



Passage

Pedagogies of Passing
from Reception to Education

National State of the Art and Gap Analysis - Data Collection and Analysis in Lithuania

Output 1.2. National PASSAGE
Ecosystem of Needs, Practices Target
Groups, Stakeholders and Mode of
Work Report



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1 Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Literature Review	5
2.1	State of The Art and Gap Analysis.....	5
2.1.1	Introduction to the national school system	5
2.1.2	Systemic regulation on the education of newly arrived immigrants and refugees 8	
2.1.3	Supporting teachers to meet migrant students' needs	11
2.1.4	Limited findings and evaluation of existing pedagogical integration models and practices 12	
2.1.5	Involvement of external bodies.....	14
3	Field Research Analysis of the focus group research with teachers	17
3.1	Self-efficacy.....	17
3.2	Implementing Practices.....	18
3.3	Cultural competency	19
3.4	Competency/Preparation	20
3.5	Student needs.....	20
3.6	Motivation	21
4	Analysis of the focus group research with stakeholders	23
4.1	National strategy and guidelines.....	23
4.2	Existing practices and long-term predictions	23
5	Analysis of teachers' perspective on integration of immigrant children and refugees.....	29
6	Conclusion	36
7	Literature	38



1 Introduction

Within the PASSAGE consortium, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Lithuania will be taking appropriate measures to cope with increased level of third country nationals arriving in these destinations. In turn, this increase has been instrumental in revealing several limits of existing policies (either national, regional, or European) and current capacities for migrants' integration to local societies, in the field of educative integration. This gap was especially evident in the case of the early stage of arrival (i.e., reception), where integration action needs to be reinforced and supported to promote basic EU values and principles of inclusivity, diversity, and civic openness.

This document will serve as basis for further elaboration and could serve as comprehensive reference on the level of understanding, knowledge, and awareness of youth in all European participating countries, in issues related to pedagogies and pedagogical integration in the EU.

Within this document, partners will conduct a literature review of the pedagogical models and administrative structures and practices in securing the integration of children from a migrant background who enter new school environment. All partners will collect data from various resources, which will be summarized in the present report for further development. Part of this activity is the analysis of the limited findings available so far regarding comparative approaches and the utilization of integration in schools. Ecosystem Mapping State of The Art and Gap Analysis Report will be further developed into the compilation of national reports and a Transnational PASSAGE Ecosystem of Needs, Practices Target Groups, Stakeholders and Mode of Work.

Texts included in this Report should not be older than 2000, including books sections, scientific articles, policy briefs, policy documents (e.g., parliament reports, etc), grey literature (e.g., project reports).



2 Literature Review

2.1 State of The Art and Gap Analysis

2.1.1 Introduction to the national school system

The System of Education in Lithuania

Lithuania's education system is more decentralized than centralized. National institutions, municipalities and educational institutions all share responsibility for the quality of the education provided. The Seimas (Parliament) forms education policy at the national level. It adopts laws and declarations on policy changes. The Government and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (and other related ministries) also formulate and implement education policy and adopt and implement legal acts other than laws and declarations.

Lithuania general education system is with 12 years duration and consists of the following stages:

- **Primary education** (pradinis ugdymas), 4 years;
- **Basic** (lower secondary) education (pagrindinis ugdymas), 6 years;
- **Upper secondary education** (vidurinis ugdymas), 2 years.

Before starting their primary education, children could be educated at home and/or by pre-school education institutions.

Pre-primary education is compulsory from age 6 to 7. Its purpose is to help a child prepare for successful learning according to the primary education curriculum.

Pre-primary education is carried out according to a one-year general pre-primary education curriculum approved by the Minister of Education and Science. Its content is focused on the development of the child's general competences – social and health care, knowledge and understanding of the world, communication and artistic expression – through integrated development activities.

Pre-primary education can be provided by private, state or municipal kindergartens, school-kindergartens, schools or other institutions, as well as freelance educators or other education providers. Pre-primary education in other languages can be acquired at the institutions providing pre-primary education programs for ethnic minorities.

