication and cooperation with local communities, especially with parents and residents, is essential in alleviating fears and prejudice and in creating welcoming structures for newcomers. Cities such as Antwerp and Edinburgh have invested in providing information and reassurance to the public and local residents, for instance through press conferences and official statements, about changes that newly arrived refugees bring to their neighbourhoods. In Nuremberg, parents associations are active in integration efforts, in The Hague, the city works closely with parents, residents, head teachers and school management boards to alleviate

fears and provide information, and the city of Berlin is in continuous dialogue with residents to enable exchange of opinions, for example on issues of perceived unequal treatment between locals and newcomers. The 'open schools' programme of the city of Athens with the support of philanthropic organizations aims to bring communities together by opening 25 schools during afterschool hours for activities such as language courses, cooking classes or music lessons; the programme particularly targets migrants and refugees (Eurocities, 2017, p. 7-8).

The following approaches for multi-stakeholder cooperation appear as successful in contributing to the inclusion of refugees into education:

- Cities or districts taking the lead in coordinating the municipal and local actors (as in Ghent, The Hague, and Antwerp, the Netherlands; and in Munich, Nuremberg and Berlin, Germany);
- Cooperating between the municipality, NGOs and volunteers for the provision of information and informal education (as in Antwerp and Ghent, Belgium (Flanders); Gothenburg, Sweden; Helsinki, Finland; and Hamburg, Germany);
- Trade Unions taking a lead in collaborations for the provision of funds for the education of refugees and the promotion of the right to education (as in Italy);
- Cooperation between the Ministry of Education, schools, NGOs and the UNHCR in order to identify and meet refugee students' needs (as in Bulgaria); and
- Communication and cooperation with communities and parents for alleviating fears and prejudice and creating welcoming structures (as in Antwerp, Belgium (Flanders) and The Hague, the Netherlands; Edinburgh, UK; Nuremberg and Berlin, Germany; and Athens, Greece).

Overview of identified obstacles and challenges

It was shown in the previous sections that some Member States, regions, cities and individual schools or non-school actors have found ways to overcome obstacles in ensuring the continuity of learning of newly arrived refugee children in Europe. Functioning approaches were pointed out. However, in order to overcome the remaining barriers, there is need for adjustment in many Member States and in most of the areas covered above. Based on the analysis, the following obstacles and challenges remain in regard to the access to education and the opportunities to succeed in education.

1 Access to education

- Article 14 (2) of the Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, providing that access to the education system shall not be postponed for more than three months from the date on which the application for international protection was lodged and that preparatory classes, including language classes, shall be provided to minors where it is necessary to facilitate their access to and participation in education. However, this is not fully put in practice in a number of EU countries due to prolonged administrative procedures and the absence of preparatory classes in some countries.
- Article 14 (1) of Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council provides that children of asylum seekers and minor asylum seekers should be granted access to the education system 'under similar conditions as nationals of the host Member State'. Some EU countries implement this only partially or not at all. This represents a considerable barrier for the access to and equity in education of refugee children.

- Limited or no access to education for children (including UM) in detention and reception facilities in some countries inhibits their timely integration into education processes.
- Regulations on maximum age limits for particular school types hinder older or late arriving refugees (including UM) from attendance at these schools. This might also hinder them from attaining a school leaving certificate.
- Accommodating refugees in distant and rural locations limits their school choice and in many cases hinders them from attending school.
- Moving refugees frequently hinders their attendance at local schools and their settling into an educational setting.

2 Opportunities to succeed in education

2.1 Enabling informed choices and connecting with prior education

- In most countries, functioning structures for informing refugees about the school system and available educational opportunities and potential trajectories are not in place. This hinders refugees from making informed choices about their educational pathways and makes them subject to the decisions (and agendas) of others.
- Functioning procedures and structures of assessing refugees' prior education and connecting their education with their prior knowledge and educational attainments (e.g. through individualized learning plans) are not in place in a comprehensive way in many countries.

2.2 Enabling the successful transition from reception to mainstream education

- The absence of a coordinated central policy approach on reception education, bureaucratic procedures, and the reluctance of education systems to adapt to changing needs represent obstacles to smooth processes of integration.
- In most countries, teachers lack the training, competences and experience with general issues of migration and diversity, to work with refugee students and their particular needs, to teach the national language as a second language, to provide psychosocial guidance, and to enable connections with the prior education of students.
- In most countries the shortage of funds is a major barrier for a coordinated approach for integrating new arrivals and for meeting refugees' particular needs.
- Coherent cooperation between multiple stakeholders involved in the education of refugees on different levels (schools, municipalities, communities, NGOs, labour market, social actors etc.) is lacking in most countries; this is a barrier to the effective support and integration of newcomers.
- The tracking system, especially early tracking, in several EU countries continues to place refugee children at a disadvantage and hampers their access to higher secondary trajectories.
- The quantity and quality of additional support at schools, for example for psychosocial needs and support for school work for refugees, is not sufficient in most cases, especially in countries where it is not obligatory to assign a support person to each school.
- Different models of reception classes come with advantages and disadvantages. Often insufficient support in the acquisition of the national language hampers a smooth transition from reception to mainstream education. This is particularly the case for secondary education and particularly for higher secondary tracks.
- Adverse conditions in accommodation centres hamper refugee children's ability to study and focus on school.

- In some countries, refugee children are subject to school segregation. This impacts their educational outcomes negatively, hinders their integration, and results in labelling, and stigma.

2.3 Enabling successful trajectories after compulsory education

- Policies for the education of refugees after compulsory education mostly favour vocational pathways. In combination with other barriers, such as language and recognition of prior degrees, this considerably limits refugees' opportunities to enter higher education pathways.
- Strict entry requirements and a lack of information about higher education opportunities hinder refugees from accessing universities in many Member States.

The lack of information about adult education opportunities and the high costs of courses hinder refugees from taking advantage of adult education in some settings.

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