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Policy Brief - GERMANY

The project aims	EMILIE PROJECT OVERVIEW <p>EMILIE examines the migration and integration experiences of nine EU Member States and attempts to respond to the new challenges that multiculturalism is facing in Europe in the early 21st century. EMILIE studies three important areas: Education; Discrimination in the workplace; Voting rights and civic participation, in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Spain and the UK. EMILIE aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• track the relationship between migration-related diversity and citizenship, i.e. multicultural citizenship, across these EU countries; and• identify whether multicultural citizenship is emerging in Europe, and if so what distinctive patterns and types can distinguished.
Case studies	EMILIE conducted three policy-related case studies in each country. The first set of case studies focused on education policy and the measures and practices adopted in dealing with cultural diversity in secondary education. The second set of case studies assessed the implementation of the EU 2000 Anti-Discrimination Directives in the different national contexts. And the third set of case studies investigated voting rights and overall issues of political participation and representation of migrant communities and ethnic minorities in the countries studied.
Definitions	(Multicultural) Citizenship: The notion of citizenship requires a self-governing political community in which individuals have rights and correlative duties enforced by law but are likely to also have a sense of shaping and being shaped by a public space that goes beyond law and politics. Multicultural citizenship debates ask how citizenship can be fully enacted for and by individuals that are culturally diverse.
Methods, data and period of reference	Each case study focuses in the last twenty year period (from 1989 till today). Data collected include policy documents, media coverage, scholarly studies, statistical data, qualitative interviews with key informants, and where it has been possible discussion groups with civil society actors and policy makers. For the German country study education policies and recommendations on the national and state (<i>Länder</i>) levels were analysed.
Focus	The project is concerned with migration-related cultural diversity and not with historical, native ethnic minorities. Special attention is paid to religious diversity and issues concerning Muslim migrants as their integration in European societies has been approached as increasingly challenging in these EU Member States.

Main findings

Migrant pupils and students in German schools

About 27% of children and adolescents under the age of 25 are either migrants or have parents or grandparents who have migrated to Germany. There is a strong correlation between the social and migrant background of pupils and students and their educational achievement.

Policy guidelines

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* has taken extensive measures promoting intercultural education since 1996. Today, government policy guidelines on education mainly focus on German language skills. Intercultural competence is regarded as a specific potential in migrant children, rather than a general educational aim for the entire student population.

Main shortcomings

- Compulsory education does not apply to children of refugees and undocumented migrants.
- The multi-track school system discriminates against children from poor families, migrant children and children with disabilities i.e. streaming of pupils at age 10 into different educational paths (Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium) . These children are also subject to institutional discrimination resulting from routines and established practices in internal school organisation and everyday school life.
- There is growing competition among upper- and middle-class parents for placement in schools with the best profiles and there is competition between schools for 'good' and easily manageable students. This deepens the gap between high standard schools for upper social strata and the so-called 'schools for the rest of the population.'
- Schools situated in socially underprivileged neighbourhoods bear the additional task of extra teaching of additional competences in order to cover the 'knowledge distance' or gap that automatically develops as children of wealthier families tend to have access to private lessons and tutorials.
- The principles of a 'reflexive intercultural pedagogy' are not implemented in teacher training and in school practice at a nation-wide level. Rather, individual schools have independently developed their own intercultural approaches.

Size of migrant school population

According to official data collected by the German state, at present, 27% of children and adolescents under the age of 25 have a 'migration history' (i.e. they, their parents or grandparents have migrated to Germany). The majority of residents with a migrant background live in the geographic region of former West-Germany, and in some urban areas, the rate of young people with a migrant background is above 50%.

The majority of migrant pupils/students with foreign passports are of Turkish origin (about 410,000). Other quantitatively significant groups – each counting between 10,000 and 25,000 pupils/students – are migrant from the former states of Yugoslavia, Albania, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Morocco, Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon, and Vietnam. There is also a high number of 'stateless' refugees, mainly from Palestine and Lebanon.

School performance of students with a migration background

Several national and international studies have revealed that in Germany there is a strong correlation between the social and migrant background of pupils/students and their educational achievement. According to the German Educational Report, one third of grade 9 students (i.e. lower secondary level) with a migrant background attend the *Hauptschule* (the type of school at the low end of the multi-track school system). This is twice as many as their German native peers. About 20 % of the male pupils of immigrant origin leave *Hauptschule* without graduating. Only 25 % of grade 9 migrant students go to the *Gymnasium* – which prepares students for university entry – compared to one third of their German native peers. The situation is even more dramatic among pupils of Turkish origin. Every second German-Turkish pupil attends a *Hauptschule* whereas only every eighth attends the *Gymnasium*. The percentage of migrant students attending the 'special-needs school' for 'students with a learning disability' is also disproportionately high.