Primary education (1-4 grades)

According to the Law on Education, children who have reached seven years of age must attend the first form. If parents wish and if a child is sufficiently mature to study under the primary education programme, they can start school earlier. The duration of the primary education programme is four years. Compulsory primary education can be obtained in kindergarten-schools, in primary schools and,



less commonly, in basic or secondary schools. Parents and children can also choose schools of non-traditional education or individual classes/groups in municipal schools. Montessori, Waldorf, Suzuki or Jesuit pedagogical systems can be selected in Lithuania.

Achievements and progress of pupils in forms 1-4 are not assessed with marks. Assessment is based on the idiographic principle, i.e. the individual child's progress made with regard to their personality is assessed and a criteria-referenced assessment is applied.

Children who attend schools for national minorities start learning Lithuanian (official language) from the second form.

This is the first stage of formal education providing a link between pre-primary and primary education. According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011), primary education is allocated to ISCED level 1.

Lower secondary education (5-10 grades)

After completion of their primary education, pupils begin the 6-year lower secondary education programme. The lower secondary education programme is implemented by basic, secondary, vocational education and training schools, pro-gymnasiums and gymnasiums. Education can take place outside the school: in museums, parks, etc. by adjusting the educational process accordingly. General education plans, which schools use to develop their plans, stipulate that the learning environment at school must provide opportunities for active education of pupils, their individual learning, learning in groups of various sizes, and also for practical, experimental, theoretical and other activities. Meanwhile teachers must be provided with opportunities to work innovatively using modern education technology: faster internet, intranet, interactive whiteboards, computers, modern classrooms and classroom equipment, libraries, etc.

The compulsory lower secondary education programme consists of two parts: part I – a 4-year programme implemented in the 5th-8th forms and part II – a 2-year programme implemented in the 9th-10th forms (1st-2nd forms of the gymnasium). Pupils can start learning the second foreign language in the 5th form and in the 6th form the second foreign language is compulsory.

In the 9th form (1st form of the gymnasium), pupils can choose subject modules and study elective subjects according to their interests and abilities.

In Lithuania, education is compulsory for pupils until they reach 16 years of age. Compulsory education is usually provided up to the 10th form (2nd form of the gymnasium). After completion of the 10th form, pupils must take the basic education achievement test in the Lithuanian Language, Mathematics,



and an elective basic education achievement test in Mother Tongue (Belarusian, Polish, Russian or German).

After acquiring basic education and obtaining the basic education certificate, they may continue learning under the programmes for secondary education or vocational education and training or under the combined programme for secondary education and vocational education and training in order to acquire their first qualification. The official language is Lithuanian but there are minority-oriented public schools that use their languages for instruction.

Education during the COVID 19 pandemic

From 16 March 2020 Lithuania went into lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All types of schools were closed. The first two weeks of quarantine were announced as holidays, during which schools prepared for online education. On 30 March the online and distance learning started. To help schools, a digital learning base has been developed with learning environments, methodological materials, teaching tools and other information relevant to schools. The digital learning base is constantly updated. Schools are encouraged to submit their proposals. At the same time, since the introduction of quarantine, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport has organized constantly online consultations for school principals, their deputies responsible for organizing education at school, teachers, school IT specialists, employees of municipal education departments, etc. During the first weeks of quarantine, it was clarified how many pupils have the necessary tools for online learning. It turned out that a part of pupils do not have computers and internet connection at home. As a result, 35,000 tablets and laptops were purchased and distributed to pupils from socially sensitive families. At the same time, training was provided to parents on how to learn online by being at home and how to use the Internet safely. An IT administrator was appointed at each school, who also advised parents raising children with special educational needs (SEN). Educational support specialists provided online assistance for children.

