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Policy Brief on Education

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.
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:
The Issues at
Stake**

Education is at the core of forming the EU's future citizens and residents. As an instrument of human development, education provides access to information and knowledge which largely determine employment and socio-economic opportunities in today's globalised world.

As a means of social integration, education defines identity, perceptions and understandings, real or imagined, of the 'self' and the 'other' and of the 'in-group' and the 'out-group'. The ways in which the dominant cultural majority in any given society frames the educational system and the values that it propagates through schooling (methods, curricula, etc), expresses and determines perceptions of its own identity and understandings of the 'other.'

Just as it can be inclusive, and a vehicle through which to promote principles of social cohesion, solidarity, and equality, it can equally (implicitly or not) propagate prejudice, stereotypes, perceptions of cultural confrontation, superiority, or discrimination.

The challenge for today's heterogeneous societies are to meet raised expectations for educational policies in response to the changing needs of an increasingly diverse and culturally pluralized student population. Expectations are high for educational policies that are culturally sensitive and inclusive, and that enhance educational, socialization and personal development opportunities for students of all communities and groups, whether they belong to native historic minorities, or to newer migrant communities, or for second or third generation migrants.

Different paths to inter- and multi-cultural education, yet similar challenges

During the post war period and increasingly during the last two decades, immigration has significantly, and irreversibly, altered the social, cultural, economic, ethnic, racial and religious characteristics of European societies. Each EU Member State has its distinct migration experience yet in spite of differences, all Member States face common challenges as multiculturalism is already a reality across most, if not all, EU societies today, and is increasingly pluralised. Policy responses are, unfortunately, usually lagging behind. Moreover, there is significant variation in the 'integration philosophies' of each country which theoretically translates in a distinction between inter-cultural and multicultural education in order to accommodate cultural diversity.

Countries which experienced immigration since the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. France, Germany or Belgium) initially developed an intercultural education approach that was attentive towards factors of socio-economic disadvantage (i.e. questions of school abandonment or poor school performance of migrant children and their families) that usually went hand in hand with cultural and religious diversity. Emphasis was given in these countries as well as in Denmark to the instrumental role of language (i.e. the host country language) in integrating the child in the school and later into the labour market. Educational approaches aimed mainly at improving the linguistic skills of children rather than at integrating them in the national culture and even less in pluralising the national culture so that migrant children would feel included. Later, in the 1980s and 1990s, as socio economic disadvantage and poor educational performance persisted, a critical review of these initial intercultural policies took place.

This led to raising awareness that minority cultures need not only be recognised and valued but also they need to be incorporated in the national identity and culture. In Belgium or France this was reflected in valorising migration and migration history as part of the national history; in Britain it involved the progressive pluralisation of national identity so that minority groups and cultures are also reflected in concepts and symbols of 'Britishness'. It was also connected with the turn to civic education and citizenship courses as a means of emphasising the feeling of belonging to the specific country and overcoming differences in values and tensions between more and less secular views of public life. In Belgium this translated in a debate on the need for all pupils to attend philosophy instead of different religion classes; In Britain, citizenship education has been introduced emphatically in the curriculum; In Germany and Denmark there were renewed efforts towards educating children with a civic ideal of citizenship that would help re-build social cohesion and overcome cultural and religious differences.

In spite of a relatively long tradition and experience with different types of intercultural and multicultural education approaches in 'old' receiving countries, 'newer' ones like Spain and Greece entered the policy debate by adopting intercultural education views that pay attention only to individual difference and not to group realities, and that emphasise the receiving country's language as an instrument for integration. The current global context however is pressing the need to re-consider and pluralise the national culture and identity in view of the changing composition of the country's population more rapidly than was the case with older migration countries.

It is perhaps too early to speak of cultural diversity challenges in education in Poland as the number of immigrant and refugee children is still very small, while in Latvia the challenge of bilingual education is pressing but has also a heavy legacy from the Soviet times. Thus, multicultural education concepts in Latvia are predominantly assimilationist in their perspective since, similarly actually to Spain and Greece, they are seen to be of concern only to minority children and not to the entire school population. In Latvia, the term *bilingual* rather than intercultural or multicultural education is most commonly used to refer to cultural diversity challenges in education given that the entire policy and conceptual debate is organised along the fundamental distinction between ethnic Latvians and Russian speakers.

