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Refugee education: Integration models and practices in OECD countries

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REFUGEE EDUCATION: INTEGRATION MODELS AND PRACTICES IN OECD COUNTRIES

OECD Education Working Paper No. 203

By Lucie Cerna (OECD)

This working paper has been authorised by Andreas Schleicher, Director of the Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD.

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Abstract

The recent refugee crisis has put many OECD countries under considerable pressure to accommodate and integrate large numbers of refugees. Refugee students are a particularly vulnerable group due to their forced displacement, but their needs are not always met by education systems, which can hinder the integration potential of these students. This poses considerable challenges as the integration of refugee students in education systems is important for their academic outcomes as well as their social and emotional well-being. The success (or lack of) integration in schools can also affect the future labour market and social integration potential of these children and youth. While there is a growing body of research on the integration of immigrants, policy-relevant research on refugee children and youth from an educational perspective is rather limited, fragmented and case specific. Detailed surveys and research projects focusing on the current wave of refugees that allow for cross-country comparisons are not yet available. Drawing on research from previous refugee waves, the paper examines key needs of refugee students and factors that promote their integration. It proposes a holistic model of integration in education that responds to the learning, social and emotional needs of refugee students. Furthermore, the paper examines what type of policies and practices are in place in OECD countries that support the integration of refugee students. Nonetheless, evaluations of practices and policies are often missing, which makes it difficult to assess whether they are successful. The paper finishes with some policy pointers on how to promote the integration of refugee students.

Résumé

La récente crise des réfugiés a exercé une pression considérable sur de nombreux pays de l'OCDE eu égard à l'accueil et à l'intégration d'un grand nombre de réfugiés. Les élèves réfugiés forment un groupe particulièrement vulnérable en raison de leur déplacement forcé, mais les systèmes éducatifs ne répondent pas toujours à leurs besoins, ce qui peut compromettre leurs perspectives d'intégration. Cette situation est très problématique compte tenu de l'importance de l'intégration des élèves réfugiés dans les systèmes éducatifs pour leurs résultats scolaires ainsi que leur bien-être social et émotionnel. La réussite (ou l'échec) du processus d'intégration à l'école peut également avoir un impact sur les perspectives futures d'intégration de ces enfants et de ces jeunes dans la société et sur le marché du travail. Si le nombre de travaux de recherche sur l'intégration des immigrés ne cesse de croître, les recherches orientées vers l'action qui portent sur les enfants et les jeunes réfugiés du point de vue de l'éducation sont plutôt limitées, fragmentées et spécifiques. On ne dispose pas encore d'enquêtes et de projets de recherche détaillés sur la vague actuelle de réfugiés qui permettent de procéder à des comparaisons internationales. Le présent rapport, qui s'appuie sur les travaux menés sur de précédentes vagues de réfugiés, examine les principaux besoins des élèves réfugiés ainsi que les facteurs qui favorisent leur intégration. Il propose un modèle global d'intégration dans l'éducation, qui réponde aux besoins des élèves réfugiés sur les plans scolaire, social et émotionnel. En outre, le rapport examine quel type de mesures et de pratiques est en vigueur dans les pays de l'OCDE à l'appui de l'intégration des élèves réfugiés. Il n'en reste pas moins que ces mesures et pratiques sont rarement évaluées et qu'il est par conséquent difficile de déterminer si elles sont efficaces. Le rapport conclut en évoquant quelques pistes à suivre pour promouvoir l'intégration des élèves réfugiés.

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1. Introduction

The 2014-15 refugee crisis has had a major effect on OECD countries due to the considerable number of those being displaced from conflicts and the comprehensive policy response required. Even though many of the countries had already welcomed refugees in previous flows, the magnitude and diversity of the flows within a short time period was unprecedented. From mid-2013 to mid-2017, the refugee population in OECD countries tripled, from 2 million to 5.9 million. This is partly due to the forced displacement due to the war in Syria. However, conflicts and humanitarian crises in other countries have also played a role (e.g. in Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, the Horn of Africa and Central America) (OECD, 2019, p. 22[1]). In the OECD, Turkey, Germany, the United States, Canada and Austria have been the main destination countries by the number of refugees (OECD, 2018, p. 23[2]).

Most countries were not sufficiently prepared to accept and host such large numbers of asylum seekers and refugees who came within a short time period. Governments were struggling to come up with policy solutions on how to accept and host such large numbers, provide necessary housing, sanitation and access to education for children. The refugee crisis has revealed a number of weaknesses in the capacity of host countries to cope with such a large and unforeseen inflow of people in need of protection. There was difficulty in anticipating such flows, co-ordinating the response within and across levels of government and sharing the responsibility across countries (OECD, 2018[2]).

Some of the difficulties to anticipate refugee flows and analyse the consequences of flows and the outcomes of refugees stem from the fact that it is challenging to collect and compare data on refugees and asylum seekers across countries. This is due to the lack of consistency of terminology, concepts, definitions and classifications, as well as variation in the methods of data collection, compilation and presentation at national and international levels (European Union; United Nations, 2018[3]).

Refugee children are a particularly vulnerable group that is easily overlooked in official statistics (Fazel and Stein, 2002[4]). In 2016, over 12 million children around the world were living as refugees or asylum seekers. Yet the real number of children driven from their homes remains unknown and is likely to be significantly higher than the estimate because of gaps in reporting and data collection (OECD, 2018[5]). Even in OECD countries, the number of refugee and immigrant children out of school is unknown because these children constitute a small number in household statistics and are not counted in general statistics of children. In many countries, available national data do not include information on migrants' and refugees' age, sex and origin, or if they travel unaccompanied or with their families. Differing criteria for age categories and for recording data make disaggregation challenging. In the absence of reliable data, the risks and vulnerabilities facing children on the move remain hidden and unaddressed (OECD, 2018[5]).

Moving beyond providing immediate support to asylum seekers and new refugees, policy-makers have to deal with the challenges of how to promote the integration of those who are likely to stay, including refugee children and youth (OECD, 2018[2]). The first challenge for host countries is to provide access to education to refugee children and the second challenge is to develop educational policies and practice that respond to the needs of refugee students and promote their inclusion in schools and societies in the medium- to long-term (Pastoor, 2016[6]).

The integration of refugee children in education systems is important for their academic outcomes as well as their social and emotional well-being. The success (or lack of) integration in schools can also affect the future labour market and social integration potential of these children. For example, in many countries, refugees may take 5 to 10 years to be employed and 15 years to 20 years to reach similar employment rates as the native-born and labour migrants (OECD/EU, 2018[7]; OECD, 2017[8]). Relatively poor outcomes in terms of labour market integration can translate into lower well-being for refugees. Furthermore, the successful integration of refugees can help promote social inclusion, reduce tensions with native populations and create more equal societies (OECD, 2019[1]).

How can countries and education systems promote the integration of refugee children and youth? While there is growing body of research on the integration of immigrants, policy-relevant research on refugee children from an educational perspective is rather limited (Pinson and Arnot, 2007[9]; Pastoor, 2016[6]), fragmented and case specific (Bonin, 2017[10]). Rutter claims that this has resulted in a one-sided way of understanding the situation of refugee children and their families, placing a strong focus on trauma experience (Rutter, 2006[11]). Bonin goes further by stating that "as the current situation is basically without precedent, the existing empirical research provides a rather weak basis for inferring what could work best to support educational development of this target group [refugees]" (Bonin, 2017, p. 44[10]). However, research on previous crises particularly on the needs of refugee children and the policies that countries have implemented can bear some lessons for the current crisis.

Refugee education can refer to education in camps, introductory classes or long-term provisions. The focus here lies on the education of refugee students in OECD countries, with an emphasis on the integration in initial education (for the integration of youth and adults and issues around the recognition of qualifications, see (OECD, 2016[12]; 2017[13]). Detailed surveys and research projects focusing on immigrant children are not yet available for refugee children separately, at least in a comparative way. Nonetheless, there is some research available on previous waves of refugees, which can provide useful lessons for the current wave. Existing research lists a number of important factors for the integration of refugee children, but there is still limited evidence on what policies and practices work for the integration of refugee children.

The paper seeks to answer the following two questions:

- Which key factors and models promote the integration of refugee children in education?
- Which policies and practices are in place in OECD countries that support the integration of refugee children in education systems?

In Section 2, the paper provides some background on the number and countries of origin of refugees. It also compares the current wave of refugees with previous ones, and discusses how refugee education differs from migrant education. Section 3 examines the existing literature on refugee education to identify key needs of refugee children and factors for refugee education. It then proposes a holistic model that could help analyse policies. Section 4 presents policies and practices in OECD countries that apply different components of the holistic model. The paper concludes in Section 5 with some policy considerations.

2. Refugees in the education system

2.1. Refugee waves over time

The most important legal instrument regarding who is a refugee and what his/her rights are is the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of which all OECD countries are signatories. The Convention also formulates obligations of states towards refugee populations. However, in practice every nation decides whom to grant asylum or refugee status (Bourgojne, 2010[14]). The large inflows of refugees in 2015 was unprecedented in many ways. However, the majority of OECD countries have experienced previous waves of refugees. This section examines if and how the current wave differs from previous ones.

Box 2.1. Who is a refugee?

The term 'refugee' refers to people who have successfully applied for asylum and have been granted refugee protection. The 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol defines a refugee as a person

"who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it".

The broader term "humanitarian migrant" refers to people who have successfully applied for asylum and have been granted some sort of protection – refugee or other status. It also includes migrants resettled through humanitarian programmes with the assistance of the United Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or through private sponsorship – often the case in Australia, Canada and the United States. All recipients of protection (refugee status, subsidiary or temporary protection) are considered here to be humanitarian migrants. The terms "refugee", "people in need of protection" and "humanitarian migrant" are often used interchangeably (OECD, 2016, p. 7[12]).

"Asylum seekers" are people who have formally applied for asylum, but whose claim is pending. In practice, only a minority of asylum seekers are granted refugee or some other form of humanitarian migrant status, while the rest have to leave the country. If people remain after being denied humanitarian migrant status they become undocumented migrants. There are also many people who do not file asylum claims, either because they do not wish to apply in the country through which they are transiting, because there is a long waiting list for applying for asylum (due to large inflows or understaffed asylum systems), or because they expect their prospects of obtaining humanitarian migrant status are small. These people are also considered undocumented migrants (OECD, 2016, p. 7[12]).

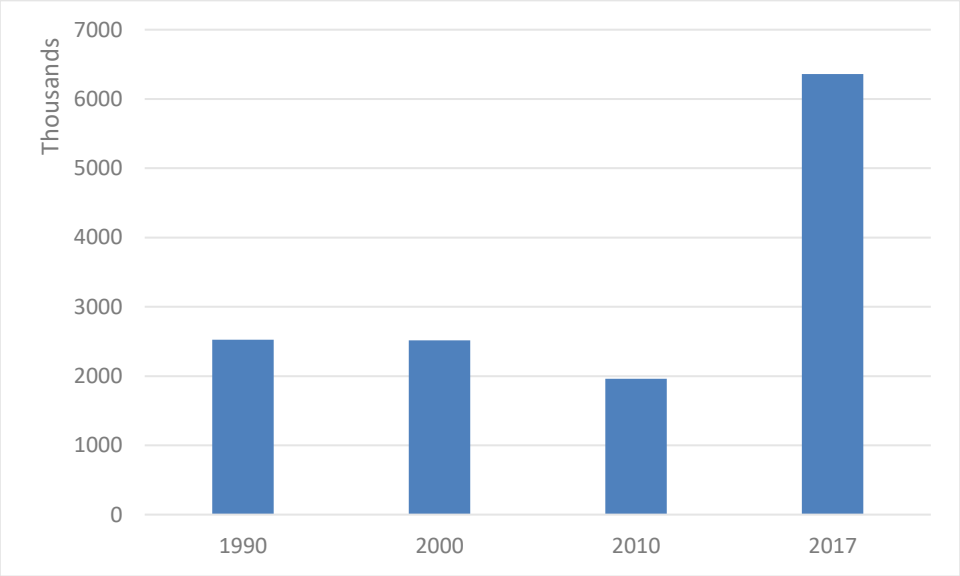
2.1.1. Number of refugees in OECD countries

Over the last decades, wars and unrest especially in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, ex-Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and ex-Yugoslavia, have led to refugee flows to OECD countries (UNHCR, 2015[15]).

An important refugee wave was triggered by the wars in ex-Yugoslavia. The Bosnian conflict in 1992-95 displaced about 1.2 million people, including around 800 000 to OECD countries and more than 300 000 to Germany alone. Also in 1992, more than 300 000 Albanians tried to resettle in Greece and Italy. Additionally, the Kosovo war of 1998-99 resulted in large-scale movements, mostly to neighbouring countries but also to several OECD countries. For instance, Germany recorded 78 000 asylum applications, Switzerland 53 000, Belgium and the United Kingdom approximately 25 000 each, and Austria 15 000 (OECD, 2015[16]).

Figure 2.1 reveals that OECD countries hosted around 2.5 million refugees in 1990 and 2000, around 2 million in 2010 and about 6.4 million 2017. This signifies a threefold increase in seven years. As during previous refugee crises in the 1990s, the impact of the current refugee crisis is concentrated in a few countries (OECD, 2015[16]). In 2017, about half of refugees were located in Turkey, 1 million of whom were school age (UNHCR, 2018[17]). Besides Turkey, other countries that have been greatly affected (in absolute numbers) by refugee flows are Germany (970 302), France (334 143), Sweden (240 899) and Italy (167 260) (UNHCR, 2018[18]).

Figure 2.1. Number of refugees in OECD countries



Source: UNHCR, Population Statistics. Available at: http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern (accessed 7 January 2019).

2.1.2. Countries of origin of refugees

The countries of origin into OECD countries have become more diverse over time. For example, in Australia, refugees in the 1990s came mainly from the Middle East and ex-Yugoslavia, whereas those in the 1980s had arrived from Asia and Latin America. In

the 2000s, refugees were mainly from Africa (including Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo) and the Middle East such as Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq.

In the 1970s, Canada welcomed refugees from Chile, Iran, Uganda and Vietnam, while in the 1980s, refugees came mostly from Cambodia. In the 1990s, refugees came to Canada from all over the world, particularly from Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa. Since then, Canada has been resettling refugees from Bhutan, Syria and Thailand (Government of Canada, 2018[19]).

In the United States, refugees in the 1970s coming mainly from Southeast Asia (such as Cambodia and Vietnam) were granted refuge. In the 1990s, refugees mainly from Europe came to the United States, especially from Kosovo and the former Soviet Union. Since the 2000s, the United States has welcomed refugees from Bhutan, Burma, and Syria (Igielnik and Krogstad, 2017[20]).

Table 2.1 shows the top three countries of origin for refugees and their share in OECD countries in 2000 and 2017. In 2000, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo, and Iraq were the top three countries of origin of refugees to OECD countries. In 2000, Bosnia and Herzegovina was the top country in several OECD countries, such as Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and the United States.

In contrast, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan were the top refugee-origin countries in 2017. More specifically, refugees from Syria were the largest group in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey (UNHCR, 2018[21]).