The national broadcaster LRT TELEVIZIJA started broadcasting "LRT lessons" every day for children who are not yet in school and pupils in grades 1-4. The show consists of four lessons lasting up to 15 minutes. They are led by teachers, pre-school and pre-primary educators and other professionals. The program "Interesting Lessons Live" with interactive quizzes, interesting experiments, etc. was started to be shown to older students on a daily basis

In Lithuania, the rate of COVID-19 differed in the various parts of the country. If a municipality's epidemiological situation was considered normal, the return to primary education was permitted without testing, but it is suggested that this testing model be used on a voluntary basis. In those



municipalities where the epidemiological situation is poor or deteriorating, contact teaching in primary schools is only permitted if the school implements the “safe return” model described above.

Vaccination of pre-school teachers started in mid-February because kindergartens were not closed en masse during the strictest quarantine in the winter of 2020-2021. Also, in order to bring primary school students back to schools as soon as possible, vaccination of primary school teachers was also started. In the second half of March, before the mass vaccination, all educators were listed as priority groups and vaccination of this cohort has begun.

Legislation and Official Policy Documents

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymas [**The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania**], Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 2011. The Law on Education is the key document regulating education system in Lithuania.

Available at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.9A3AD08EA5D0/xbPKUCNrMi>

Dėl Pradinio, pagrindinio ir vidurinio ugdymo programų aprašo patvirtinimo [**Description of Primary, Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary Curricula**], Minister for Education and Science, No V-1309, 21 December 2015

Available at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/37350520a7bc11e5be7fbe3f919a1ebe>

Dėl Pradinio ir pagrindinio ugdymo bendrųjų programų patvirtinimo [**General Curricula for Primary and Lower Secondary Education**], Minister for Education and Science, No ISAK-2433, 30 August 2008.

Available at:

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=326307&p_query=Bendrosios%20programos&p_tr2=2

Dėl Pradinio ir pagrindinio ugdymo bendrųjų programų patvirtinimo [**General Curriculum Framework for Primary and Lower-Secondary Education**], Minister for Education and Science, No ISAK-2433,

30 August 2008. Available at:

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=326307&p_query=Bendrosios%20programos&p_tr2=2

2.1.2 Systemic regulation on the education of newly arrived immigrants and refugees

According to the data of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, in 2019, a total of 40 067 people came to Lithuania, of which 2 700 were children. Compared to the data of 2018, the number of arrivals in Lithuania increased by almost 12 000. Their reasons for having migrated (e.g. economic or political)



may vary, as may their legal status – they may be citizens, residents, asylum seekers, refugees, unaccompanied minors or irregular migrants. Their length of stay in the country may be short- or long-term. Migrant children from within and outside of the EU are taken into account. They are defined as newly arrived/first generation, second generation or returning migrant children.

The integration of students from migrant backgrounds into schools is a complex process, which aims to give children and young people access to quality education and to provide any necessary language, learning and social-emotional support. It also involves helping them to adapt to their new school environment and ensuring that they make good progress in their learning. However, Lithuania's experience regarding the integration of immigrant students in the schools of general education so far has been rather scarce and one-dimensional.

Access to education

The legislation concerning education of immigrant students can be considered quite extensive and generally favourable. The access to education is provided on the same level as it is to Lithuanian citizens. Pupils who have completed part of or the full primary, basic and secondary education programme of a foreign country or an international organisation either abroad or in Lithuania, have the right to select a state, municipal or private school and to be admitted to it just like any other Lithuanian pupil pursuant to a commonly accepted procedure.. School-age children are admitted to schools in accordance with the general education curriculum following the general procedure applicable to any other child of school age residing in Lithuania.

The school where a pupil, who has completed part of or a full international general education programme, is admitted recognises and accepts the pupil's results, it means that the curriculum the pupil completed abroad is assessed by the school of their choice. However, if a graduate from an international general education programme, does not have a document verifying their learning achievements, the school may determine compliance of the learning achievements with those required under the general primary, basic and secondary education programmes. If necessary, the school in question may test the learning attainments acquired by the student and make recommendations for further learning.

The school prepares an integration plan for those pupils who have completed part of or a full international general education programme and, if necessary, an individual education plan; the school also sets a suitable period for the pupil's adaptation. If the pupil is able to achieve a satisfactory level of knowledge and skills during the adaptation period, the school prepares his learning plan and provides educational assistance.