Our overall conceptual and policy approach review in the nine countries studied suggests that the dilemma between terms and approaches coined as 'intercultural' or 'multicultural' may be partly a misleading one. The main division between the two approaches is their respective emphasis on the individual (in 'intercultural' education approaches) vs. the group level (in 'multicultural' education approaches). However, in either interculturalism or multiculturalism, we find theoretical and policy approaches that are more or less critical and self-reflexive. Thus, intercultural and multicultural concepts and practices that are critical of power and social inequality relations and that are reflexive in that they put into question both minority and majority cultures and the role of individuals as 'carriers' of these culture, can be very similar in their understandings of cultural diversity and how it should be integrated in education policy. After all, the question posed at the theoretical and policy level in Europe is not choosing between intercultural and multicultural education but rather in understanding how cultural identities are internally differentiated, activated differently in different contexts, lived at different degrees of intensity by different individuals but also largely subject to material and symbolic structures of power which create cultural and group hierarchies.

Multi-faith societies, secularism and education

Two central questions have dominated the public, political and academic debate:

- How can conflicting values of cultures be integrated in education?
- How can group rights be balanced with individual rights in education and other sectors of public policy?

Both are related to the global on-going debate on the relationship between 'Islam' and 'Western culture' and the notion of secularism. In some of the countries, notably France, schools are the emblems of secularism. In others, schools are largely secular but seek to accommodate the religious needs of their pupils with varying degrees of diversity in the curriculum. Thus, in Belgium, children are allowed to follow different types of religion classes in relation to their own faith; in Spain pupils may choose a course on the history of religions rather than religion classes; while in Greece, children can be exempted from religion classes overall if their parents wish to do so but there are no provisions for alternative courses. The German and British case studies argue that the discourse on schools and Islam is both an indicator of existing problems in the accommodation of cultural/religious diversity, and also the result of codifications of other phenomena, like social or gender disparities, individual or youth conflicts, as 'cultural' and 'Islamic'. Thus, education policy in a culturally diverse society has at least two complex often conflicting tasks: to accept and accommodate cultural/religious diversity on the one hand, and to try to detect the genuine, often multiple reasons of certain conflicts and by this to deconstruct the discourse on migrants, especially on Muslims, on the other.

Faith-based schools that are of Muslim orientation and that are state-aided are a final dimension that we examined. These can be found in Britain and Denmark. Faith based schooling, although not free of contradiction and dilemmas, expresses most strongly and evidently the need to pluralise national traditions and identities by incorporating new minorities that are issued from recent immigrations. The question is in other words less one of secularism, given that all European countries practice moderate forms of secularism and most recognize religious education as part of school curricula, and more one of citizenship and civic values. To what extent does civic citizenship and currently advocated civic values allow for the multi-faith nature of contemporary European societies to be recognized not only in the private but also in the public domain? How can the desire for civic integration and non-segregation be effectively, in practice, combined with the desire of some parents to provide for an education that is impregnated with specific traditions and religious values?

These dilemmas are very real and certainly cannot be answered or tackled in a manner that is valid for all countries, all religions and all contexts. Our study suggests that the debate about our faith-based schools and the type of diversity that can be accommodated in contemporary European societies is more one about **citizenship values** and **legitimate diversity** and less one of secularism.

**Key Messages for
Policy Makers &
Proposed
Measures**

Today's pluralised and rapidly changing globalised European societies pose a demanding reality to teachers, educators and policy makers. Education continues to be, perhaps more than ever, the most crucial socialization institution. Thus, principles of equality of treatment and opportunity, of societal cohesion, of respect of diversity and social justice are particularly relevant in Europe's education policies that aim at increasing tolerance for diversity and awareness of the growing unity between European peoples. This is important for the content of the material taught, the curriculum and the way in which classrooms, classes and schools overall. It is also pertinent for practical issues, innovations and concrete actions that schools and teachers can undertake in order to address the education needs (linguistic and cultural) of ethnic minority groups (historical autochthonous or national minorities in different countries), and / or to better manage ethnic and cultural diversity resulting principally from post -World War II migration trends. Based on our research in nine EU member states, we propose the following key messages:

First, access to schooling should be guaranteed regardless of the legal status of the student and his or her parents. Regardless of whether a child's parents have legal or irregular status, or whether they are asylum seekers, refugees or migrants, he or she must be able to enroll, attend and fully participate in the public education system of the host country as the right to education is universally and legally binding (Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)).