Table 2.1. Top three countries of origin of refugees in OECD countries, 2000 and 2017

	2000						2017					
	1st most popular country of origin		2nd most popular country of origin		3rd most popular country of origin		1st most popular country of origin		2nd most popular country of origin		3rd most popular country of origin	
Country of Residence	Country of Origin	Share of total	Country of Origin	Share of total	Country of Origin	Share of total	Country of Origin	Share of total	Country of Origin	Share of total	Country of Origin	Share of total
Australia	Serbia and Kosovo	20%	Iraq	17%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	10%	Afghanistan	23%	Iran	17%	Pakistan	9%
Austria	Serbia and Kosovo	25%	Romania	13%	Iraq	12%	Syria	38%	Afghanistan	23%	Russian Federation	10%
Belgium	Various/Unknown	31%	Rwanda	14%	Congo (Democratic Republic)	11%	Syria	22%	Various/Unknown	18%	Iraq	9%
Canada	Bosnia and Herzegovina	12%	Various/Unknown	12%	Sri Lanka	8%	Colombia	8%	China	7%	Haiti	7%
Chile	Peru	60%	Cuba	12%	Serbia and Kosovo	8%	Colombia	61%	Various/Unknown	24%	Peru	6%
Czech Republic	Afghanistan	16%	Russian Federation	12%	Romania	12%	Ukraine	12%	Syria	10%	Belarus	10%
Denmark	Bosnia and Herzegovina	39%	Iraq	17%	Somalia	14%	Syria	54%	Eritrea	11%	Iran	9%
Estonia	Algeria	50%	Afghanistan	50%	.	.	Syria	40%	Ukraine	23%	Iraq	8%
Finland	Serbia and Kosovo	27%	Somalia	20%	Iran	19%	Iraq	38%	Somalia	16%	Afghanistan	12%
France	Various/Unknown	25%	Cambodia	14%	Sri Lanka	11%	Various/Unknown	26%	Sri Lanka	7%	Congo (Democratic Republic)	5%
Germany	Various/Unknown	97%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3%	.	.	Syria	51%	Iraq	13%	Afghanistan	11%
Greece	Various/Unknown	45%	Turkey	35%	Iraq	8%	Syria	35%	Various/Unknown	21%	Afghanistan	12%
Hungary	Serbia and Kosovo	46%	Romania	26%	Afghanistan	14%	Afghanistan	25%	Various/Unknown	16%	Syria	16%
Iceland	Serbia and Kosovo	69%	Vietnam	12%	Iraq	5%	Iraq	22%	Syria	18%	Afghanistan	14%
Ireland	Various/Unknown	50%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	26%	Serbia and Kosovo	4%	Syria	11%	Iraq	8%	Somalia	8%
Israel	Lebanon	96%	Sierra Leone	3%	Ethiopia	1%	Eritrea	86%	Sudan	12%	Congo (Democratic Republic)	1%
Italy	Serbia and Kosovo	16%	Albania	14%	Iraq	13%	Nigeria	11%	Afghanistan	10%	Pakistan	10%
Japan	Vietnam	74%	Laos	10%	Cambodia	10%	Myanmar	67%	Various/Unknown	12%	China	3%

	2000						2017					
	1st most popular country of origin		2nd most popular country of origin		3rd most popular country of origin		1st most popular country of origin		2nd most popular country of origin		3rd most popular country of origin	
Country of Residence	**Country of Origin**	**Share of total**	**Country of Origin**	**Share of total**	**Country of Origin**	**Share of total**	**Country of Origin**	**Share of total**	**Country of Origin**	**Share of total**	**Country of Origin**	**Share of total**
Latvia	Pakistan	43%	Congo (Democratic Republic)	14%	Stateless	14%	Syria	62%	Afghanistan	9%	Iraq	5%
Luxembourg	Various/Unknown	100%	.	.	.	.	Syria	34%	Iraq	14%	Serbia and Kosovo	13%
Mexico	Guatemala	87%	El Salvador	11%	Colombia	0%	El Salvador	37%	Honduras	32%	Venezuela	13%
Netherlands	Iraq	17%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	17%	Afghanistan	16%	Syria	30%	Somalia	15%	Eritrea	14%
New Zealand	Iraq	18%	Somalia	16%	Various/Unknown	15%	Various/Unknown	21%	Iran	11%	China	11%
Norway	Bosnia and Herzegovina	30%	Iraq	17%	Serbia and Kosovo	13%	Eritrea	26%	Syria	19%	Somalia	13%
Poland	Bosnia and Herzegovina	38%	Somalia	17%	Sri Lanka	6%	Russian Federation	82%	Syria	4%	Ukraine	3%
Portugal	Various/Unknown	29%	Sierra Leone	23%	Liberia	16%	Ukraine	24%	Syria	20%	Eritrea	9%
Slovak Republic	Afghanistan	41%	Iraq	9%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	8%	Afghanistan	28%	Iraq	24%	Serbia and Kosovo	5%
Slovenia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	100%	Serbia and Kosovo	0%	Iraq	0%	Syria	36%	Serbia and Kosovo	11%	Iran	10%
Spain	Various/Unknown	12%	Cuba	11%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	11%	Syria	67%	Cuba	5%	Palestine	5%
Sweden	Bosnia and Herzegovina	34%	Serbia and Kosovo	18%	Iraq	16%	Syria	43%	Eritrea	11%	Afghanistan	11%
Switzerland	Sri Lanka	24%	Serbia and Kosovo	16%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	14%	Eritrea	33%	Syria	15%	Afghanistan	9%
Turkey	Iran	44%	Iraq	21%	Bosnia and Herzegovina	20%	Syria	98%	Iraq	1%	Iran	0%
United Kingdom	Various/Unknown	40%	Somalia	14%	Serbia and Kosovo	8%	Iran	13%	Eritrea	11%	Afghanistan	8%
United States of America	Bosnia and Herzegovina	21%	Various/Unknown	17%	Vietnam	10%	China	26%	El Salvador	7%	Haiti	6%

Note: The table displays the top three countries of origin of refugees (or those living in refugee-like situations) in OECD countries.
Source: UNHCR, Population Statistics. Available at: http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern (accessed 7 January 2019).

2.1.3. Educational levels of refugees

The skill and educational level are also quite diverse across countries of origin and refugee waves. For instance, recent refugees from Syria are more skilled than other groups and those who came during the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s (OECD, 2015[16]). According to Statistics Sweden, more than 40% of Syrians in the country in 2014 had at least upper secondary education, compared to 20% of those from Afghanistan and 10% of those coming from Eritrea (OECD, 2015[16]). In Germany, Syrian refugees are also on average better educated than other groups of refugees (OECD, 2015[16]).

A study from the Netherlands in 2011 finds that the earliest refugees from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq in the 1980s had higher levels of education and occupational status. Iranian refugees who came during that time had on average a higher level of education than the native Dutch population. However, refugees arriving to the Netherlands from Somalia in 2000s have not had much education because of the severe social and economic disruption in their home country (Center for the Study of Democracy, 2012[22]).

The above trends reveal that there are considerable changes over time not only in the number of refugees, but also in the heterogeneity of refugee groups in terms of countries of origin and educational levels. This diversity poses considerable challenges for designing effective policies that promote integration.

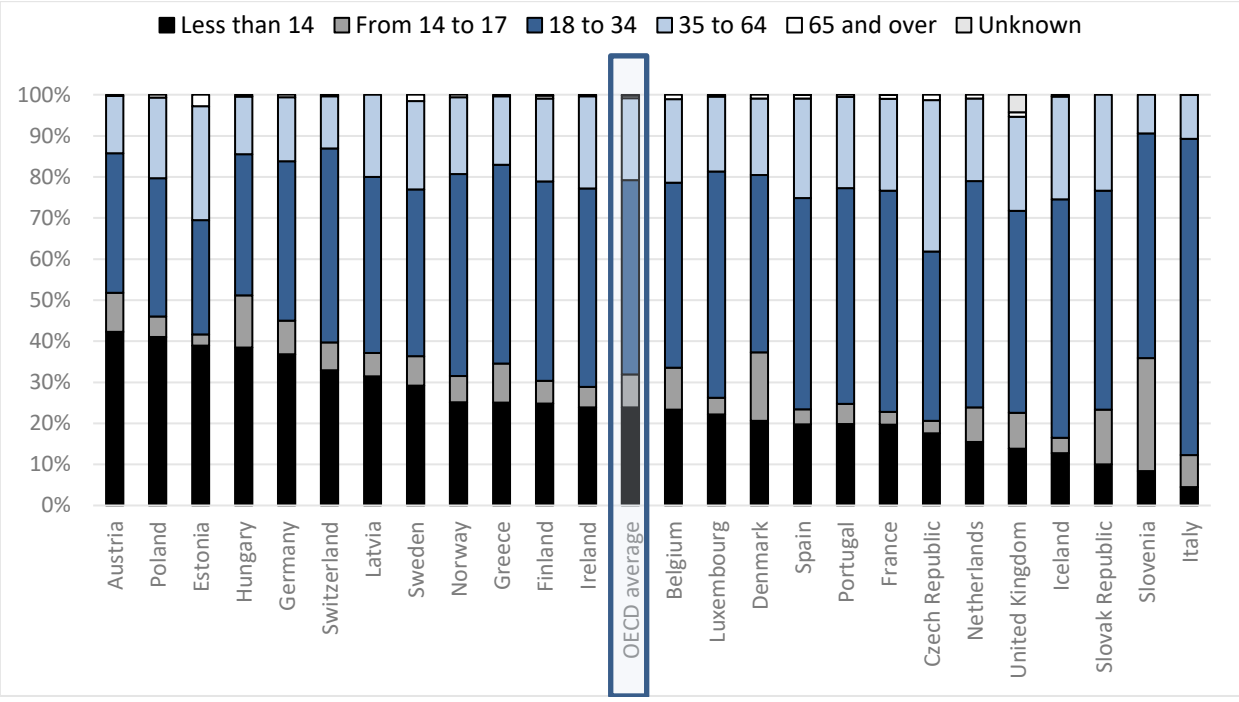
2.2. Data on refugee children and youth

Data on refugee children is scarce, which limits the opportunity to inform policy development and offer targeted support services. Even if refugees access education, their educational achievements and needs remain invisible, as they are no longer captured in their home country's Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and not yet included in their host country's EMIS (OECD, 2018[23]).

Although governments are responsible for education-related data collection through EMIS, they face capacity constraints to ensure the collection of accurate sex, age and other disaggregated data on refugees. There is also a question concerning the information sought about educational outcomes and the link to increased access to quality education. Challenges for collecting and sharing data on refugees in data relate to the lack of data on residence status, high turnover of individuals which makes it difficult to properly track numbers, and confidentiality (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017[24]). Methodological challenges exist in terms in addressing sample sizes, with special attention to reaching the most marginalised groups, such as unaccompanied minors or refugees with disabilities, for which there is hardly any information available (OECD, 2018[23]).

Across the European Union and the OECD, only data on the number of children who apply for asylum are collected in a co-ordinated manner (UNHCR; UNICEF, 2017[25]). On average across the OECD, around 30% of applicants in 2017 were younger than 18 years. However, Austria, Germany, Hungary and Poland reported a higher proportion of asylum applicants who were less than 18 years old (higher than 45%). In Austria and Hungary, around 40% of applicants were even younger than 14 years (Figure 2.2). Such high proportion of refugee children creates challenges for policy-making to respond appropriately to these vulnerable groups.

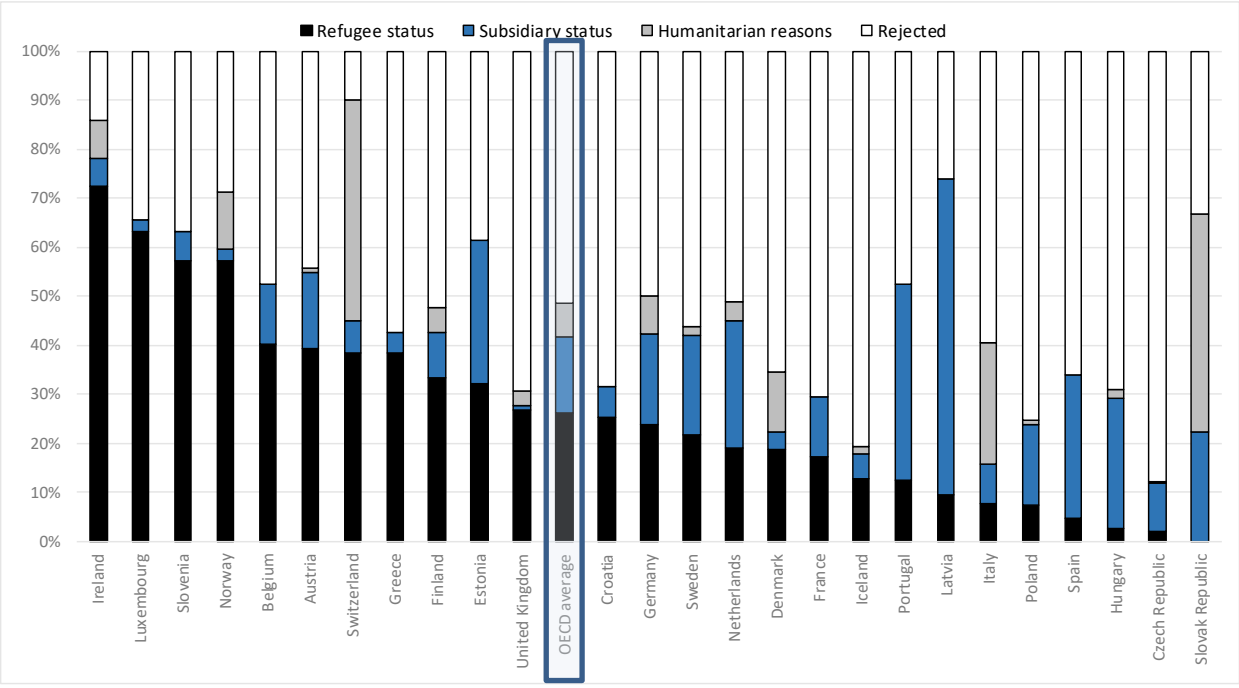
Figure 2.2. Distribution by age of (non-European Union) first time asylum applicants in selected OECD countries, 2017



Notes: Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of first time asylum applicants that were younger than 14. The OECD average is the average of OECD EU countries shown in the figure
Source: Adapted from: Eurostat, Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data, http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_asyappctza&lang=en (accessed on 07 December 2018).

In 2017, nearly half (48%) of first instance asylum decisions in the OECD resulted in positive outcomes, that is granting applicants refugee or subsidiary protection status, or an authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons (Figure 2.3). For first instance decisions, some 26% of all positive decisions in the OECD countries in 2017 resulted in grants of refugee status. This figure differs considerably by country of destination. For example, over 70% of first instance decisions in Ireland and Lithuania resulted in grants of refugee status, whereas in countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Spain, fewer than 10% of decisions did (Eurostat, 2018[26]). However, data that disaggregates decisions on refugee status by age is not available.

Figure 2.3. Distribution of first instance decisions on (non-European Union) asylum applications, 2017



Notes: Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of individuals who obtained refugee status out of all first instance decisions. The OECD average is the average of OECD EU countries shown in the figure.
Source: Adapted from: Eurostat, First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data, http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_asydcfsta&lang=en (accessed on 07 December 2018).

Access to education and enrollment rates are often taken as indicators of refugee integration. Nevertheless, access to education is limited for refugee children. Globally, 91% of children attend primary school whereas only 61% of refugee children do so. As refugee children become older, the challenges increase: only 23% of refugee adolescents are enrolled in secondary school, compared to 84% globally (UNHRC, 2017[27]). While many OECD countries are making efforts to enrol newly arrived children in education, challenges still persist especially for children from pre-primary and upper secondary ages, who often fall out of national compulsory education systems (UNICEF, 2018[28]).

It is more difficult to collect information on the education status of refugees living in urban areas than for refugees enrolled in school in camps. One reason is that only a few countries such as Turkey identify refugee status in school censuses explicitly (UNHCR, 2018[29]). For instance, the Turkish government supplements its EMIS in public schools with a parallel system for 'foreign students' ("Foreign Students Information Operation System", referred as *YÖBİS*), which monitors temporary education centres. After a policy was introduced to include these centres in the national education system, the primary net enrolment ratio of Syrian students increased from 25% in 2014 to 83% in 2017. However, their secondary net enrolment rate rose much less, from 16% to 22%, indicating that refugee students are not able to access education especially at the secondary level (UNHCR, 2018[29]; Arik Akyuz, 2018[30]; UNESCO, 2018[31]).

Box 2.2. Refugee children in Turkey

Turkey has a long history of emigration and immigration and has been particularly affected by a large number of (mainly Syrian) refugees. In 2018, about half of refugees in the OECD area were located in Turkey, 1 million of whom were school age (UNHCR, 2018[17]).