Admission may be carried out throughout the school year. However, it should be borne in mind that admission procedures are set by each school individually, therefore they should contact the school with specific questions such as a list of the documents to be submitted, admission dates and deadlines, a certificate confirming the registration of your place of residence, etc.

Language support in linguistically and culturally diverse environments

School performance depends very much on students' level of literacy in the language of instruction. Proficiency in the language of instruction also facilitates the socialisation process in schools. The opportunities to study Lithuanian and, to a certain extent, native languages are offered. The children with no proficiency in Lithuanian, prior to attending general education school, have an opportunity to learn the Lithuanian language in a special levelling class to bridge the language gap.

The school carries out a needs assessment for learning the Lithuanian language and organises learning in a bridging course/group (for an academic year or a shorter period) for pupils who do not know the Lithuanian language or have only a basic knowledge of it. The initial assessment of newly arrived migrant students' competences in the language of instruction is not only used to make decisions on school placement, it also provides teachers with the necessary information to plan their lessons and provide the appropriate support for each student according to the particular language needs.

Migrants' children (children of foreigners and citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, arriving or returning from a foreign country to live in Lithuania) are entitled to receive an additional 30 percent funding in addition to the student's basket they are entitled to (a student's basket is the allocation of funds per student earmarked by the state and distributed by municipalities). The additional funding for migrant children, should cover the expenses of specialists to help the student's faster integration into classes of peers.

However, there are some struggles with the practical application of this legislation, especially in terms of Lithuanian language acquisition. First, even though the students arrive from different countries, the standard amount of time that can be dedicated to Lithuanian language classes can hardly be adapted to their needs. The general requirement is 20-25 hours per week for one school year and the funds dedicated are calculated according to this amount. This poses a practical problem, especially in the cases of recent refugee students who spend a certain amount of time in various refugee institutions before they are given refugee status and are allowed to enrol to schools. The refugee institutions provide language classes as well (usually by forming so called mobile groups in the schools of the region where the institution is located). However, there are cases when these classes do not ensure a



satisfying result. The opportunities to study immigrants' native language, while projected in the legislation, are practically impossible since the minimum number of students to form a language group in a school is 5 with the condition that a qualified teacher is employed at the school. Given these limitations, the actual access to native language classes is possible only to immigrants arriving from the countries citizens of which comprise Lithuanian ethnic minorities (Russian or Polish).

2.1.3 Supporting teachers to meet migrant students' needs

Teachers are at the forefront when it comes to supporting the integration of students from migrant backgrounds in schools. However, the research literature shows that they often feel unprepared and insecure when confronted in the same classroom with students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (e.g. Nilsson & Axelsson, 2013; Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015; Trasberg & Kond, 2017) Most education authorities try to address teachers' unpreparedness to work in culturally diverse classrooms through teacher education and training.

However, TALIS 2018 m. survey data show that, in Lithuania only 34,7 percent basic education teachers agree that they are well prepared to work in multicultural and multilingual environments.

Moreover, the vast majority of Lithuanian language teachers are not qualified enough to teach Lithuanian as a foreign language as their education and work experience have been focused exclusively on teaching Lithuanian as a native language.

At national level, it is planned to improve the initial teacher training and qualification, as almost two thirds of Lithuanian teachers states that they are not ready to work in a multicultural and multilingual environment. Therefore, one of important education policies to improve the integration of migrant pupils - to help teachers to develop work in multicultural and multilingual environments and to provide pedagogical, didactic, methodological assistance to schools and teachers - to prepare teaching educational models, to provide assistance in assessing a pupil's educational experience and individual student progress.

Teachers in most cases are not alone in ensuring that migrant students are successfully integrated into schools. Many other professionals, such as school counsellors, social pedagogues, psychologists, social workers, etc., contribute to this process. Schools try to keep parents informed about their children's performance, progress and learning needs.