It is pertinent to note here that the level of German language skills among migrant students is low and this consequently hampers their school achievements. However, even if they have the same reading competences as their peers, migrant children are less likely to be recommended for enrolment in the *Gymnasium* than German natives.

Main policies for addressing diversity in the school population

Education policies are under the agenda of the Federal States (*Länder*). In October 1996, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* (*KMK*) agreed to promote a resolution on intercultural education. In 2003, the integration of Muslims in schools was addressed with the 'Weimar Appeal'. The recommendations were imbued with the perspective of religious and cultural diversity, and defined integration as "mutual acceptance". These resolutions do not have any binding effects on *Länder* policies, but they do serve as guidelines for the articulation and implementation of wider policy commitments.

In July 2007, the Federal Government submitted its National Integration Plan (NIP). Among other things, it stressed the importance of educational integration: "to meet future needs of skilled personnel and to stay competitive on an international level". The Plan maintained that the most important requirement is good German language skills and underlined the necessity of developing an educational system that "opens up chances and develops potential". However, intercultural competence is regarded as a specific potential in migrant children rather than an educational aim. According to the NIP, teacher qualifications should be improved and the selection of teachers with a migrant history should be encouraged, in particular in schools with a high percentage of migrant pupils.

There are no specific suggestions on education, curricula content or the accommodation of various cultures and religions. In contrast to the *KMK*-recommendations, the NIP does not promote any tools with a view of integrating difference and cultural heterogeneity. In response to the international competition for skilled personnel, the NIP focuses on a school reform with the aim to make better use of human capital.

To sum up, the *Länder* Ministries of Culture and several individual schools are working on school reforms, new curricula and teaching methods. However, the nation-wide and systematic implementation of intercultural principles and equal opportunities is far from being realised. The dualism between 'Them' and 'Us' still dominates the educational process and wider public discourse.

Policy Implementation Problems

Compulsory education does not apply to children of refugees and undocumented migrants. The 'right to schooling' for refugee children that some *Länder* have introduced, is not enough due to administrative, financial, legal and organisational obstacles blocking the actual integration of these groups in the educational system. Undocumented children are completely excluded from the public school system in the majority of federal states. Children under a limited residence permit (toleration/*Duldung*) live with the uncertainty of being deported at short notice. Hence, they often do not see the point in engaging in education. Educators and potential employers often share this view, limiting thus the chances for the educational and socio-economic integration of these students into the host society and its institutions.

The multi-track school system predetermines educational paths according to ethnic and social categories. Streaming schoolchildren to different levels of education at the age of 10 has a particularly negative effect on children from poor families, migrant children and children with disabilities. This criticism is fully shared by the UNHRC-Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education. Recent initiatives to abolish the *Hauptschule* but keep a two-track system are not appropriate for overcoming these discriminatory effects.

Children attending the *Gymnasium* (predominantly comprised of middle-class, native Germans) are excluded from interaction with children from backgrounds other than their own. As a result, native German teachers, academics, politicians and doctors may learn about other cultures, about tolerance principles and how to deal with people who have different or other academic backgrounds. However, they have very limited practical exposure and experience of it before they start working.

Researchers have pointed out several types of institutional – or covert – discrimination resulting from routines, habits and established practices in internal school organisation. School principals, teachers and school administrators often inadvertently act in a discriminatory way, simply by following the traditionally established organisational logic of the system. For example, primary schools structure their educational practices around the capacity of secondary schools in the area rather than around the skills of the children.

Empirical studies point to the segregating effects of introducing principles of economic competition into school education. The competition of upper- and middle-class parents for the schools with the best profiles and services (teaching and extra-curricular activities) and the competition of schools for 'good' and easily manageable students deepen the gap between high-standard schools for higher social strata and the 'schools for the rest of the population', i.e. for children from disadvantaged social, and often migrant, backgrounds.

Schools situated in socially underprivileged neighbourhoods have to cope with a student population that tends to have a low competence in the German language, many different mother-tongue languages in a single class, and quite a wide cultural diversity. Schools in these areas bear the additional task of having to teach competences that children of wealthier families may learn at home or in extra private lessons.