Despite considerable capacity challenges of integrating refugee students, Turkey has been building schools and expanding access to education for refugee children (OECD, 2017[32]). School attendance rates of refugee students vary by level: 80% of refugee students attend pre-school, 60% of students attend primary school and 30% attend secondary schools (OECD, 2017[32]). More than 600 000 Syrian children have been enrolled in the education system for the 2018/19 school year. In total, there are 1 047 999 Syrian school aged refugee children in Turkey (up from 833 039 in 2016) (Hurriyet, 2018[33]).

In 2014, the Ministry of National Education established a regulatory framework for temporary education centres (TECs), which are provided by nongovernmental organisations such as UNICEF. Syrian families could choose enrolment in TECs or Turkish public schools (Turkey Ministry of National Education, 2014[34]). Since summer 2016, the government has been working towards integrating all Syrian children into the national education system. The share of Syrian children enrolled in TECs is estimated to have fallen from 83% in 2014/15 to 37% in 2017/18. The remaining 318 TECs are expected to close by 2020 (Delegation of the European Union in Turkey, 2017[35]).

By government mandate, all TECs have to offer 15 hours of Turkish language instruction per week to prepare students for transition to Turkish schools. To support the mental and psychological development of children under temporary protection, 491 guidance counsellors have been appointed to TECs and public schools with at least 90 Syrian students (Arik Akyuz, 2018[30]). Inclusion also has important consequences for school infrastructure and teacher preparation. The process has been supported by Promoting Integration of Syrian Children to the Turkish Education System (PICTES), a project supported by the European Union's Facility for Refugees in Turkey (Delegation of the European Union in Turkey, 2017[35]). In the second phase of the project (2019-22), support for refugee students will expand to 26 Turkish provinces and a greater focus will be placed on early childhood education and care.

Within the framework of this project in the first phase (2016-19), about 390 000 Syrian children have received intensive Turkish classes since 2016; and 5 600 Turkish language teachers, 500 guidance teachers and 100 Arabic educators have been employed. Currently, 282 TECs in 23 provinces are offering intensive Turkish classes to 100 678 refugee children. As of September 2018, 12 838 volunteer Syrian teachers have been employed by TECs across Turkey. The directorate general for teacher training and improvement in the Ministry of Education has provided training including pedagogical guidance to around 20 500 volunteer Syrian teachers so far (Hurriyet, 2018[33]). Evaluations of the project have shown that language training, backup training, catch up training and training for school leaders have had positive effects on grades, rates of absenteeism, rates of grade repetition and sense of belonging of Syrian students. However, challenges remain such as providing access to the almost 400 000 out of school children, particularly at the secondary and upper secondary level, and preparing for the enrollment of more school aged refugee students in the coming years.

Besides the limited access to education for refugee students, another challenge concerns the shortages of qualified teachers (UNESCO, 2018[31]). In Turkey, it is estimated that 80 000 additional teachers would be needed if all school age Syrians were to enrol in regular schools (Sirkeci, 2017[36]). In Sweden, a deficit of 80 000 teachers and pre-school teachers is expected by 2031, not only due to increased immigration but also due to population growth (Skolverket [National Agency for Education], 2017[37]). Low levels of education among affected populations, remoteness and vulnerability of many teaching posts, language of instruction issues, denial of refugees' right to work and non-recognition of refugee teacher qualifications make the teacher shortages even worse (Mendenhall, Gomez and Varni, 2018[38]).

For instance, the German education staff union, Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft, estimated in 2017 that an additional 18 000 educators and 24 000 teachers are needed, at an estimated cost of EUR 3 billion extra per year (Vogel and Stock, 2017[39]). Shortages have led to a proliferation of contract or voluntary teachers, who have variable qualifications, usually work on short-term arrangements with no job security and earn significantly less than teachers in the national service earn. Furthermore, retired teachers and teachers with university degrees but without teacher qualifications have also been called upon to fill the gaps (Strauss, 2016[40]; Vogel and Stock, 2017[39]; UNESCO, 2018[31]).

2.3. Refugee and immigrant children in comparison

Immigrants and refugees share some similar motivations and characteristics. They have to deal with the disruption of migrating to a new country and adjusting to a different culture and lifestyle. Many newcomers might encounter discrimination and racism because of their race, ethnicity, religion or cultural differences (McBrien, 2005[41]). Immigrant and refugee teens can also be faced with a crisis of identity as they try to meet the cultural demands of their parents and of their peers (McBrien, 2005[41]). Nonetheless, acculturation stress is considerably higher among refugees (Berry et al., 1987[42]). Acculturation is the change in an individual or a culturally similar group that results from contact with a different culture (Berry, 1997[43]).

Although data on refugee children are limited, what is available reveals that refugee children face more obstacles than other children with an immigrant background (Bloch and al., 2015[44]; McBrien, 2005[41]; Sirin and Rogers-Sirin, 2015[45]; Suárez-Orozco and al., 2011[46]; European Commission, 2013[47]). In addition to adjusting to a new language and culture, challenges for refugee children frequently include overcoming disrupted or minimal prior education, disruption to family networks, insecure housing, poverty, negative stereotypes and discrimination (Block et al., 2014[48]; Dryden-Peterson, 2016[49]; Essomba, 2017[50]; Crul, 2016[51]; Halldorsson, n.d.[52]). Refugees might be affected by several layers of disadvantage, linked to their forced displacement and low socio-economic status, and harmed by the (often) negative attitudes of the host population towards refugees.

Refugees face additional challenges related to the nature of their forced migration such as mental health issues, weak prior links with the host country (OECD, 2016[12]) and might also lack of documentation of their education, credentials and diplomas. This makes it difficult to place them into the right programme/grade without a systematic assessment of their skills (OECD, 2019[1]). Additionally, access to education is a challenge since refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than non-refugee children (UNHCR, 2016[53]).

The small minority of refugees who are able to settle in OECD countries often suffer educational disadvantage due to the protracted time spent in refugee camps. A stay of 5-10 years in a refugee camp is common and such time frames have a considerable effect on educational development and attainment (Oh and van der Stouwe, 2008[54]).

Challenges for refugees at the educational level are numerous. Essomba notes that the education systems are not well prepared to receive asylum seekers and refugees. The school curricula do not often provide basic language skills and social competences that refugees need. Additionally, the education system is responsible for schooling refugees in a social context that is not always supportive of welcoming these newcomers (Essomba, 2017[50]). That is why there have been some national and international efforts to improve the lives and outcomes of refugees and their children, such as the Global Compact for Refugees.

Box 2.3. Global Compact for Refugees

To provide a basis for predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing among all United Nations Members States, the UNHCR proposed a (non-binding) Global Compact for Refugees. The compact was endorsed by the General Assembly in December 2018. This box presents some education-related excerpts from the Global Compact.

68. In line with national education laws, policies and planning, and in support of host countries, States and relevant stakeholders will contribute resources and expertise to expand and enhance the quality and inclusiveness of national education systems to facilitate access by refugee and host community children (both boys and girls), adolescents and youth to primary, secondary and tertiary education. More direct financial support and special efforts will be mobilised to minimise the time refugee boys and girls spend out of education, ideally a maximum of three months after arrival.

69. Depending on the context, additional support could be contributed to expand educational facilities (including for early childhood development, and technical or vocational training) and teaching capacities (including support for, as appropriate, refugees and members of host communities who are or could be engaged as teachers, in line with national laws and policies). Additional areas for support include efforts to meet the specific education needs of refugees (including through "safe schools" and innovative methods such as online education) and overcome obstacles to their enrolment and attendance, including through flexible certified learning programmes, especially for girls, as well persons with disabilities and psychosocial trauma. Support will be provided for the development and implementation of national education sector plans that include refugees. Support will also be provided where needed to facilitate recognition of equivalency of academic, professional and vocational qualifications.

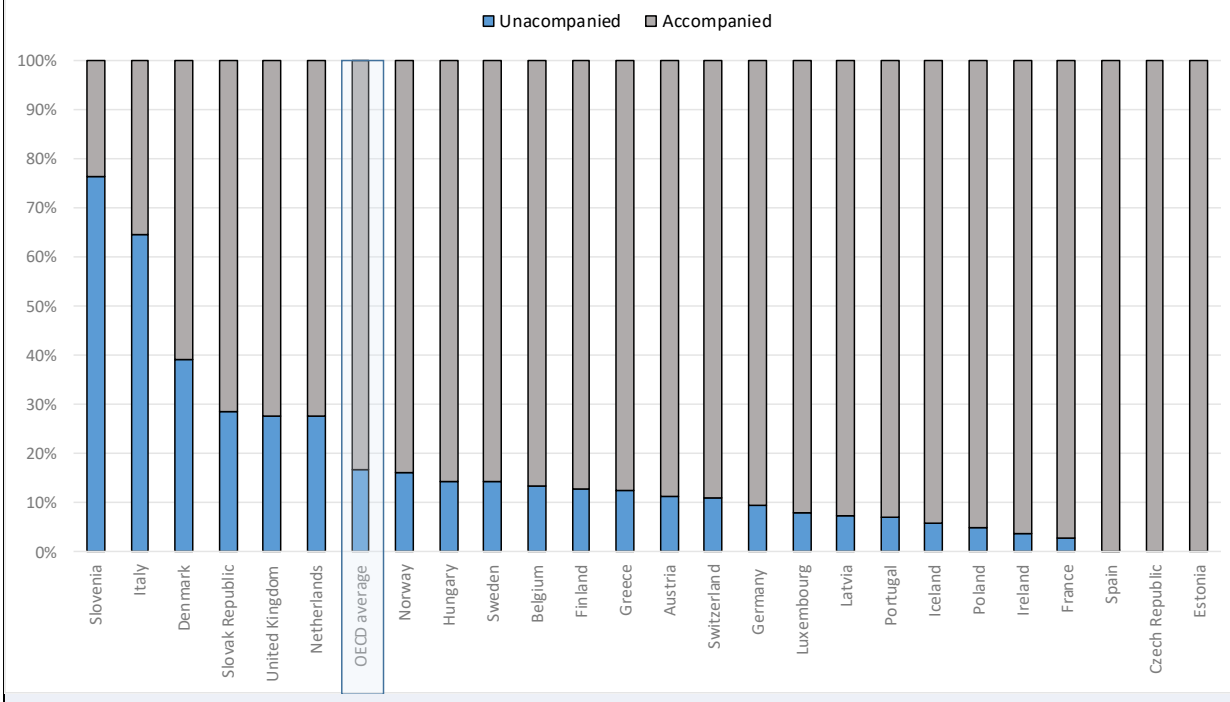
Source: United Nations, 2018[55].

Furthermore, refugees are often affected by trauma and pain, which, in the case of children, can considerably impact the construction and the development of their personal identities (Essomba, 2017[50]). Therefore, they need schooling with a strong emotional and affective component, which sometimes schools and teachers are not able to supply. The educational expectations of refugee children and their families are not always met due to the circumstances of the asylum seeking progress (Essomba, 2017[50]). In the case of unaccompanied minors, there are additional challenges of separation from their families.

Box 2.4. Unaccompanied minors

An unaccompanied minor is a person less than 18 years old who arrives on the territory of a country not accompanied by an adult responsible for the minor or a minor who is left unaccompanied after having entered the territory of a country (UNHCR, 1997[56]). In 2017, there were 31 300 applications in the (European) OECD countries from unaccompanied minors; 17% of all minors were unaccompanied (see Figure 2.4). Among minors who applied for asylum, the share that was unaccompanied was less than half in all OECD countries in 2017 (Eurostat, 2018[26]).

Figure 2.4. Distribution by status of (non-European Union) asylum applicants from minors in selected OECD countries, 2017



Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of the share unaccompanied minors among applications from minors.
Source: Adapted from: Eurostat, Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data, http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_asyunaa&lang=en (accessed on 07 December 2018); and Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data, http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_asyappctza&lang=en (accessed on 07 December 2018).

The challenges of unaccompanied minors are different from refugee children who came with their parents. Providing access to education and offering further support can help these children integrate successfully into the education system in the host country. However, a significant proportion of unaccompanied minors in many OECD countries face serious difficulties not only in obtaining access to education but also in receiving basic services and therefore may be particularly vulnerable to suffering from poor academic outcomes and low levels of social, emotional and motivational well-being (OECD, 2018[57]).

The main challenge for host country education systems is to enrol unaccompanied minors in school as soon as possible. Many of these children have spent a long time without attending school and further delays in enrolment are an unnecessary extension of their exclusion from education. Although European Union countries need to ensure access to education to asylum-seeking children within the first three months of their arrival, delays are common. These delays usually occur for two reasons. First, because of the long period of time that many unaccompanied minors have to stay in reception centres where education is only provided informally by nongovernmental organisations and volunteers (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2016[58]). Second, since once having abandoned the reception centres and moved to a care facility, the number of places available and the procedures in place may delay enrolment in school for several months.

Additionally, in some countries there are certain age-related restrictions that might make it particularly difficult for unaccompanied minors to eventually enrol in school. Prompt enrolment in school is essential, but unaccompanied minors also require further support to ensure their successful integration into schools. They tend to be unfamiliar with the education system and many of them have only limited knowledge of the language of instruction. The majority of unaccompanied minors have experienced traumatic events during their journey. Overall, these children face greater obstacles to success in school (OECD, 2018[57]).

Many unaccompanied minors arrive when they are older and cannot easily integrate into the education system as young children. Research indicates that while it takes children approximately two years to acquire communicative language skills, they can take up to seven years to develop the academic language used in school environments (Cummins, 1979[59]). At 16 or 17 years of age (the age at which the majority of unaccompanied minors arrive at their destination) students in the majority of host countries are nearing, or at, the end of compulsory education. Thus newly arrived minors have little time with which to learn the host country language and take on new content before they must face high-stakes tests that determine eligibility for further education (OECD, 2018[60]). In some cases, unaccompanied minors enter the vocational training system instead (if they are eligible). This eligibility can depend on being granted a work permit following a transitional period for asylum seekers.

Unaccompanied minors frequently disappear to leave the country or take up (irregular) employment (Länsstyrelsen, 2016[61]). Their keenness to work as soon as possible is reinforced by the fact that holders of unstable residence permits can stay on in the host country as long as they have work. Further challenges are that unaccompanied minors in some countries are no longer entitled to some integration support upon reaching majority and leaving state guardianship. Targeted education programmes, combined with flexible language support and civic orientation, could help them adapt to their new school environment and its requirements. Ideally, such schemes also bring individual caseworkers into the picture. They accompany minors throughout education, training and internships to facilitate their transition into employment (OECD, 2016[12]).

Policies and practices

In the United States, the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) programme, a longstanding integration scheme, helps the unaccompanied refugee minors develop the skills they need to become a socially and economically empowered adult (www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/programs/urm/about). This scheme provides intensive case

management by social workers, educational support, English language training, career and educational counselling, mental health care and social integration support.

In other countries, a range of promising projects have been developed to address the particular integration challenges that unaccompanied minors face. One example of a successful intervention is "SchlaU-Schule" in Munich (www.schlau-schule.de/). It enables unaccompanied minor and young adult refugees between the ages of 16 and 21 to obtain secondary school leaving certificates through specially adapted individually based teaching and support in a school setting. The scheme also provides post-school follow-up into mainstream education (OECD, 2016[12]).

2.4. Refugee education and integration

Research on the education of refugee children is smaller than the large research body available on the children of immigrants. This is linked to the fact that refugee children are often not specially targeted in national surveys or international surveys like the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) enabling comparison of children of the same refugee groups across countries. These differences and the gap in research make it difficult to conclude how refugee children perform in school across countries (Crul, 2016[51]).

Research on the children of immigrants usually differentiates between those born in the country of immigration of their parents and those who came during the compulsory school period. Such differentiation of refugees could help explain the variation in outcomes both between groups, and within groups (Bloch and al., 2015[44]; Crul, Schneider and Lelie, 2012[62]; Heath and Brinbaum, 2007[63]; Holdaway, Crul and Roberts, 2009[64]).