Legal acts



- Užsieniečių integracijos į visuomenę 2018–2020 metų veiksmų planas [Action Plan 2018–2020 on the Integration of Foreigners into Society] Available at : <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/31d148100a1911e98a758703636ea610?positionInSearchResults=6&searchModelUUID=e27a4cd7-4ffa-4784-ba08-210980bd79ec&fbclid=IwAR1NSNs7gcW7ecN2juis0SaYJhRKQIDcpdIIRCsdBa6lfjPUbcFyjqCcn0>
- Dėl užsieniečių, atvykusių dirbti arba gyventi į Lietuvos respubliką, vaikų ugdymo bendrojo lavinimo mokyklose įgyvendinimo [On the implementation of education of foreigners children, who came to work or live in the Republic of Lithuania, in general education **schools**] Ministry of Education and Science, No. ISAK-789, 4 June 2003 Available at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.212821/asr>
- Rekomendacijos "Dėl sugrįžtančių į Lietuvą asmenų švietimo ir integracijos [On the education and integration of persons returning to Lithuania] the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, No. SR-3534, 30 August 2019. Available at: <https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/griztantiems/rekomendacijos%20d%C4%97I%20sugriztanciu%20asmenu%20svietimo.pdf>
- Dėl Demografijos, migracijos ir integracijos politikos 2018-2030 metų strategijos patvirtinimo [On Approving a Strategy for Demography, Migration and Integration Policy for 2018-2030], Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, No XIII-1484, 20 September 2018. [Online] Available at <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/fbb35e02c21811e883c7a8f929bfc500?jfwid=-35aaxldoi>
- Dėl Demografijos, migracijos ir integracijos politikos 2018–2030 metų strategijos įgyvendinimo 2019–2021 metų tarpinstitucinio veiklos plano patvirtinimo [Interinstitutional Activity Implementation Plan for 2019-2021 of the Strategy for Demography, Migration and Integration Policy for 2018-2030], Government of the Republic of Lithuania, No 1216, 5 December 2018. Available at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/2a093814fc8411e89b04a534c5aaf5ce?jfwid=-rwipzde7s>

2.1.4 Limited findings and evaluation of existing pedagogical integration models and practices

With the increasing number of returning and arriving students from abroad, in Lithuania efforts are being made to improve their integration.

The attitudes of Lithuanian general education schools are varying to a great extent. While some are very much willing to accept immigrant students, others express discriminating views or are somewhat reluctant to enroll such students.



The network of schools

Since 2019, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the program "Create for Lithuania" is developing a network of schools the main goal of which is to strengthen the readiness of schools in different regions of Lithuania working with children arriving in Lithuania to fully (academically, socially and emotionally) integrate children with direct migration experience into the education system. At the moment the network has 61 schools, but it is constantly expanding. In the framework of the school network development project, in 2019. there was conducted a survey of 21 schools working with returning / arriving children. Schools shared their experiences - what tools, measures for integrating into schools immigrant children were most successful.

The most successful measures	Other successful measures	Successful, but less frequently used measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual educational plan; • individual Lithuanian languages and / or other subjects consultations; • non-formal education activities; • parents consultations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher assistant (up to 3 months); • preparation of classmates for integration of the immigrant children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring of the students; • consultations of educational support specialists; • Lithuanian language teaching in equalization / preparatory groups

Schools good practices

The National Education Agency implements the project "Development and Testing of General Education Content and Organizational Models in General Education" financed by the European Structural Funds (2018-2022). In 2020, this project collected information on the situation of foreigners who came to live and work in Lithuania, organization of their children's education. The experience of schools shows that they use the majority for them available integration tools.