Second, on the subject of language, culture and history in the case of newly-arrived migrants:

- Learning the language of the receiving country is a priority for inclusion and participation. Thus, new teaching methods should be developed and applied, and language teaching should be approached as a task across all subjects (e.g. also in the natural sciences).
- Reception and support classes are necessary for the students and for their parents as these facilitate integration of newly-arrived migrants and facilitate their adjustment in the host country's institutions and the society's economy and norms.

Third, migration in today's globalised world is taking place in a deeply complex reality where migrants maintain constant interaction with their culture and society of origin while participating and living in the host society through increasingly easily accessible means of communication and transportation. They no longer 'leave everything behind' nor are they totally uprooted to set up a life elsewhere as was mostly the case with migrants up until the middle of the twentieth century. Continuous interaction and the changing nature of transnational migration means that migrants are exposed to and participate in at least two communities, identities, societies and languages; this multiplicity is a growing feature and an enriching potential of contemporary diverse, global societies. Thus,

- It is important to recognize and accommodate the linguistic diversity and cultural capital that exists within the immigrant population (particularly in the way the language of the receiving country is taught).
- Learning the language, culture and history of origin is considered valuable, and has proven to be quite necessary, for the student's social and cultural capital.

Fourth, multicultural education needs to be approached in a holistic manner, cutting across and transcending school curricula, disciplines, material and extra-curricular activities. For instance:

- Greater diversification ought to be considered as regards religious education not only in terms of making it optional but also as regards what and how students learn about the main faiths.
- Greater flexibility in the teaching of the humanities (especially history and geography classes) should be encouraged both in terms of content of the courses but also in terms of experimenting with new methods and approaches.

Fifth, there seems to be a rather widespread gap between the theoretical approach to multicultural education and how this is in fact implemented in every day reality in schools. The role of educators and teachers is pivotal in actually applying the core foundations and principles of multicultural education in their everyday teaching. It makes a positive difference when educators are proactive in ensuring that different groups are not disadvantaged by ethnic, racial or religious 'difference' and when they present the positive benefits of diversity in the classrooms.

- Teacher-training in intercultural/ multicultural pedagogy is essential for all educators, as is training in teaching the language of the receiving country as a second language.
- Providing on-going training for educators and teachers so that they can be kept informed of innovative teaching methods and approaches that may be more relevant and applicable to increasingly dynamic and diverse classrooms is necessary.
- Recognising and offering incentives for educators and teachers who are interested in teaching in schools with large minority groups or students of immigrant origin, or who have specific expertise in teaching in multicultural classrooms is important. Time and again, personal involvement, drive and commitment (especially when it is rewarded symbolically and formally) is what makes the difference in transposing and applying policies into everyday practices in schools that have an impact and that lead to results.
- Increased employment of bi-lingual / bi-cultural teachers and social workers is also a policy option that could constitute a positive contribution especially in areas with demographic diversity or with high concentration of minority or migrant population groups.

Regarding the role of school at the local community level, classroom size and teaching methods, our research suggests that:

- Smaller-sized classrooms with two teachers / and a cultural mediator appear to have better results.
- Whole-day schooling that offer qualified supervision to the students have positive results on immigrant students or students belonging to minority groups. Additional potential side effects include: increased class cohesion and rendering schools attractive for the majority population and thus minimizing ghettoisation of schools.
- Various methods of monitoring and evaluating are useful. For instance, it is important to increase the visibility of how each school adheres to its statutory public duty of promoting social cohesion and anti-discrimination principles or good race-relations. This includes having a written policy that may be monitored for effectiveness and amended as new challenges arise.
- Schools should continue prioritizing the need to reaching out more to parents and engage them in their children's education and the school. This requires increased support and resources (including offering language courses, translation services, etc), while at the same time, schools ought to be encouraged and supported in proactively seeking communication and interaction with local communities and associations in their neighbourhood (this of course should also include migrant associations, or organizations formed on the basis of ethnic or religious affiliation). Where relevant, positive action for schools in underprivileged neighbourhoods through increased infrastructural and financial support should be encouraged as a means to try to reduce social and ethnic segregation.

Finally, multicultural education must be grounded on a solid basis of citizenship education. We argue that three interdependent elements of citizenship education should be included in school curricula and are relevant for all European societies irrespective of whether they are older or newer migration countries, or whether they have smaller, larger, or growing migrant populations. Citizenship education must be based on the triptych of:

- social and moral responsibility;
- community involvement;
- and political literacy.

These three dimensions are important in contributing to the societal and political human development of Europe's younger generations and to create global citizens who are civically engaged and socially responsible.

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For more information on the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Programme of the European Commission please see:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/index_en.html