While some research on the current wave of refugees is being currently carried out, research already exists on previous waves of refugees in Europe in the 1990s, when individuals fled from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and ex-Yugoslavia. A large body of research on refugee integration in school system is also available from Australia (Matthews, 2008[65]), Canada (Wilkinson, 2002[66]) and the United States (McBrien, 2005[41]), mostly dealing with resettled refugees.

Refugee students have been often treated as a homogenous group, which has prevented detailed examinations of pre-migration and post-migration factors (McBrien, 2005[41]). These are relevant for understanding the particular needs of refugee students and developing appropriate educational support (Rutter, 2006[11]). Refugees arriving in different OECD countries often have diverse national, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and racial backgrounds and circumstances, including their educational experiences in countries of asylum (Sidhu and Taylor, 2009[67]; Matthews, 2008[65]). Even within the same host country individuals from different regions may have diverse educational needs.

Refugees will respond to school and their new environment differently depending on a variety of individual and contextual factors, including country of origin, race, ethnicity, religion, culture and socio-economic and educational background before migration. Other important factors are also the age at the time of flight, migration and resettlement, personality characteristics and the level of family support and sustenance (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]).

As refugee students are a heterogeneous group with different skills, experiences and backgrounds, how can countries and education systems integrate them effectively? Integration is seen as a two-way process of adaptation of both the newcomer and the host

society (Kallen, 1995[69]). Newcomers make some adjustments in order to successfully integrate, while the host society also makes certain changes in order to accommodate the newcomers. Educational integration is understood as "a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 12[70]).

There is no single or best integration model. Most countries mix elements, practices, experiences, experiments inspired or imported by one or the other of the main models. There is a variety of experiences which resemble often a patchwork, bricolage of practices, projects and innovation (Krasteva, 2013[71]; Freeman, 2004[72]). Sections 3 and 4 examine which key needs of refugee children and factors for educational integration of refugees emerge from reviews conducted in the literature and what practices and policies countries and education systems have adopted to integrate refugee students.

3. Refugee integration in education: from key needs and factors to a holistic model

This section examines the unique needs of refugee children and the factors which shape the prevalence of these needs. It then proposes a holistic model of refugee integration in education that links needs, factors and policies.

3.1. Needs of refugee children

Refugee children have a variety of learning, social and emotional needs that have to be addressed before integration can be successful. These range from education, safety, communication, belonging and identity to overcoming loss and trauma.

3.1.1. Need to learn host country language and develop mother tongue

Refugee children need support for developing both the host country language (such as English as additional language) and their mother tongue (Candappa, 2000[73]; Rutter and Stanton, 2001[74]; Jones and Rutter, 1998[75]). Refugee children often view the acquisition of the host country language important to their future success in the new country (Pryor, 2001[76]). However, language proficiency can vary considerably depending. For instance, "children may be competent at spoken, colloquial English but considerably behind in academic English" (McBrien, 2005, p. 342[41]). Some children are placed in special education classes, and others are put in low academic tracks despite high capabilities (Suárez-Orozco, 1989[77]). Therefore, refugee children also need to acquire proficiency in the language of instruction in order to succeed in school. This can take at least four to five years (Clifford, Rhodes and Paxton, 2013[78]).

Besides the host country language, refugee children also need to develop their mother tongue. This cannot only have a positive effect on their learning of the host country language but also their sense of belonging to their community (European Commission, 2015[79]; Espinosa, 2013[80]; Slavin et al., 2011[81]). In order to retain competency in their mother tongue, it is important that children have continued interaction with family in their mother tongue (on increasingly complex topics), ongoing formal mother tongue instruction and exposure to positive parental attitudes to maintaining this language (Ball, 2011[82]; McBrien, 2011[83]).

3.1.2. Need to overcome interrupted schooling or limited education

Many refugee children have experienced interrupted education or have very limited educational experience (Rutter and Stanton, 2001[74]; Bloch and al., 2015[44]; Crul, 2016[51]; Essomba, 2017[50]). This includes the need to master a new language, learn literacy skills and overcome gaps in knowledge across academic subjects (Birman and Tran, 2017[84]). Some more specific challenge are handling academic material in the classroom (Cassity and Gow, 2005[85]) or dealing with concepts and references that are culturally and socially unfamiliar (Dooley, 2009[86]). Refugees are more likely than natives to have low skill levels, which make them vulnerable to being excluded and affects their potential to integrate into the labour market and society (OECD, 2019[1]; OECD, 2016[12]). Without intensive education, refugee students with low skills are also more likely to drop out of school and end up in low-skilled, unstable employment (OECD, 2016[12]; OECD, 2016[87]). Therefore,

there is a strong need to overcome interrupted schooling and limited education to catch up with their peers.

3.1.3. Need to adjust to a new education system

Refugee children also need to adjust to a new education system and a new school culture (Hamilton, 2004[88]; Marland, 1998[89]; Anderson et al., 2004[90]; Clark-Kasimu, 2015[91]). For example, the norms of school behaviour and the knowledge of how to be a student might be different to those experienced in their home countries (Alsleben, 2006[92]; Miller, Mitchell and Brown, 2005[93]). This need for adjustment includes the difficulties refugee parents experience in familiarising themselves with the culture of the new education system (Rutter and Stanton, 2001[74]).

3.1.4. Need to communicate with others

Communication represents significant aspects of a culture. However, forced displacement changes the way refugee children are able to communicate. They have difficulties in making themselves understood, unable to adequately express their needs, and others cannot understand or interpret their messages. This has significant impact on their feeling of belonging (Baker, 1990[94]).

Establishing productive communication is considered the first major step before beginning academic instruction with refugee students (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95]) and responding to their social and emotional needs. Refugee children need a common solid language base to use for communication (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95]). For example, basic sign language symbols can be used early on and can eventually lead to verbal communication.

3.1.5. Need to bond and feel a sense of belonging

Refugee children also have a strong need to bond with others and to feel a sense of belonging to the new community and school. Refugee youth are separated from their peers in their home country and are required to establish new friendships in a host country. Additionally, due to differences (e.g. cultural), they may feel alienated and have a more difficult time developing a sense of belonging (Nakeyar, Esses and Reid, 2017[96]). The loss and creation of friendships is especially challenging for refugee children and youth (McMichael, Gifford and Correa-Velez, 2011[97]; Sleijpen et al., 2016[98]) and can be significant barrier in their integration (Correa-Velez, Gifford and McMichael, 2015[99]).

Bonding social capital signifies strong ties connecting family members, close friends and relatives. Refugees identify strongly with the bonding social capital that reflected their community. While refugees can often maintain the bonding links of the immediate family, they need to develop looser bonds with other members of their culture, members of their new neighbourhoods and with other members of the society (Fielding and Anderson, 2008[100]).

3.1.6. Need to develop a strong personal identity

Refugee children need a strong personal identity. This involves navigating between their home and host cultures. The struggle of refugee children to find the right balance can hinder adjusting to their new host country (Nakeyar, Esses and Reid, 2017[96]).

Identity construction and re-construction play an important part in the integration of refugee students in schools and societies. Schools are places of socialisation and thus have a

responsibility in helping refugee students understand the new country and become a part of it (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]).

However, adaptation to the host society does not mean that the students' parental values, language, thinking and history have to be downgraded. Refugee students and parents may want to feel that teachers and classmates understand and appreciate the value of their previous lives and heritage (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]). Research shows that an approach respecting and combining the culture of the home with the culture of society is effective for the adaptation and learning process. Families and schools that are willing to accept dual heritage can help children maintain a sound basis in the home and branch out into host society without feeling isolated requires tolerance both in the home and in the school (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]).

3.1.7. Need to feel safe

Many refugee children have experienced war, conflict and unsafe environments and thus need to feel safe in the new countries. Schools can be a stabilising feature in the unsettled lives of refugee young people (Matthews, 2008[65]; Downey, 2007[101]; Jeffery, 2004[102]). They provide safe spaces for new encounters, interactions and learning opportunities.

However, refugee children can also suffer from discrimination and bullying in schools in host countries. This can also be seen as a security concern if refugees do not feel welcome and safe in their new country (Nakeyar, Esses and Reid, 2017[96]; Correa-Velez, Gifford and McMichael, 2015[99]). For example, one study in Canada among refugee children and youth found that 86% of refugee youth (12-21 years) experienced some form of bullying, such as teasing, social exclusion, physical bullying, unfair treatment, racial insults and intellectual belittling (Wesley Urban Ministries, 2014[103]).

3.1.8. Need to cope with separation, loss and/or trauma

Refugee children have often experienced a loss of their homeland, possessions, friends and in some cases also loss of parent/s or family members (Athey and Ahearn, 1991[104]). Some (especially unaccompanied minors) might have been separated from their parents and family members. Refugee children might also have been exposed to multiple traumatic events including war (Carlson, Cacciatore and Klimek, 2012[105]; Ehntholt and Yule, 2006[106]; Bates et al., 2005[107]). Separation and loss can lead to subsequent grief, despair and bereavement (Ressler, Boothby and Steinbock, 1988[108]).

Refugees can suffer from emotional and mental health problems, such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression or conduct disorders (Fazel and Stein, 2002[4]). This can severely affect their lives and their chances of integrating into host societies. The available literature also indicates a high prevalence of mental health problems among refugee and asylum-seeking children and youth due to a series of factors related to forced migration (Nielsen et al., 2008[109]; Hjern, Angel and Jeppson, 1998[110]; Montgomery, 2011[111]). Depression, anxiety or sleep disturbance, often in combination, are more common in refugee children than in the general population (Montgomery, 2011[111]; Jacobsen, Demott and Heir, 2014[112]; Bean et al., 2007[113]). Rates of PTSD are particularly high relative to population norms, especially in unaccompanied minors (Jacobsen, Demott and Heir, 2014[112]).

Studies in OECD countries have reported PTSD prevalence rates ranging from 10% to 25% (Fazel, 2018[114]). In addition to the displacement trauma, learners face several risk factors in their new learning environments, including parental misunderstanding of education

expectations, stereotyping and low expectations by teachers, bullying, and discrimination by staff or peers. These experiences can result in mental health problems and disruptive behaviour, which hinder teaching and learning (Graham, Minhas and Paxton, 2016[115]; Iversen, Sveaass and Morken, 2014[116]).

3.2. Factors that shape the prevalence of needs

What factors can achieve the learning, social and emotional needs of refugee children? Factors include all individual, interpersonal and school-level characteristics that influence the needs of refugee children. Factors in turn influence the policies and practices for integration.

3.2.1. Individual factors

Individual factors include language proficiency, mother tongue proficiency, and physical and mental health.

(Host country) Language proficiency

Language is one factor that can promote or hinder the integration of refugee children. Language skills are not only important for academic achievement, but are essential if students with an immigrant and refugee background are to develop a sense of belonging at school.

Some small-scale studies have explored particularly the role of language for outcomes of different waves of refugees. For instance, one study considered an intervention programme for low performing Iraqi students in elementary school. The programme consisted of an all-day, self-contained class in which both the teaching strategies and the curriculum had been designed to match the Iraqi students' experiential knowledge and to accommodate their cultural norms, values, beliefs and expectations (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010[117]). The instruction was provided in English but the programme encouraged the use of mother tongues (Kurdish and Arabic) in order to cooperate and communicate easier with classmates. At the end of the year, the results on the Language Assessment Scales Reading/Writing test showed that the group of participating students had improved significantly in English literacy compared with the rest of the English-language learner students at the school (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010[117]).

Another study analysed the 'Literacy Transition Pilot Programme' (LTTP) for Sudanese refugees in secondary schools in Australia. These students attended schools in an Intensive English Centre with a curriculum that was designed to accommodate specific learner needs, fill gaps in skills and knowledge and provide background knowledge for key learning areas. The instructional strategies targeted language and literacy needs, special learning. The programme also provided the students with a high level of counselling support as many Sudanese refugees suffered from trauma (Cranitch, 2010[118]).

Besides a smaller class size, the Sudanese refugees were helped by a Sudanese teacher's aide who worked as a role model and provided a linguistic and culture bridge between students, teachers and parents. The participating students also received individual access to counsellors on a regular basis (Cranitch, 2010[118]). Findings from the research showed that the students made considerable progress in their language development as measured by the English as Second Language (ESL) scales. Due to the students' cultural background with strong oral traditions, their oral language development was more prominent than their

reading and writing. The students had excellent listening skills and a well-developed auditory memory (Cranitch, 2010[118]).

Mother tongue proficiency

Besides learning the host country language, developing students' mother competences is beneficial because it can help refugee students "to learn the language of instruction and stimulate their development in all areas" (Eurydice, 2009, p. 51[119]). Numerous researchers have shown that mother tongue education can result in increased cognitive development and second language literacy, important learning aids for immigrant and refugee students (Benson and Kosonen, 2013[120]; Dolson and Mayer, 1992[121]; Bühmann and Trudell, 2008[122]; IDRC, 1997[123]; Ball, 2011[82]). Furthermore, the host community's view of their mother tongue can help secure self-esteem and identity of students and their families (European Commission, 2015[79]; Eurydice, 2009[119]).

Physical and mental health

Refugee children can suffer from poor physical health due to their forced displacement and post-migration environment. Particular health issues for refugee children are immunisation coverage (usually incomplete), nutritional deficiencies (such as iron deficiency anaemia), growth and developmental issues, poor dental health and often communicable diseases, including tuberculosis, hepatitis B and parasitic infections (Woodland et al., 2010[124]; McGillivray et al., 2007[125]; Davidson et al., 2004[126]; Fazel and Stein, 2002[4]).

Refugee children can also suffer from poor mental health. Two sets of factors are of key importance in understanding the factors shaping the mental health of refugee children as well as being potential portals for interventions: exposure to past and ongoing traumatic events and the complexities of navigating the post-migration environment such as dealing with school, discrimination and reconfigured family life (Fazel and Betancourt, 2018[127]).

Previous exposure to potentially traumatic experiences interacts with the post-migration environment to either worsen or decrease the risk of having posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Montgomery, 2011[111]; Bean, Eurelings-Bontekoe and Spinhoven, 2007[128]; Veryliet et al., 2014[129]). Longitudinal studies of both child and adult refugees confirm the prolonged negative effect that exposure to pre-migration traumatic events and post-migration stressors can have a decade or more after migration (Tam, Houlihan and Melendez-Torres, 2017[130]; Bogic, Ajdukovic and al, 2012[131]; Beiser, 2009[132]; Carlsson et al., 2006[133]).

3.2.2. Interpersonal factors

Interpersonal factors include connections with peers as well as family and social support of refugee children.

Friendships (Connections with peers)

Numerous studies identified community, family, and friends and family as important factors to consider when improving well-being and promoting children and youth's adjustment to the host country (Sleijpen et al., 2016[98]; Francis and Yan, 2016[134]; Rossiter et al., 2015[135]). High perceived peer support was associated with improved psychological functioning (Berthold, 2000[136]; Kovacev, 2004[137]).

Some studies on refugee youth from Bosnia in Sweden show that language barriers prevented the youngsters from speaking with Swedish students about more than clothes

and weather. The Bosnian students mainly stayed with each other, in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in the schoolyard and outside school. They felt a sense of language inferiority, which sometimes turned into cultural shame in relation to Swedish youth, and had a negative effect on their relationships with Swedish students (Bunar, 2001[138]). The studies also show that it did not matter for forming relationships whether they went to a school with a majority of Swedish mother tongue students or to a school with a majority of immigrant students. Furthermore, the Bosnian youths expressed a strong feeling about that they would never be accepted as Swedes, no matter how hard they would try or strive for it (Bunar, 2001[138]).

Other studies highlight the importance of refugee students to build friendships and to belong to the community. Especially co-ethnic friends share common experiences and they provide cultural support, and positive academic and social values. However, making friends across ethnic groups is challenging. For example, large schools, solidified friendships (of native students) due to shared history and lack of structures at schools to support making friends can all be barriers to social integration (Wilson-Forsberg, 2012[139]).