As an example of good practice could be a school, which organizes education in the state and one of the languages of instruction of national minorities: they integrate preschoolers and primary school children into common groups, classes, because young children they are very receptive to languages and they start to understand Lithuanian quite quickly, and after a few months they start speaking. They teach senior students in a leveling class, where the main focus is on the Lithuanian language,



Lithuanian history and geography, as well as English. Arriving students, like everyone else, can use all the services and facilities provided in the gymnasium. Students participate in non-formal education according to their preferences, hobbies. In the equalization class, students are not graded in the first month, later grades are written after the parents' survey and the assessment of the children's psychological condition. All coming students receive an additional Lithuanian for 2 years language lessons 3 times a week. There are 10 lessons per week in the equalization class in Lithuanian years, then for another 2-3 years they also receive additional Lithuanian language lessons 3 times a week. Once a month, the psychologist communicates with the students' parents and provides the necessary assistance. Students visit a psychologist if necessary and at the request of their parents. They try to involve all students in all school events. Students also participate in various competitions and Olympiads.

2.1.5 Involvement of external bodies

In addition to learning support, extra-curricular activities are also helpful in helping migrant students to integrate (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). They may be provided in schools but delivered by external bodies such as municipalities, NGOs, and migrant or other volunteer organisations. They often include not only academic, but also cultural, intercultural and sports activities.

Develop inclusive education and promote the involvement of the whole school and the local community: by promoting the social integration of migrant pupils, use more than just direct lessons with these teachers working with students, but also the whole school (school leaders, student support professionals, teachers, other students) and local community (eg language schools, non-governmental, national, cultural or religious organizations)

Projects supporting immigrants' integration:

STREAM is an online platform and volunteer collaboration initiative that helps refugees and asylum seekers to address the negative consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic in Lithuania. STREAM is working with a number of different volunteers, including those with a refugee background, to create pathways for participation in the pandemic response. Volunteers are facilitating various workshops online, related to language courses, vocational training, non-formal activities, and direct assistance. The project works to tackle the challenge of social isolation at a time when social contact is being shut down or becoming more difficult as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, causing isolation and loneliness.



The project provides targeted, culturally sensitive learning content to refugees and asylum seekers. Particular focus has been placed on an initiative for language courses and **online assistance to refugee children.**

STREAM has 30 volunteers, 10 of whom have a refugee background. As a result, the project's platform is diverse, respected and strong within the local community.

At the start of each week, a programme is published for participants on the Facebook page of Human Aid (the partner organisation for the project), with an active link to zoom.us for each session. The sessions are designated a specific theme, time and language, and each lasts 40 minutes. <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/intpract/stream>

Project **HUMANAID** ('Supporting refugee integration through the Lithuanian grassroots refugee-inclusion groups') seeks to increase awareness of asylum and refugee integration matters in local communities, to strengthen traditions of activism, to create/strengthen social networks between refugees and the local population, and to raise concerns around social issues that are of relevance to other vulnerable groups in society. The project has created an online platform which mobilises and engages volunteers in grassroots initiatives; a number of training activities on various issues for refugees; events with local communities; various other related activities'

Potential gaps in providing education to immigrants and refugees.

The children are most sensitive to migration, as they often migrate involuntarily and are forced to move with their families. Therefore, it is very important to ensure that the integration of immigrant children in Lithuanian education system runs as smoothly as possible. According to the researches ordered by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport the learning achievements of immigrant children are lower compared to those who were born and raised in Lithuania. There is no given long-term plan or solution for how schools should behave and accept these students coming from abroad. We can identify a number of issues that need to be improved:

1. Teachers lack knowledge of how to work with immigrant students. Not only lack the information to develop an appropriate individual learning plan, but also often the competence to do that.



2. To minimize the problems children of immigrants face: language barrier, differences in programs and learning, integration into the school community, stereotypes against the immigrant's existence.
3. Increase efforts to address the full needs of migrant students: developing social and emotional support, encouraging useful, but still rarely used practices in Lithuanian schools - peer mentoring, student support, specialist team consultation, informal educational activities in which students could improve the Lithuanian language in an informal environment.
4. To assure a successful integration the cooperation between the parents, teachers, students and school administration has to be essential.
5. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports has to provide a unified system according to which students returning from abroad or immigrants would be integrated. Now each school decides independently how to integrate an arriving student. A successful student integration depends on the efforts and competencies of the school community.