An additional dimension that needs to be taken into consideration when examining approaches to interculturalism involves indirect or subconscious discriminatory practices in the classrooms that may guide traditional educational practices; define 'normality' without adopting a critical standpoint; and stereotypically codify migrant students as the 'other'. Such an example is when even well-meaning educators refer to migrant students only as 'experts' on their parents' home country. Migrant and Muslim organisations frequently report discriminatory practices and a lack of sensitivity towards cultural or religious specific needs and a lack of cultural open-mindedness among teachers.

Intercultural or multicultural pedagogical efforts in the case of Germany often treat culture as a static concept and reproduce and intensify cultural relativism. The principle of a 'reflexive intercultural pedagogy' is hardly implemented in schools. 'Reflexive intercultural pedagogy' views the concept of culture as heterogeneous and dynamic. It aims to enable the articulation of intercultural capacities on different levels ranging from an understanding of the different causes of cultural or social disparities to the ability to reflect on one's own perceptions and conduct in a multicultural context and to be able to participate in a plural and democratic environment.

According to German Basic Law religious instruction is a regular subject in many state funded schools and is taught in accordance with the principles of 'religious groups' (*Religionsgemeinschaften*). Demands by Islamic groups for the introduction of Islamic religious instruction in German schools have been rejected because they are not accepted as 'religious groups' in the sense of the Law. Since the late 1990s there are some pilot projects and initiatives to find a solution beyond the strict definition of 'religious groups', but there is still strong resistance against the introduction of Islamic religious instructions or even 'ethics' – a subject which deals with the multitude of religions – especially by institutions of the Christian Churches.

Recommendations

We consider that certain reforms in Germany's education system would contribute to increasing and expanding students' general human development and their social capital. These would also guarantee high quality schooling for the entire student population irrespective of their social, ethnic, religious or legal background or other attributes. The following points are therefore put forward for consideration:

- The guarantee of equal access to schooling irrespective of the child's legal status;
- The consolidation of the legality of the 'tolerated' status of refugee children so as to guarantee continuity in their school education;
- The abolition of the multi-track school system as it over-proportionally affects migrant and socially disadvantaged students. Instead, pilot schemes such as Community Schools that promote integrated teaching of students of different competence levels are more promising;
- Additional support to schools in socially underprivileged neighbourhoods in comparison to schools in middle class areas. Namely, reduce class sizes, increase the numbers of teachers, promote co-teaching by two teachers in one class, set up whole-day schools that offer qualified supervision during afternoon hours. In addition, socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods would need support in improving their public-spaces infrastructure.

As regards the contents and methods of teaching and teacher training we suggest:

- Compulsory teacher training in German as a second language, in reflexive intercultural learning, and multilingual learning. Teacher training should include practical experience in schools so that the teacher comprehends and experiences intercultural teaching methods. In addition, advanced teacher training for professionals in reflexive intercultural and multilingual learning should also be offered. Schools should implement supervision of teachers in order to encourage (self) reflection.
- The proportion of teachers with a migration background should be increased. Their field of responsibility should not be reduced to native language teaching or to schools with a high proportion of migrant students. They should rather be promoted to teach in all subjects and schools.
- The revision of curricula, textbooks and other teaching material according to reflexive interculturalism. In addition, increased cooperation between educational sciences and schools is also required in order to develop intercultural methods and contents in theory and in practice.
- Support of German language learning according to individual needs (and mainly throughout the grades of (pre-) schooling and covering all subjects taught at school). Correspondingly, financial and methodological support for educators is necessary.
- Increase of bi- or multilingual schooling, including languages of migrant families, such as Turkish, Arabic, and Russian and not only European languages, is a final addition that would be welcome.

With respect to everyday life of schools and their involvement in the neighbourhood we would recommend:

- The development of a school policy by the headmaster/educators based on reflexive interculturalism guiding principles.
- The development of a common school and classroom culture pro-actively shared by educators, students and parents, that would include a culture of sensitivity and respect for cultural/religious distinctive features, similarities and changes.
- Support towards parents in their engagement with their children's education and the school (facilitation of communication by bilingual and bi-cultural educators and social workers, offer of German language lessons to parents at school, cooperation with (migrant) parents' organisations towards this end).
- Accommodation of different cultural/religious claims like religious instructions, religious holidays, dietary rules, dress codes etc. as a matter of course. Development of a communicative culture in order to depoliticize these issues.
- Opening of the institution and enhancing its networking with families and organisations in the neighbourhood and the city, including Islamic organisations. An open-minded discussion and cooperation especially with migrants' and Muslim organisations has to be put into practice.

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