Family support and social networks

Attachment to at least one parent, perception of high parental support, close parental supervision and support by families and stability are associated with fewer psychological difficulties (Fazel et al., 2012[140]) and can help refugee children integrate into schools and achieve higher academic and well-being outcomes (Carlson, Cacciatore and Klimek, 2012[105]; Wang, 2002[141]; Weine, 2008[142]). Refugee children are also more likely to integrate in schools if they come from cultures that place very high value on education and have parents and families who support their learning (Pieloch, McCullough and Marks, 2016[143]; Goodman, 2004[144]; Kohli and Mather, 2003[145]). Research shows that the presence of social networks including extended family (e.g. grandparents) can have positive effects on family and child outcomes in adverse circumstances (Jack, 2000[146]; Werner, 1991[147]). Besides parental and family support, a healthy social support network is also linked with better adjustment to a new environment (Suarez-Orozco, 2005[148]).

3.2.3. School-level factors

School-level factors include learning environment, teacher-student interactions, school engagement, assessment at school-level, extra-curricular activities and parental involvement in school community.

Learning environment

The learning environment can have an important impact on refugee integration in schools. An inclusive one can provide a curriculum catering to a diverse range of students and accommodating diverse voices and perspectives so that all children feel they belong and can contribute (Taylor and Sidhu, 2012[149]).

One study considered the effect of culturally-relevant instruction on the academic performance, in particular the acquisition of literacy, of English Language Learners with an interrupted education. New English Language Learners were assigned to classrooms by order in which they had been registered, so playmates or family members were often placed in different classrooms. Teachers also believed that separation would force them to interact with the native students and thus learn English faster, but this did not happen (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010[117]).

The study examined an intervention programme for non-literate refugee students from Iraq who arrived in New York City in the 1980s. In contrast to regular practices of separation of co-ethnics at the school, this programme placed the Iraqi children in the same classroom. This was meant to enable them to experience a sense of group identity, display initiative and assume leadership roles, and develop their social behaviour. Furthermore, the curriculum was adapted to the students' past and current experiences as well as their cultural knowledge and perspective. The study finds that immersion in a learning environment compatible with the culture of the home can improve the learning outcomes and the sense of belonging of the students (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010[117]; Bartlett, Mendenhall and Ghaffar-Kucher, 2017[150]).

School engagement

Whole-school approaches can provide the necessary support to refuge students and highlight preparedness to address pre- and post-displacement challenges (Rutter, 2006[11]; Hek, 2005[151]; Sidhu and Taylor, 2009[67]). A welcoming environment can create a sense of security and belonging that enables students to form new relationships and make new friends (Hek, 2005[151]). However, a targeted policy can stigmatise refugee students, so it is important that they are not singled out but rather seen as a part of the multicultural fabric of schools (Arnot and Pinson, 2005[152]).

Whole-school approaches involving the school leadership, teaching and support staff are key to achieving equitable education for students with a refugee experience (Pugh, Every and Hattam, 2012[153]). School leaders play an important role for the integration of refugee students (Sidhu and Taylor, 2009[67]). They are especially helpful when promoting positive images of refugee students within the school and local community (Arnot and Pinson, 2005[152]).

To fully meet the needs of refugee students, it is important to understand better their educational experience as a refugee prior to resettlement (Hattam and Every, 2010[154]). Schools play a significant role in creating respectful, welcoming environments where holistic approaches to inclusion can be fostered and developed (Keddie, 2010[155]; Matthews, 2008[65]). Therefore, educators need to understand former refugee students in the light of their individual complex histories and hear their stories of hope and resilience. Such strategies can assist educators to understand better what support refugee students need in order to adjust socially and academically to the new environment (Uptin, Wright and Harwood, 2016[156]). There are many ways of acknowledging and valuing the refugee students. This can happen, for example, by appreciating the multiple languages the student speaks, the soccer team they support and the music videos they listen to in their first language (Uptin, Wright and Harwood, 2016[156]).

Teacher/student interactions

Teachers can play an important role in strengthening feelings of connectedness to schools, creating encouraging and inclusive classroom environments because they can respond to the students' needs for education, belonging and safety. All efforts to integrate children with an immigrant and refugee background depend on well-skilled and well-supported teachers who take into account the diversity of their student populations in their instructional approaches and who can help all students to achieve. Teachers are often ill-prepared in pedagogical approaches for second language learning or in recognising and helping children overcome the effects of trauma that many immigrant children endure (OECD, 2015[157]).

More specifically, teachers may have a lack of understanding of limitations to engagement that accompany previous schooling interruptions (King and Owen, 2015[158]) as well as the continuing responsibilities that refugee background youth have (Earnest et al., 2015[159]). New teachers do not often receive adequate university training in multicultural education during their preservice studies to enable them to use effective and relevant inclusive practices for diverse classrooms (Forrest, Lean and Dunn, 2016[160]; Walton et al., 2016[161]; Watkins, Lean and Noble, 2015[162]). Teachers may place responsibility for immigrant or minority children's learning at the feet of students and their families, and have low expectations of the capability of these students (Hatoss, O'Neill and Eacersall, 2012[163]) or of their future success (Keddie, 2012[164]; Pecek, Cuk and Lesar, 2008[165])

Teachers might see refugees in different ways than other students, which can affect their teaching practices and expectations. One study of three schools in Stockholm showed that teachers treated, talked about and highlighted immigrant and refugee students in different ways. The teachers perceived that the part of the students' cultural background that related to relations and contexts was a burden for the future. In order to have similar conditions in the Swedish society as their native peers, the teachers thought that the immigrant and refugee children needed to focus on the Swedish language (Bunar, 2010[166]).

Another study conducted at a high school in Central City in the United States examined what type of institutional practices teachers used to meet the needs of refugee students in their classrooms. About 25% of the student body were classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). Refugee students were met with various obstacles at the school, such as lack of English as Second Language (ESL) support staff, a lack of in-service programmes for mainstream subject teachers, and multiple and competing agendas that teachers have to face (Roxas, 2010[167]). The teachers in the study individualised their response to institutional obstacles in school by using one of three cultural scripts:

- *The need for protection.* Many teachers felt the need to create safe havens for the refugee students in order to protect them from harassment, fights and social exclusion. For example, this safe haven could be a special classroom only to be used by the refugee students. However, this approach could marginalise students even more.
- *The need for credentials.* Some teachers had other academic expectations for the refugee students than for the native-born students. Refugee students are often given effort grades instead of academic achievement grades. This objective was to get refugee students out of high school and into a job. However, this will not necessarily prepare the refugees students for the local job market. By giving refugee students effort grades and having them graduating without English proficiency, teachers might be condemning them to low-paying jobs or even unemployment.
- *Assimilation is the goal of education.* Many teachers were of the belief that it was important to assimilate quickly into the American culture. If refugees could learn how to blend into American society and assimilate the culture, then their lives would improve for the better. However, this type of view might lead teachers to view students that show difficulties in learning English as deficient in their academic ability or defiant in their attitude (Roxas, 2010[167]).

Assessment at school-level

Refugee children and youth often believe that the grade placement system does not adequately assess their ability (Nakeyar, Esses and Reid, 2017[96]). Assessing the language

and other skills of refugee students can help identify the needs of each individual child and to target training. Language support requires an accurate assessment of children's language skills (in both the mother tongue and the language of instruction) and other competencies at the time of entry into the education system and also during their education, since some refugee children may not exhibit difficulties at the start of their schooling, but might progressively fall behind due to a lack of language practice and support at home. Poor measures of assessment on entering the school system can have a detrimental impact on refugee and immigrant children because these children are more likely to be allocated to special education and lower-ability tracks (OECD, 2018[57]).

In addition to the identification of refugees, a variety of enabling assessment procedures, and regular re-evaluation, other early interventions are essential, including screening mechanisms to detect learning disabilities and psychological or emotional problems. Initially, screening can be done by the classroom teacher and can be carried out by means of observation or interviews with the student and his/her family. If necessary, these informal steps should be followed by more formal interventions by professionals: psychologists, social workers, and ethnic group consultants. This would help to decrease the likelihood that poor school performance later one is automatically attributed to inadequate English or lack of formal education (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]). Otherwise, refugee students might leave school because they believe their academic deficiencies are so great is so that they will not catch up with native students.

Extra-curricular activities

While extra-curricular activities have mainly positive benefits for every student, they can be particularly beneficial for students with learning disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds. Through such activities, these students might assume leadership roles and demonstrate talents in ways that that might not be available to them in traditional classroom settings. Extra-curricular activities might also allow students to meet and make friends with peers from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Moody, 2001[168]).

One after-school activity that can be particularly beneficial for refugee and immigrant students is sports. Sporting environments can offer equal opportunities and promote racial equality among those involved, allowing refugees and immigrants to maintain their cultural identity while integrating into the host country society. By participating in leisure activities with native populations, they can learn about local customs and culture, and interact with native peers (Makarova and Herzog, 2014[169]). This, in turn, can improve the way immigrants and refugees relate to natives and create positive social bonds. Sports can also provide "a sense of purpose and direction for young people recovering from the traumas of the refugee experience or the impact of racism" (Dykes and Olliff, 2007, p. 1[170]). Sport offers an opportunity for social interaction, and a way for non-English speakers to learn and practise English; and it can promote ethnic and cultural harmony and strengthen communities (Olliff, 2007[171]).

Parental involvement in school community

Engaging parents can play an important role in helping refugee students integrate. However, such engagement can entail considerable challenges due to different approaches and views of families and school staff. One study from Sweden finds that parents often believe that the Swedish schools lack discipline in the classrooms and that they do not teach the students about respect for elderly or other authority roles in society. Highly educated parents often expressed criticism towards the slow pace of the teaching, which in their

opinion decreased the chances for their children to succeed in their future careers. All of these differences can distance teachers and parents with an immigrant background from each other (Bunar, 2010[166]).

Another study from Sweden analysed two different communication patterns between schools and parents in multicultural areas in Stockholm. Communication patterns between parents and teachers can differ depending on the parents' background and whether teachers and parents trust each other or not (Bunar, 2001[138]).

Other studies from Australia show that refugee students often have to bridge two worlds in their movement between countries and cultures, and in their movement between home and school (Burridge, Buchanan and Chodkiewicz, 2009[172]; Sainsbury and Renzaho, 2011[173]). Refugee youth end up as intermediaries between their families and society, which can place considerable responsibilities on their shoulders (Uptin, Wright and Harwood, 2012[174]).

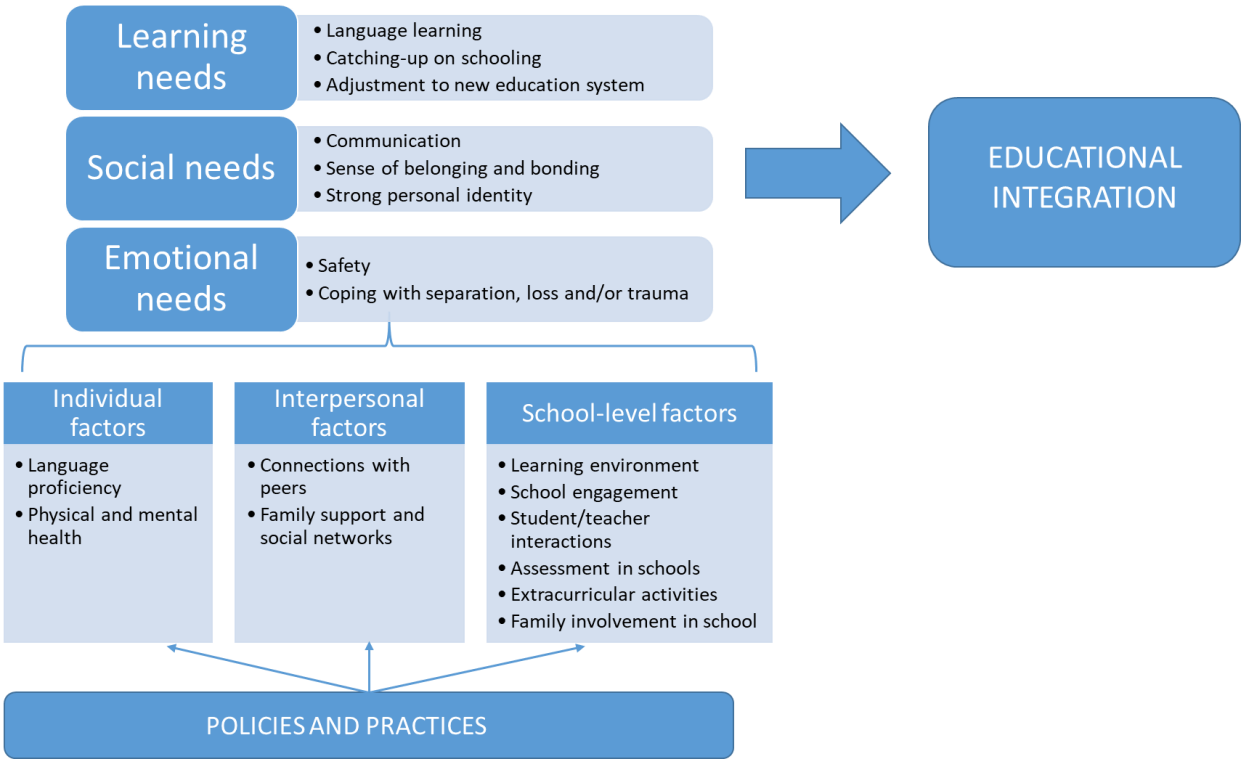
The proficiency of host country language and level of education of refugee parents has a significant effect on capacity to support their children's learning, together with the time available due to family and work commitments and understanding of the schooling system (Sainsbury and Renzaho, 2011[173]; Jamal Al-deen and Windle, 2015[175]). Community group support can help parents with low literacy by disseminating information orally rather than only relying on text, and homework clubs can support students when parents do not have the capacity (Cassity and Gow, 2006[176]; McMichael, Gifford and Correa-Velez, 2011[97]; Sainsbury and Renzaho, 2011[173]).

3.3. Holistic model for the educational integration of refugees

Drawing on the evidence and key needs and factors presented in the previous sections, it is important to consider a holistic model for refugee educational integration, which recognises the complexity of needs of refugee children (i.e. their learning, social and emotional needs) (Arnot and Pinson, 2005[152]; Sidhu and Taylor, 2009[67]).

The holistic model (Figure 3.1) depicts the relationships between needs, factors, policies and educational integration. Educational integration of refugee children can take place if all (or at least most of) their learning, social and emotional needs are addressed. Refugee children need to learn the host country language and develop their mother tongue, overcome interruptions in schooling or limited education, and adjust to a new education system. They also need to be able to communicate with others, feel a sense of belonging and bond with the community, and develop a strong personal identity. Furthermore, refugee children need to feel safe, and be able to cope with loss, grief as well as separation and/or trauma. Different individual, interpersonal and institutional (school-level) factors can shape the prevalence of needs of refugee children. A variety of targeted policies and practices then shape these factors.

Figure 3.1. Holistic model for the educational integration of refugee children



While the three main pillars of needs and the factors within the holistic model are similar to a multidimensional model for immigrant students (OECD, 2018[57]), each pillar can carry a different weight. For example, catering to the emotional needs of refugee children might be at the core of the model, followed then by responding to learning and social needs. For immigrant students, while all three are important, catering first to learning needs might be the main priority, followed by social and emotional needs. However, the relative importance of each factor might vary depending on the personal and educational background of each refugee child.

Existing research shows that schools identified as offering a holistic model were able to respond to the psychosocial and emotional needs of their students through life skills programmes, welfare and pastoral support, admission support, extensive induction processes and provision of lunchtime and after-school activities (Arnot and Pinson, 2005[152]; Pugh, Every and Hattam, 2012[153]). A holistic approach also works in partnership with other relevant agencies to address the multiple complex needs. This includes social work, health organisations, community organisations and other support services (McBride, 2018[177]).