3 Field Research Analysis of the focus group research with teachers

In order to gain a better insight into the current situation in relation to integration of newly arrived immigrants or/and refugees in the classroom, local societies in Lithuania there were interviewed teachers from different parts of the country. Focus group of five teachers from Kaunas, Vilnius and Kasiadorys shared their experience and thoughts about integration of immigrants' children into their schools. Among them there were two primary school teachers, teachers of English, Lithuanian languages and IT, economics and entrepreneurship.

3.1 Self-efficacy

The majority of focus group teachers think that they are not sufficiently prepared and ready to integrate immigrant children, but they are constantly learning, and think that there should be a team that must work together to integrate immigrants: administration, social pedagogue, psychologist, class teacher, subject teacher, class student - mentor, parents. Teachers mentioned that mainly intuition helps them how to behave, act and interest the child and how to adapt the curriculum to a child with a completely different experience than the rest of the class.

Most of the teachers haven't got any separate preparation, information or training how to cope with tension with immigrants' parents if it arises during the integration process. One of the teachers mentioned that she writes letters to parents in an electronic diary, but mostly the deputy principal for education communicates with parents about individual learning plans, difficulties or problems at school. According to the teachers' parents mostly tend to work with educators to make their children feel not isolated and to feel as little exclusion as possible. Consultations are provided to improve achievements. Most of the teachers don't face tension or stress, they manage to deal with it.

The teachers agree that the workload is high. In the classroom - a group of 20 students or more - students are active, curious, critical, creative. Some are still learning to work, be in a team, so they lack patience, demand and get angry when not being done according to them or too little individual attention is given. Completing additional documentation, constantly recording student progress, and informing parents about each child's individual progress requires additional attention and energy that



are not directly related to the educational process, but are among the main "time eaters." According to the teachers a lot of time takes producing almost all methodological materials, tools themselves, as there is a lack of them. Teachers also mentioned that the workload increases because they have to devote extra time to prepare for lessons, there is often a language barrier, because their Lithuanian language knowledge is poor or not at all and it takes time to make them understand content and tasks of the subject.

3.2 Implementing Practices

The teachers are using new types of practices, innovative tools. Materials are usually searched online, on the websites of methodological centers. They time from time participate in seminars on this topic, look for opportunities on the Internet, prepare training materials.

Teacher Jolita mentioned that they work on the Edmodo platform: correspond, share experiences, host training materials, host completed tasks, prepare surveys, tests, questionnaires ,etc; TEAMS - video lessons. They use the textbook by H. Prosniakova and V. Stumbrienė "My and your country Lithuania" (2007). It is a Lithuanian language textbook, audio recordings and an exercise book for the beginners aged 11–14. She also uses J. Džežulskienė's "Easy Lithuanian" in Lithuanian. A1 textbook - an exercise book with recordings, online platforms: <https://mokymai.lki.lt/>, <https://www.loecsen.com/lt/mokytis-lietuvi%C5%B3>, <https://www.50languages.com/phrasebook/lt/en/1>. For self-assessment: <https://kahoot.com/>, <https://new.edmodo.com/>, for reflection: <https://www.mentimeter.com/>, <https://padlet.com/> In the educational process she follows the rule WORD - IMAGE - ACTION - REPEAT.

As teacher of English noticed in order to integrate immigrant children in teaching English, in general, the reverse process is more common than in teaching Lithuanian native speakers - in many cases, the level of English of those children is higher than of the rest of the class. Therefore, when it comes to teaching a subject, the language experience and knowledge of a child from abroad can be used to make teaching in the classroom more interesting and engaging. You can immediately show the rest of the class for whom and how the foreign language is needed. With the appearance of immigrant children in the classroom she started to use the CLIL methodology and look for material that would allow her to apply this methodology. She thinks this methodology is perfect for primary school bilingual children and very useful for monolingual children for broader and more interesting language learning.