4. Policies and practices in OECD countries

Based on the proposed holistic model in Section 3, this section examines selected policies and practices that countries have put in place to respond to the different needs of refugee children and shape the key factors for refugee integration in education. Due to the range of individual schools' policies and practices, there is variation in the ways in which countries and schools support students with a refugee background. This section focuses on the integration of refugees in initial education.

4.1. Responding to learning needs of refugee children

Responding to the learning needs of refugee students, especially access to education, is an important policy concern across OECD countries. This can include providing refugee children with academic support by teachers and other professionals, offering language support, assessing skills and language, and providing a positive learning environment (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95]).

4.1.1. Access to education

Schools are a stabilising feature in the unsettled lives of refugee youth by supporting refugee students and addressing social exclusion, mental health problems and poor educational outcomes (Matthews, 2008[65]; Downey, 2007[101]; Jeffery, 2004[102]; Pastoor, 2016[6]). Removing barriers to participation and achievement enables children to experience success and build on their strengths with positive outcomes in the long-term (Mujis et al., 2007[178]).

While access to education for refugee children is the first priority, it is not always guaranteed across OECD countries, both before and after compulsory school age. An early starting age in education is key because gaps early on in education, especially in language acquisition, are only magnified later without appropriate counter-measures (Crul, 2016[51]). Since access to early childhood education from age three is not always provided to refugee children, it can limit their chances of learning the language and integrating into the school system early on (OECD, 2018[57]).

Most OECD countries provide access to education for compulsory schooling (though not always at reception centres), but considerable challenges appear at the pre-school and post-compulsory education levels (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017[24]). For example, a study of nine countries suggests that responses to the needs of young children among refugees and asylum seekers have been 'extraordinarily weak', both in and out of reception centres. (Park, Katsiaficas and McHugh, 2018[179]).

Access to pre-primary education

The main challenges concerning access to early childhood education include long waiting periods, language barriers, accessibility in terms of distance, insufficient guidance for families, lack of information provided on such opportunities, low allowances for asylum applicants to cover expenses, and the treatment and integration of traumatised children (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017[24]). However, some countries policies in place to overcome these barriers.

In ***Turkey***, Syrian children can attend early childhood education in public schools, but shortages of places and resources have led many nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and international agencies to provide services. In June 2017, UNICEF-led initiatives enrolled 12 800 Syrians aged 3 to 5. Some NGOs (e.g. Mother Child Education Foundation, Support to Life, Mavi Kalem Social Assistance and Solidarity, Yuva Foundation) provide teacher education, education materials, home visits, psychosocial and mental health support, and learning and recreational activities (UNESCO, 2018[31]).

Several countries have succeeded in establishing partnerships and operating with multiple local and NGO actors. In ***Belgium***, the public early childhood and care agency for the Flemish Community set up centres in the Flanders and Brussels-Capital regions to provide a full range of services for families with children. The agency co-operates with the Belgian Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers and the Red Cross, which manage the reception centres (Park, Katsiaficas and McHugh, 2018[179]).

In ***Luxembourg***, changes introduced in August 2017 aim to strengthen the integration into the compulsory schooling system of Luxembourg of newly arrived foreign students, through the extension of the multilingual education programme to early childhood education and through the provision of care service vouchers aimed to mitigate inequalities and provide an equal start to all children (OECD, 2018[2]).

Access to post-compulsory education

Another challenge for providing access to education is once refugee teens reach compulsory school age because they might be excluded from school at a time when they need schooling and language training the most (Crul, 2016[51]). Otherwise their transition into the labour market can be severely hampered, which can affect both their economic and social integration in the host societies (Barslund et al., 2017[180]; Barslund et al., 2017[181]; OECD, 2019[1]).

Many European countries report difficulties with regard to the education of children who are above the compulsory school age. Such difficulties include a lack of sufficient language skills, forcing children to attend classes for younger age groups, and the absence of programmes providing access to vocational training (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017[24]).

Once refugee students have passed the age of compulsory education, their opportunities for developing their skills are limited and, in some countries, mostly limited to vocational education and training. In Helsinki, ***Finland***, a 'skills centre' combining vocational education, employment and language training services was created in 2016. Its services mostly target refugees over 17 years of age and those migrants whose language skills are not yet at the level needed for employment and vocational education (Eurocities, 2017[182]).

In the ***Netherlands***, education is compulsory for children between the ages of five and 16. After that, those who have not obtained their diploma yet have to follow education one or two days per week for one or two years (Center for the Study of Democracy, 2012[22]).

In ***Austria***, in order to reduce the number of youth without a school leaving certificate, a 2016 amendment to the Austrian Law on Education and Training raised the minimum age for the achievement of the compulsory school leaving certificate to 18 years (OECD, 2018[2]). In ***Sweden***, June 2017, amendments were made in 2017 to ensure that those aged between 18 and 25 are able to extend their temporary residence permit for the duration of their upper secondary school studies. Young adults arriving after the age of 18 can also attend general adult education or Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), i.e. classes for adults

to learn basic Swedish (Crul, 2016[51]). Similarly, in ***Germany*** youth whose removal has been suspended during and after their vocational training can stay in Germany for the duration of their vocational studies and possible subsequent employment (OECD, 2018[2]).

4.1.2. Early assessment and individualised study plan

In order for refugee children to learn the host country language, overcome interruptions in schooling and fully benefit from learning opportunities, it is important for schools to provide early assessment of skills and individualised study plans. To alert educators to potential difficulties, refugees need to be identified and assessed as soon as they enter the school system. Teachers must be made aware of the traumatised life of some refugee youngsters and of their particular needs (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]).

In ***Sweden***, early initial assessment is essential in providing language support to immigrant students as it is an important starting point in the language learning process (Siarova and Essomba, 2014[183]). Within two months of starting school, all new arrivals are assessed on their academic knowledge and language skills. Additionally, the assessments are offered in the students' mother tongues in order to best assess previous knowledge without language barriers (Berglund, 2017[184]). Using the results, the principal and/or headteacher determine the best educational trajectory. The decision is based on the student's age and language skills, and results of the mapping of previous knowledge (Bunar, 2017[185]). For example, if a student demonstrates good knowledge in a subject, they can then participate in regular teaching of that subject with mother tongue study supervision (i.e. tutors in the student's native language). Students can also benefit from study guidance which is when a member of staff (a tutor) who knows the languages in question and preferably has some understanding of the subject matter, explains the specific vocabulary and general concept of the subjects studied in the student's native language (Utbildungsdepartementet and Education), 2011[186]). Since August 2018, it is mandatory that newly arrived students in Sweden starting with grade 7 have an individual study plan. The mapping of a student's previous knowledge and experience is also mandatory (Skolverket (National Agency for Education), 2018[187]).

Another example of individual assessment and learning plan stems from ***Finland***, where the model of integrating newly arrived students 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 co-operation between the teacher, the student and the family (Dervin, Simpson and Matikainen, 2017[188]). 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., 2016[189]).

4.1.3. Introductory/welcome classes and transition to mainstream classes

To respond to the needs of refugee children for language learning, overcoming interruptions in schooling or limited education, adjusting to a new education system, communicating with others and developing a sense of belonging, many countries have introduced introductory classes. The objective is to provide classes in language and different subjects to non-native speaking students who might have missed months or years

of schooling in order to prepare them for mainstreaming later on. The challenge is to prepare students so that they can be mainstreamed into a regular class after one to two years and provide sufficient pedagogical and social resources for students to achieve academically and develop a sense of belonging (Nilsson and Axelsson, 2013[190]).

In some countries the host country language proficiency is taken as a decisive factor for mainstreaming but this can often entail transferring students to a school level that is below their potential ability (Onderwijsraad, 2017[191]). That is why some argue that an extensive period (up to two years) in separate classes can hinder the educational success of refugee children (Crul, 2016[51]). Instead, a quick transition into regular classes together with sustained second language support could be more effective. Alternatively, schools could combine separate and regular class hours to ensure that refugee children will also be in contact with children whose first language is the national language. Refugee children often need more time to adjust to the new education system and to their new life, which may be very different from their previous experience (Crul, 2016[51]).

Germany has several models of Willkommensklasse (Welcome Class). Besides the variations across *Länder*, schools also adjust overall models to their circumstances. Classes differ by their focus on language versus subject learning and by phasing of transfer to a regular class. For example, some schools have created Welcome Classes that are completely separate from regular classes and teach exclusively in German, while others try as much as possible to include new immigrants in subject matter classes with the regular students from the start and give them supporting German language classes at the same time. Between these two, there are various combinations of segregated or inclusive approaches with different ways to eventually transfer children into regular schooling (UNESCO, 2018[31]; Ahrenholz, Fuchs and Birnbaum, 2016[192]). In the case of unaccompanied minors, Saarland has special language classes for unaccompanied minors (Tangermann and Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik, 2018[193]).

Australia has an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD or EAL/D) programme provided to school aged students for whom Standard Australian English is not their first language or dialect. These programmes run through specific schools or Intensive English Language Centres. EALD education is generally taught within the context of key learning areas in the relevant mainstream curriculum, so that integration into mainstream classes is achieved following completion of the programme. Students generally spend approximately 12 months in these programmes. After their time in the programme, most schools and Intensive English Language Centres help with the transition into mainstream schooling for their students and families. This may include cultural liaison officers, qualified EALD support teachers, Multicultural Education Aides or designated mainstream teachers (Settlement Council of Australia, 2018[194]; South Australia Department of Education, 2018[195]).

4.1.4. Language training and support

To be able to communicate with others, learn the host country language and develop a sense of belonging, refugee children need language support.

Language can pose particular difficulties for the integration of refugee students. For example, an immigrant or refugee child in Canada might have to cope with his/her mother tongue which he/she speaks but does not read or write, the language of the first country, which he/she reads and writes but may not speak well, and in Canada, he/she must learn English or French (Kaprielian-Churchill, 1996[68]).

Language skills are not only important for academic achievement, but are essential if students with an immigrant and refugee background are to develop a sense of belonging at school. That is why it might be beneficial for newly arrived children who are not proficient in the host country language to be moved quickly to targeted language support provided in mainstream classrooms rather than being taught in separate classes (European Commission, 2015[79]; Crul, 2016[51]).

An Australian study highlighted the importance of adapting pedagogy and curriculum to meet a heterogeneous group of refugee students through combining explicitly relevant language instruction and awareness of students' individual histories and lived experiences (Miller, Windle and Yazdanpanah, 2014[196]). A flexible curriculum and teachers who are able to reflect on the management and interpretation of diversity are needed (Pugh, Every and Hattam, 2012[153]; Earnest et al., 2010[197]; Miller, Ziaian and Esterman, 2017[198]).

In Europe, the duration of language preparatory classes for newly arrived students for primary and lower secondary education varies from one year or one school year in Belgium, France and Lithuania, to two years in Denmark and Norway, to three years in Latvia and four years in Greece (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017[199]).

One programme in ***Germany*** is Sprach-Kitas, launched by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, which provides early childhood and education programmes with language-focused support. The ministry plans to invest nearly EUR 400 million in 2017-20 to expand the programme and staff (Park, Katsiaficas and McHugh, 2018[179]).

Outside Europe, the government of ***Canada*** provides continuous support in language of instruction. Courses use established second language learning standards with specialised and certified teachers. A public body monitors curricular standards. Some provinces, including Alberta, Nova Scotia and Ontario have similar requirements (Huddleston et al., 2015[200]; Huddleston et al., 2015[200]).

To take the example of British Columbia, the province has seen an increase in the diversity of its student body and has adopted specific polices and guidelines for their English Language Learning (ELL) services. These services can be delivered in the shape of separate ELL instruction by specialists, co-teaching or team teaching in a mainstream classroom, consultative or collaborative support to the classroom teacher, adapted curriculum materials and so on. The ELL services need to be adjusted regularly so that they are in line with student progress and needs (Province of British Columbia, 2013[201]).

Language support in British Columbia is provided from the pre-primary grades. In kindergarten, non-native English speaking immigrant children receive 5-8 hours of language support every week. In primary school, students with limited English knowledge can receive in-class language assistance or pull-out instruction while they participate in the standard curriculum. In secondary school, immigrant students are provided with a preparatory programme (Cho, 2012[202]). This includes three stages:

- *Reception stage.* A stronger focus on ELL courses while at the same time providing grade level content courses.
- *Transition stage.* A shift towards more standard courses and fewer hours of language support classes.
- *Integration stage.* Students receive only some ELL assistance.

4.1.5. Mother tongue tuition

To respond to the needs for the development of mother tongue, communication and sense of belonging, providing access to mother tongue tuition can be helpful for refugee children.

Some countries are offering mother tongue tuition or study supervision in mother tongue. For example, in ***Sweden***, the Education Act regulates the right to mother tongue instruction for all students with a legal guardian with a mother tongue other than Swedish if (1) the language in question is used for daily communication in the student's home, and (2) the student has basic knowledge of the language in question (Utbildningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research), 2016[203]; Ganuza and Hedman, 2015[204]). The benefits of mother tongue instruction are explicitly stated in the Swedish curriculum with the acknowledgement that mother tongue education aids in language development and in learning across disciplines. Moreover, it gives students the opportunity to develop their language, identity and understanding of the outside world (Skolverket [National Agency for Education], 2016[205]; Nilsson and Bunar, 2016[206]).

Nonetheless, mother tongue tuition does not always reach all students. For example, in Sweden, non-native speakers in pre-school (23% of enrolment) have a legal right to develop their mother tongue, yet just 39% of those who qualify actually receive such support (Park, Katsiaficas and McHugh, 2018[179]). Furthermore, it is often difficult to find teachers that can teach in all the languages needed. As a response, some municipalities in Sweden are working with digital platforms in order to be able to offer study supervision to their students. Other promising approaches are co-operation between schools, municipalities, local universities and the civil society to offer help with homework in case there are not sufficient teachers in particular mother tongues (Bunar, 2017[185]).

In ***Australia***, students who live in rural and isolated areas receive distance education This type of schooling uses technology to offer real-time remote teaching sessions (e.g. video conference lessons, phone lessons, satellite lessons, and virtual excursions) and/or non-real-time teaching practices (e.g. email and online learning management systems, such as Moodle) (New South Wales Government, 2017[207]). In Victoria, those students who are newly arrived and who come from language backgrounds other than English, and who cannot access an English language school or English language centre, can enter into the Virtual English as Additional Language New Arrivals Programme. Schools that have little experience receiving immigrant students and who cannot provide them with language support can also offer their students this programme. Systems such as Skype and Moodle are used to develop the newly arrived students' English language proficiency so that they can access the mainstream curriculum. Specialist English as Additional Language (EAL) teachers deliver curriculum-related content and individualised content to the students. Students enrolled in the virtual programme receive one virtual conferencing session per week, with lessons lasting 30 to 60 minutes depending on the school year. Depending on the need and the progress of the student, he or she can participate in the programme for up to four consecutive school years (New South Wales Government, 2017[207]).

4.1.6. Learning environment

To respond to the refugees' needs for learning, and help them adjust to a new education system and ensure their safety, it is important that schools implement measures to encourage an inclusive learning environment. The learning environment can also play a crucial role in supporting or hindering specific language and learning programmes for refugee students.

One method of providing a supportive learning environment for refugee students is through norm critical pedagogy. The main idea is that both students and teachers are taking part in the construction of social norms and are influenced by difference-shaping categories, so it is important to work together to question and reveal norms that enforce hidden power structures (Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, 2018[208]).

The National Agency for Education in ***Sweden*** promotes norm critical working methods and highlights that all staff working in schools needs to have knowledge about this pedagogy as it is key to work against discrimination and offensive treatment. The Agency proposes that norm critical pedagogy should be a compulsory part of the syllabus for those studying to become teachers and for professional development of teachers and school staff (Skolverket [National Agency for Education], 2009[209]).

4.1.7. Support from teachers and other school professionals

To respond to the need of refugee children for language learning, overcoming interruptions in schooling or limited education, adjusting to a new education environment, developing a sense of belonging and feeling safe, it is useful if teachers and other professionals are trained to support their specific needs.

Both new and more experienced teachers may need to develop skills through cross-cultural training in order to understand and meet the needs of these potentially vulnerable student populations (Rhonda, Haig and Grote, 2009[210]; Miller, Mitchell and Brown, 2005[93]). School staff could attend relevant professional development sessions, and that knowledge should be communicated between and within schools to maximise benefit through increased acceptance of inclusive practices (Cassity and Gow, 2006[211]). Training across providers can also increase knowledge and understanding of available resources and community services (Morland et al., 2005[212]).

Appropriate, effective and respectful interaction with immigrants and refugees requires cultural competences, which need to be taught (Barrett et al., 2013[213]). Activities that promote openness to multiple perspectives need to be embedded in teaching practices. It is important to provide freedom to explore sensitive issues in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way in order to develop critical thinking skills and question own identity and beliefs. Experiential method through real or imagined interactions can provide opportunities for individuals to interact with newcomer students (De Leon, 2014[214]).

Teachers need several competences to teach in diverse classrooms with immigrants and refugees. A key one is preparedness to teach students not proficient in the language of instruction (Bunar et al., 2018[215]; PPMI, 2017[216]). Improvements in teacher preparation need to address three domains. The first involves knowledge of legal frameworks, dimensions of cultural diversity and methods to address diversity. The second concerns teacher-student and teacher-parent communications, open-mindedness and respect in the school community, motivating student engagement and dealing with conflicts to prevent marginalisation. The third concerns management and teaching: addressing socio-cultural diversity in classrooms; establishing an inclusive, safe environment; tailoring teaching to student needs; and using diverse approaches for culturally sensitive teaching (PPMI, 2017[216]).

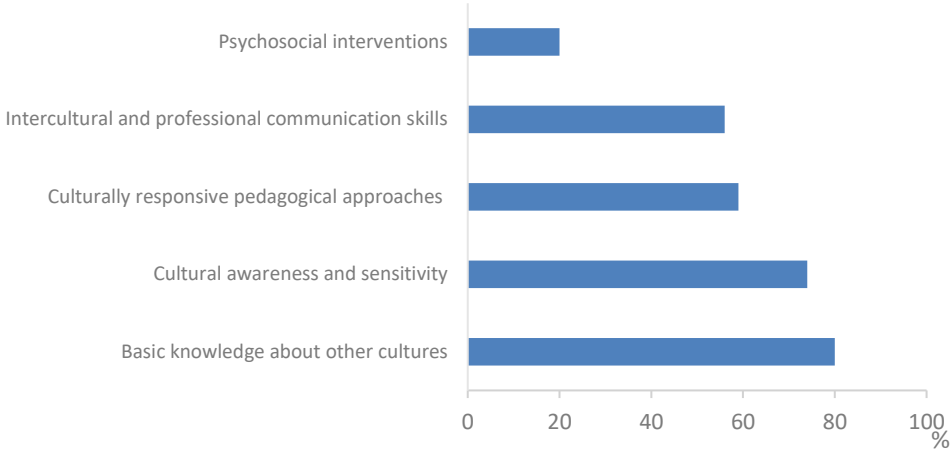
In initial teacher education and in ongoing professional development, it would be also helpful to examine real-life examples of teachers handling diversity (e.g. classroom observation, case studies, videos, reported episodes, etc.) to connect concepts to concrete practice (Forghani-Arani, Cerna and Bannon, 2019[217]).

However, teacher education programmes often emphasise general knowledge over practical pedagogy (Figure 4.1). About 80% of programmes included a focus on cross-cultural knowledge, e.g. overviews of education systems, culture and art around the world. By contrast, student-centred pedagogical approaches included the theory and practice of teaching in diverse classrooms, bringing in other languages and cultures, and using differentiated instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Some 74% of programmes incorporate cultural awareness and sensitivity training, including self-assessment of cultural bias. Among the more practical pedagogical categories, 59% of programmes have culturally responsive approaches, and 20% include psychosocial interventions. This suggests that only one out of five prepared teachers to anticipate and resolve intercultural conflicts or be familiar with psychological treatment and referral options for students in need (April et al., 2018[218]).

Figure 4.1. Teacher education programmes covering immigrant and refugee students' needs

Percentage of teacher education programmes covering specific diversity competences, 2018



Note: Based on 108 teacher education programmes in 49 countries.
Source: Adapted from April et al., 2018[218].

Well-trained teachers are vital for ensuring the inclusion of immigrant and refugee students but they too need support in order to manage multilingual, multicultural classes, often including students with psychosocial needs.

In countries such as Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden, teachers may be trained and certified but need new skills to address the needs of refugees (Bunar et al., 2018[215]). Education policy in ***Germany*** is decentralised across the 16 states, and refugee-specific responses vary among them, depending on the refugee caseload, experience with migrant students and local policy orientation. States have made definite, if mixed, progress in preparing teachers for language support. Between 2012 and 2015, 10 states began providing explicit content for language support, although only six had made language support pedagogy mandatory by 2017 (Baumann, 2017[219]; UNESCO, 2018[31]).

In ***Sweden***, the National Agency for Education published Build Swedish (*Bygga svenska*) as a support measure for teachers to assess the language abilities of new arrivals. It is available in three categories: grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9/high school introduction programme. Created by the Department of Language Didactics at Stockholm University, Build Swedish

is based on the model of language development involving increased 1) participation in linguistic activities, 2) degree of independence and 3) degree of variety and security in language use (Söderlund, 2018[220]). The assessment aid is formed from a socio-cultural view of language and language development, which emphasises social interaction and supporting roles in the learning process. The material consists of an assessment model with age-related descriptions of the student language development in five steps and reconciliation points for those students who have not yet reached step 1. The five steps are described in detail for the skills of reading, speaking, listening and writing. Teachers receive templates to document student language development (Ingves, 2017[221]). These support materials are freely available on the National Agency for Education's website (www.bp.skolverket.se/web/kartlaggningsmaterial).

In ***Australia***, schools in Sydney, Wagga Wagga and Southern New South Wales have benefitted from ***Refugee Action Support*** (RAS), a programme that combines tutoring for new arrivals with student-teachers' professional development. As an official part of the secondary teacher education degree at the University of Western Sydney, RAS allows "pre-service teachers [to] work in a one-to-one or small group tutoring situation. Here they enhance their pedagogical and interpersonal skills while providing valuable support to secondary students from humanitarian refugee backgrounds" (Ferfolja and Naidoo, 2010[222]). With a focus on late literacy and numeracy learning, RAS helps students with a refugee background with homework as well as generally supports their studies in secondary school.

RAS has been successful on many fronts; over 80% of students were found to have improved significantly, quite substantially or to an outstanding degree (Naidoo et al., 2018[223]; Naidoo et al., 2018[224]). The success of the RAS programme also extends beyond academic outcomes; in addition to social and emotional support measures, students were able to participate more actively in classroom activities after participating in RAS (Naidoo et al., 2018[224]). Overall, both the participants and student-teachers benefit; "young refugee students are supported in their development of academic skills and socio-cultural understandings while simultaneously, preservice teachers gain an appreciation of the complex dynamics related to teaching, students and diversity" (Ferfolja, 2009, p. 395[225]).

Refugee students might suffer more frequently from mental health issues than other students. However, in most cases, teachers lack trauma and mental health training. The Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings recommend that teachers can provide psychosocial support by creating a safe and supportive environment through their interactions and specific, structured psychosocial activities (IASC, 2007[226]). Teachers can maintain relationships with students and their families, learn their histories, observe student behaviour for signs of distress and seek help from specialised personnel, such as trauma-trained school psychologists (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016[227]). For that, they need continuous professional development, for instance in constructive classroom management or use of referral mechanisms. They should not, however, attempt to conduct therapy with students (IASC, 2007[226]) as mental health interventions require specially trained therapists and are beyond teachers' skills and responsibilities (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016[227]).

Other professionals

While teachers play an important role in the lives of refugee students, other professionals are also needed to support the needs of these students. For example, the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program in ***Canada*** is an initiative funded by Immigration, Refugees

and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The SWIS programme places settlement workers from community agencies in primary and secondary schools that have high numbers of newcomer students. The SWIS workers:

- support successful school integration by assisting in school registration, school orientation, parent/teacher interviews and meetings, home visits and follow-up meetings
- provide information and guidance on educational issues to students and parents
- collaborate with the school counsellors and the community to provide practical, culturally sensitive guidance, referrals and intervention during crises
- advocate for the rights and responsibilities of all students and their families
- refer families to affordable community programmes (sports, children's dental clinic, libraries, summer and school break camps, teen and youth programmes)
- encourage new families to become involved in school events and community recreational activities
- promote respect for cultural diversity by providing multicultural training to school personnel, parents, students and the community regarding newcomer issues (Saskachewan SWIS Coordination, n.d.[228]).

4.2. Responding to social needs

Besides addressing learning needs of refugees, a number of countries also have different policies and practices to address the social needs of refugee students. These can include providing refugee children with opportunities to engage in social activities and community building, engage in identity formation and involve whole schools and communities (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95]).

4.2.1. Whole-school and whole-community approaches

Whole-school and whole-community approaches can promote the development of a strong identity of refugee children, provide a safe place for learning and socialising, and help to adjust to a new education system and school culture.

Fostering links with parents, local agencies and the wider community, and working with welfare agencies, were also good practices identified across schools in countries such as Australia (Sidhu and Taylor, 2009[67]) and the United Kingdom. In ***Australia***, the Department of Education in New South Wales published guidelines for schools on how to implement a whole-school response to welcome and integrate refugee students. Strategies include educational, emotional well-being and social support, as well as how to: enrol refugee students as quickly as possible, provide orientation to them, provide co-ordinated learning support by all school staff, monitor and assess refugee students, engage parents and families, and engage with the wider community and government agencies (New South Wales Government, 2016[229]).

Another example stems from the ***United Kingdom***. Citizens UK, the national community organising charity, and NASUWT, the Teachers' Union, promote Refugee Welcome Schools, an accreditation scheme to recognise schools that have made a commitment to welcome refugees in their institution and community, educate all their students and staff about the importance of refugee protection over the course of a year, and participate in

campaigns to improve the lives of refugees in the United Kingdom (Brimacomde, 2017[230]). While this is not an official accreditation, the initiative has been led by teachers who become "refugee welcome champions," and engage in interschool dialogue, leadership activities, and community outreach to exchange and share practices on how to effectively integrate refugees into their school communities.

In ***Canada***, the province of New Brunswick Association for Community Living in Canada formed the programme ***Creating an Inclusive School: Indicators of Success***. This whole-school approach to educating is rooted in inclusion "an inclusive school is based on the philosophy that the whole school shares in the responsibility for inclusion. A real culture of inclusion cannot be brought about unless everyone embraces it" (New Brunswick Association for Community Living, 2011, p. 6[231]). The programme is based on nine school characteristics: diversity and inclusion are embraced, creating a sense of belonging, student learning experiences are inclusive, supports are available and properly utilised, fostering appropriate behaviour, inclusion and students with exceptionalities, proactive school management and leadership, and an innovative creative environment. Cyclical in nature, the programme focuses on taking action, educating, reflecting and examining (New Brunswick Association for Community Living, 2011[231]; McMaster, 2013[232]).

Canada also has government-sponsored and privately sponsored programmes for refugees. Among the privately sponsored programme, the Group of 5 was created to sponsor individuals with refugee status for 12 months (Government of Canada, 2018[233]). Private sponsors usually support the sponsored refugees by:

- providing the cost of food, rent and household utilities and other day-to-day living expenses
- providing clothing, furniture and other household goods
- locating interpreters
- selecting a family physician and dentist
- assisting with applying for provincial health care coverage
- enrolling children in school and adults in language training
- introducing newcomers to people with similar personal interests
- providing orientation with regard to everyday activities such as banking services, transportation
- helping in the search for employment.

While these sponsorship programmes target family units and do not specifically address the needs of refugee children beyond school enrolment, they could be extended to groups of five (such as students, teachers, support staff, school principal, parents) supporting a new refugee child in school for 6-12 months.

4.2.2. Identity construction

To respond to the need of refugee children for strong personal identity, providing opportunities for identity construction are crucial. Introducing notions of identity construction into the classroom could be useful for understanding the concerns and the experiences of refugees. Moreover, including student voices in the curriculum could

encourage refugee students to contribute their experiences and participate in classroom discussions (Mosselson, 2006[234]).

Different programmes exist at school and classroom levels to facilitate identity formation of refugee students. For example, the Kaleidoscope Cultures and Identity Programme is a six-session group programme for young refugees aged 14-24 years currently enrolled in a secondary school in ***Australia***. The programme seeks to:

- explore the impact of living in a new culture
- break down social isolation, alienation and dislocation
- build trust, bonding and an understanding of others
- promote self-esteem and identity
- integrate past experiences and build a vision of the future.

The programme has three integrated components. The first component seeks to break down social isolation resulting from previous trauma experiences through the restoration of trust and the acquisition of communication skills. The second component aims to promote the development of self-identity through the integration of past experiences, and promote an understanding of their influences on the present and on young people's view of the future. The third component seeks to identify emotions that influence everyday behaviour, and looks at ways to deal with distressing emotions, as well as enhancing emotions that promote well-being. Each individual is given the opportunity to talk about their past experiences, their present concerns and their views of the future in a variety of ways (Foundation House, 2016[235]).

At the classroom level, the Kaleidoscope programme has been adapted for grades 5-10. The 10-lesson unit for the mainstream classroom is designed to increase all students' understanding of their own cultural background, and the diversity of cultural backgrounds in their classroom. It aims to break down social isolation, alienation and dislocation. Activities explore identity issues, promote an understanding of emotions and their influence on health, and assist in developing trust and belonging through inclusive teaching approaches (Foundation House, 2016[235]).

4.2.3. Friendship-building

Providing contact with friends can be a useful policy measure to address the need of refugee children for communication, language learning and sense of belonging. Making friends is an important aspect for building social connections for refugee students. One example to promote friendship-building is a high school programme in New Brunswick, ***Canada***, called "Lunch with a Bunch" where students are granted special permission to eat lunch outside the school once a week. The students are a mixture of new arrivals and Canadian born students. Having the programme take place outside of the school walls allows for students to feel more at ease. Additionally, the students can form friendships that will help everyone feel like they belong (OECD, 2018[236]).

4.2.4. Extra-curricular activities

Offering extra-curricular activities can be a helpful policy measure to address the need of refugee children for communication and bonding (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95]).

Extra-curricular activities such as sports, arts, theatre and music can be an effective way of building social connections. Communities have developed a variety of ways to promote sporting activities among refugees. For example, in ***Germany***, the Football League (DFL) started a "Willkommen im Fussball" (Welcome to Football) initiative in 2015, leading to 24 of the country's professional clubs launching similar schemes [e.g. Werder Bremen's "Bleib am Ball" (Stay on the Ball) project and Bayer Leverkusen's "Bayer 04 macht Schule" (Bayer 04 does school) project]. Around 65 training sessions involving about 800 refugees aged between 4 and 30 take place in Germany every week, and around 600 of these participants have begun playing in amateur leagues. In conjunction with the local amateur side, TSC Eintracht Dortmund, and with funding from the DFL and the German Children and Youth Foundation, the Bundesliga club's Borussia Dortmund (BVB) Foundation has helped to create a project that allows a group of refugees aged between 18 and 20 to attend a weekly training session at the stadium, where they also receive a free meal before training and a German lesson afterwards. Students from refugee communities attending local schools are rewarded for good behaviour with a year-long place in the course, and organisers also help find them jobs and university placement afterwards (Aarons, 2017[237]).

4.2.5. Parental and family engagement

Engaging parents and families can help address the need of refugee children for bonding and social support. This can include establishing meaningful home and family partnerships, involving parents in schools, translating information into parents' home language and providing language training to them (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95]).

Some countries implement specific measures to support immigrant and refugee parents. For instance, in Queensland, ***Australia***, intensive English-language courses are offered in consultation with parents as the government has committed to improving the engagement of immigrant and refugee communities in education. The New South Wales Department of Education offers Community Information Officers to help schools strengthen links with parents and community members from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The department also offers a specific programme for Youth Partnerships with Pacific Communities that includes parent/school partnerships and homework support (MIPEX, 2015[238]).

A handbook for integrating refugee students in ***New Zealand*** recommends a number of activities for schools to engage parents of refugee students. These include: utilise refugee community members as resource people or experts; notify families about homework centres and encourage their participation as assistant; help families understand how school works; and emphasise the reciprocal process of an effective relationship (Ministry of Education Auckland, 2016[239]).

4.3. Responding to emotional needs

Besides addressing learning and social needs of refugees, a number of countries have also different policies and practices to address the emotional needs of refugee students. These can include providing counseling support to refugee children (Szente and Hoot, 2011[95])

4.3.1. Well-being and mental health support

Refugee students might be in greater need of well-being and mental health support due to their forced displacement. Schools have been proposed as key sites for mental health

interventions especially for refugee children (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016[227]; Tyrer and Fazel, 2014[240]; Fazel, Garcia and Stein, 2016[241]). They can provide a location where refugee children and their families are able to access a range of services, including health care and linguistic support as well as opening educational opportunities. Schools can foster social-peer relationships and encourage a sense of belonging to the school community and the wider culture; these can likely play important roles in preventing mental illness (Fazel and Betancourt, 2018[127]; Kia-Keating and Ellis, 2007[242]).

Reviews of school-based mental health interventions for refugee and asylum-seeking children differentiate between two types of intervention: 1) those based on creative expression through art, music or drama to help students develop social-emotional skills, and 2) cognitive behavioural therapy, which can deal with past experiences, for instance through verbal processing, or with current and future challenges, such as through self-soothing. The second type of interventions appear to have had positive therapeutic effects (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016[227]; Tyrer and Fazel, 2014[240]).

A number of countries have recognised the well-being need of refugee children and have implemented different policies and programmes to support these students. For instance, Mobile Intercultural Teams (mobile *interkulturelle* Teams, MIT) is a programme of the Ministry of Education in ***Austria***. These teams have been deployed to schools with high percentages of immigrant students since 2016. The teams offer support to teachers and administration who work with immigrant and refugee children. In addition, there is often a psychologist qualified to help children who have experienced trauma or difficulty in their lives (Scholten et al., 2017[243]). This support varies and can include advice for teachers, individual casework with students, and workshops to improve class climate. Importantly, the MITs interact with parents of immigrant and refugee students to integrate them into the school community (Felder-Puig, Maier and Teutsch, 2016[244]) and often serve as a language bridge between students, parents and the school (teachers, administrators, etc.) (Eurydice, 2018[245]).

MIT employees are hired on the basis of the following: experience working with heterogeneous groups, relevant language skills, knowledge of the Austrian school system, networking in the psychosocial care system, conflict resolution and mediation skills, intercultural competences, experience in refugee work or in work with migrants, and team orientation. They go through two full days of training on the following topics: asylum and migration movements, school law and administration, trauma and trauma coping with children and adolescents, and psychosocial support systems at and for school (Felder-Puig, Maier and Teutsch, 2016[244]).

Another example to improve the well-being of refugee and asylum-seeking children is the government-financed NGO Pharos programme in the ***Netherlands***, which since the early 1990s provides support to the social-emotional development of these children in secondary schools (www.pharos.nl). The goal is to give attention to the difficulties refugee children face, strengthen peer support systems for refugee children by offering opportunities to share their histories and experiences with other children, foster teacher support for refugee children and strengthen coping ability and resilience among refugee children (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2012[246]).

The programme has three components:

1. "The refugee lesson" is a series of eight lessons focusing on the experiences refugee children have in common. The lessons are conducted by a teacher, together with a mental health care professional, for a group of 8 to 12 children.

2. The "Refugee youth at school" component is a training manual, accompanied by videotapes, for teachers and others involved with this group. The themes are backgrounds of refugee youth, coping with loss, dealing with children who have been traumatised, and preventive activities in the classroom.
3. "Welcome to school" is a series of 21 lessons emphasising non-verbal techniques such as drawing and drama. The lessons aim to improve the well-being of youth seeking refuge or asylum and to prevent them from developing psychosocial problems by building bridges between the past, the present and the future. Classmates become companions and learn how to support each other (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2012[246]).

The Playing with Rainbows group, established in 2004, is a partnership between traditional, mainstream service organisations and a variety of ethno-cultural, ethno-specific service organisations and community members in ***Canada***. In 2004, the coalition received funding from the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services' Children and Youth Mental Health Innovation Fund to provide and evaluate an innovative group work service to Toronto refugee and immigrant children. Phase 1 of the "Playing with Rainbows" group was developed for children, ages 5 to 13, and their caregivers, who have been affected directly or indirectly by war and migration trauma. Phase 2 has focused on developing specialised group work curricula for youth (ages 13 to 19) and parents (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2012[246]).

The main goals of the coalition are to: 1) develop resources designed to promote mental health and facilitate the healing process for children, youth, parents and care providers traumatised by war, political oppression, and pre-migration and post-migration stressors and 2) play a role in educating service and care providers and educators about the impact of trauma on interpersonal relationships, mental and physical health, behaviour, academic success, employment and all aspects of one's life (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2012[246]).

4.4. Data and monitoring

The holistic model is underpinned by data collection and monitoring of outcomes of refugee students. However, available data and monitoring of refugee outcomes in education is limited. There are some promising examples at the national level such as the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Refugee Study in ***Germany***, which surveyed recently arrived refugees in Germany. It provides analysis of the impact of legal and institutional frameworks and of the effect of programmes aiming at the target population (DIW Berlin, 2018[247]). The survey included interviews with the target person aged 18 and above and all other household members (the second and third survey instalments included interviews with children). Waves 1 and 2 included: issues of origin; route to Germany; status of asylum procedure; accommodation in Germany; knowledge, needs and use of support/counselling offers; knowledge of languages and attendance of language courses; education and vocational training abroad and in Germany; labour market participation and income abroad and in Germany; health; personality, attitudes, values; social networks, social participation; family situation; school attendance of children; and cognitive skills (OECD, 2018[23]). Nonetheless, it does not specifically target children and students.

Other countries have started to design and implement monitoring systems for refugee children and youth. For instance, from spring of 2019, ***Switzerland*** has started to implement

new measures for refugees under the Swiss Integration Agenda for several groups (Kantonale Integrationsprogramme, n.d.[248]):

- All recognised refugees and those admitted provisionally have a basic knowledge of one national language after three years.
- 80% of refugee children who come to Switzerland before the age of 4 are able to communicate in the language spoken at their place of residence by the time they start compulsory schooling.
- Two thirds of refugees and those admitted provisionally between the ages of 16 and 25 are in basic vocational education and training after five years.

To ensure the effectiveness of the Agenda, a monitoring system will be set up to review regularly the achievement of the objectives. This process of elaboration has started and should be completed by the end of 2020 (Staatssekretariat für Migration (State Secretariat for Migration), 2018[249]).

There are also some new data systems developed at the international level. For example, the Refugee Education Management Information System (REMIS) is a new tool by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to collect, compile, analyse and report refugee education data. The aim is for REMIS to feed into EMIS, which informs global education statistics, which then informs Sustainable Development Goal 4 (To ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong opportunities for all) monitoring. However, REMIS is only a stopgap measure to bring refugee education data up to the required levels of quality for inclusion in national EMIS. REMIS core indicators include: gross enrolment ratio; net enrolment ratio; percentage of repeaters; completion rate; national exam pass rate; student-teacher ratio; percentage of qualified teachers; percentage of female teachers. All student-related data is disaggregated by age, gender and other characteristics (OECD, 2018[23]).

Despite some national and international initiatives for data collection in formal statistics and monitoring, more is needed to capture refugee children and students in education and to measure and compare their academic and well-being outcomes.

5. Conclusions and policy considerations

The research on refugee children and youth in education is limited and often case specific, which makes generalisations difficult in the context of considerable data gaps. The paper has discussed the diversity of populations with a refugee background and their education and well-being outcomes. It has examined in what ways the needs of refugee students differ from immigrant students, and what we can learn from previous waves of immigration. Even though countries of origin and their educational levels in the current wave differ from previous waves, some findings from previous studies can help inform policy towards current refugee students. The paper has also analysed what key needs of refugee children and factors emerge from existing studies on refugee education. Drawing on these findings, the paper has then proposed a holistic model that addresses the learning, social and emotional needs of refugee students and has discussed examples of policies and practices from OECD countries. Despite the limitations in data, studies and evidence on policies towards refugee students, some lessons can be drawn from existing studies in order to influence policies and practices for refugee students. This section proposes a number of policy pointers to promote the integration of refugee students through a holistic model responding to their learning, social and emotional needs.

Consider refugee integration in education through a holistic model

Policies towards refugee students often focus on providing access to education or responding to mental health needs of these students. However, it is important that policies address the learning, social and emotional needs of refugee students through a holistic model. Some model components might carry more weight than others depending on the specific needs of refugee students in different classrooms, schools and education systems. A holistic approach also works in partnership with other relevant agencies (such as social work, labour market agencies, health organisations, community organisations) to address the multiple complex needs.

Provide access to refugees to all levels of education and allow for flexible pathways

Access to education at all educational levels and beyond (including pre-primary and post-compulsory) for refugee students in a timely manner is important. Access to pre-primary education and post-compulsory education for all refugee children is particularly crucial. However, access to education is only the first step; good quality education and flexible pathways to education are key.

Introduce early assessment and develop individualised development and learning plans

As every refugee student has different experiences, knowledge and skills, schools need to undertake an early assessment of language, skills and well-being needs. This would allow for the preparation of an individualised plan for learning and development, which would foster social interactions and respond to the refugee student's well-being (and mental health) needs. For example, the assessment could also help determine whether the student could benefit from introductory classes and additional learning classes. The individualised

learning and development plan should be regularly updated and be the responsibility of the teachers, school leader, parents and the student.

Provide flexible learning options, pathways and transitions for older students

As refugee students might have missed several years of schooling or might have low levels of skills, they might require flexible learning options adapted to their particular needs and background. Additionally, more flexible pathways and transitions for refugee youth are needed to enable them to complete education. Pathway programmes to facilitate a successful transition through post-compulsory years to further education, training or employment are also necessary.

Promote language support specifically targeted to refugee students and facilitate the development of mother tongues

Language can be a considerable barrier for refugee students. Particular language classes should not take place in isolation, but need to be designed to accommodate the learning and language needs as well as cultural norms of the refugee students. With sufficient resources, instruction in the language of the host country could be combined with encouragement to develop mother tongues to facilitate co-operation and communication with classmates.

Offer specific teacher training and professional development to support the needs of refugee students

Well-trained teachers, school leaders and other professionals are key to be able to support refugee students. Teacher training and professional development should raise awareness and understanding of refugee issues, the impact of the refugee experience on learning and behaviour, the school and the classroom teacher's roles in promoting recovery from trauma, and strategies for addressing barriers to learning as a result of the refugee experience and disrupted schooling. Furthermore, it is important to provide information and professional learning around refugee issues to new staff members during their induction (Foundation House, 2016[235]).

Provide a supportive learning environment to refugee students

The learning environment can play a crucial role in supporting or hindering specific language and learning programmes for refugee students. Providing a supportive learning environment could support the students' integration.

Create opportunities for social interactions between refugee and other students

Besides learning support, supporting the social integration of refugee students is needed. Facilitating opportunities or implementing structures for refugee students to form friendships with students from their own backgrounds and other students, and providing a welcoming and safe community in schools and beyond, are also important. Providing access to extra-curricular activities could also help refugee students interact with other students and the community.

Adopt whole-school and whole-community approaches to welcome and include refugee students and their families

Interventions and programmes are unlikely to be successful unless schools have a positive school climate and adopt a whole-school approach to dealing with the refugee students,

which also involves parents and communities. In addition, schools are not the only entities responsible for refugee students, so taking a whole-of-community approach is crucial for the successful integration of these students. Furthermore, co-ordination between the education system and other sectors including health, social, housing, labour market and welfare is necessary.

Support the well-being needs of refugees including mental health

Besides learning and social support, fostering the well-being of refugee students is crucial. Since many (though not all) refugee students have specific physical mental health needs, an assessment of well-being needs is necessary. If deemed necessary, support should be provided early on and progress monitored regularly. Otherwise, interventions to support learning needs might not bear any fruit.

Improve data collection and monitoring of outcomes of refugee students

The holistic model is underpinned by data collection and monitoring of outcomes of refugee students. However, current data limitations severely constrain the knowledge about refugee students, which makes the design and implementation of policies difficult. Quantitative data is often incomplete, and qualitative data is usually collected ad-hoc and unable to reflect wider patterns (Miller, Ziaian and Esterman, 2017[198]). In the absence of reliable data, the risks and vulnerabilities facing children on the move remain hidden and unaddressed. Nonetheless, some national and international efforts to collect data on refugees in education are promising.

Data collection

To maximise positive integration outcomes, it is important to produce statistics that accurately reflect the integration of refugee and immigrant children in order to maximise positive integration outcomes (UNHCR; UNICEF, 2017[25]). To compare outcomes, it would be helpful to collect data on the following indicators (European Union; United Nations, 2018[3]):

- participation in education
- participation in pre-school education and access to childcare
- literacy and numeracy
- years spent out of education between the exact ages of 5 and 16
- educational attainment
- (host country) language proficiency
- support received as a child integrating into the school system
- participation in language courses.

OECD surveys

Challenges differ according to the migrant status of individuals, which then necessitates more targeted policy responses. That is why it would be important to collect data on the reason for migration and the migrant status in international surveys. However, there is often an issue of small sample sizes.

Surveys such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) do not currently collect this information, as youth might not always be able to answer these questions. However, it might be possible to ask contextual questions, which indirectly lead to information about migrant status. Including questions regularly on years spent out of education could help examine how interrupted schooling can impact their academic and well-being outcomes. While some PISA rounds such as 2012 have included this question, others have not.

The OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), which addresses individuals aged 16-65 years, could include questions on migrant status, which could help analyse outcomes in a comparative way.

Other surveys ask specific questions about refugees. For example, more disaggregated data is collected in the new round of the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018. For example, principals are asked to provide information on the proportion of immigrant students and refugee students in their schools.

Evaluation

Many countries do not monitor the academic and well-being outcomes of refugee students. As current knowledge about what works for the economic and social inclusion of migrants is rather limited, fragmented and case specific, it might be helpful for integration programmes targeted to refugees to undergo careful impact evaluation and ex-ante pilot testing before they are implemented in full (Bonin, 2017[10]).

Promote inclusive education that responds to the needs of all learners

Even though refugee students may benefit from broader policies towards equity or disadvantaged students, targeted policies for refugee students in schools may still be necessary once they have transitioned from specialised support programmes into regular schools (Miller, Ziaian and Esterman, 2017[198]).

However, refugee students should not be marginalised and singled out. Inclusive education as an overall strategy could help protect refugee students from isolation and stigmatisation. Inclusive education was initially promoted by special education professionals in relation to the integration of students with disabilities into regular classrooms (Kiuppis and Peters, 2014[250]). The term is often used in response to integrating diversity within school communities. Inclusive education aims at providing good and equal learning opportunities to all learners, regardless of their diverse needs. The refugee crisis adds urgency to the task of making education systems more inclusive (Pastoor, 2016[6]). Promoting inclusion through comprehensive support systems can offer opportunities for refugee students to engage both socially and with curriculum (Due and Riggs, 2009[251]; Pugh, Every and Hattam, 2012[153]).

The challenge is not only to promote inclusive education in policy-making, but also to implement inclusive principles and policies into classroom practices. Such policies and practices could be embedded into a comprehensive strategy working against the economic and social exclusion of immigrants and refugees (Bonin, 2017[10]). The second phase of the *Strength through Diversity* project, "Education for Inclusive Societies", examines how to build inclusive education systems and societies for different types of diversity (including migration, ethnic groups and visible minorities, gender, disabilities and impairments as well as gifted students).

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