Some of the teachers use interactive games in Lithuanian / English in order to achieve every aspect of language education - auditory, spoken, written. They also create their own tasks, which help students



to develop the language faster and of better quality. Film screenings, various board games about Lithuania, designed to get to know it, learn city names, the most important symbols, etc. also help in education process.

The teachers believe that the variety of tools and materials and the ability to choose from a variety of sources always have a positive effect on the quality of education and the effectiveness of integration. Often, the teacher focuses only on conveying the curriculum, skipping other important issues such as social adaptation, cultural and religious integration, simply due to a lack of methodological support and information.

Most of the schools follow the recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science, providing support, integration and involvement in the school community and in the curriculum. But not many schools have internal guidelines for school staff to improve the integration of immigrant children and mostly the teachers do all the job. In some schools immigrant students are assigned a mentor - an educator, a peer (senior student) who would help them feel better at school. Teachers attend various seminars on relevant topics, and the school has educational support specialists. Teachers can work and give the student the opportunity to learn remotely. Tasks are differentiated according to the student's abilities. Efforts are made to provide social and emotional support to make them feel well.

3.3 Cultural competency

According to the majority of focus group teachers cultural and linguistic differences in the teaching process are obvious. However, they try to take advantage of cultural differences. When immigrant children talk to class about their exceptional cultural experiences, it is like a live illustration to other children. In this way, they are more persuasively and effectively involved in the learning and expand their perception that the world is large and very diverse. The children of the migrants talk about their lives, experiences and beliefs quite willingly. For other children, this is interesting and naturally acceptable. Acceptable things in one culture are not necessarily acceptable things in another culture, perceptions of different things, acceptance of patterns of behaviour, which leads to cultural differences. These differences are mostly dealt with by class teachers organizing various activities after regular classes. Teachers also mentioned that the language barrier and cultural differences pose problems both in education and in communication with friends. They use even Google translator (translates into their native languages) when teaching Lithuanian. But at the same time, teachers try to deepen their knowledge of a foreign language, get acquainted with the culture and religion of other countries.



Teachers agree that consistency, support and communication in the class community is very important. A migrant child needs to be involved in all activities, communicate as much as possible. Talking about differences and similarities makes an adaptation process easier.

3.4 Competency/Preparation

The teachers consider themselves competent and qualified enough in teaching local students, but not the foreigners. Most of them think that the university provides some theoretical knowledge, but the real knowledge comes with practice, by working with such children. They attend different professional development seminars, workshops, search for new methodological tools, materials. The schools also organize seminars and provide them with some knowledge how to work with migrant children.

Teachers mentioned that they have general competencies, but teaching foreigners it is not enough. Therefore, they participate in all organized seminars on this topic, as well as other topics related to the education and integration of foreigners. Some teachers have not attended any seminar how to teach immigrant children, but they read a lot about it and eager to learn as much as possible any innovative methods how to work with such kids. At the same time they agree and believe that their current job position provides a lot of opportunities to grow and improve themselves. However, the desire to improve must always come from the educator herself/himself. The teaching profession requires continuous improvement as the children, their hobbies, interests, their information channels and perceptions change.

3.5 Student needs

The most important need of a student is his/her safety, so the main thing is to ensure a safe environment in which the child will not be laughed at or mocked. The needs of immigrant students (social, emotional, psychological) have to be met by integrating them into the educational process in order to make them feel safe, comfortable, to experience as few negative emotions as possible living and learning not in their native countries. To accomplish this task the schools, take different measures. In some schools the whole team works in collaboration with these students, responds to situations or circumstances, different subjects' teachers work together, extra attention and time is granted.

But most teachers think that the education system is not adapted to immigrant children and is not friendly to them. They mentioned that there is a possibility that any teacher can have an immigrant or refugee child in his/her class at any time, without any training before, without an education program,



says a lot about the attitude of the education system. Teachers must be trained and prepared, acquainted with the peculiarities of the development of these children, the development of an educational plan and the planning goals. They added that there is no possibility of having an interpreter at school, there is no possibility of giving that child extra hours of education or an assistant to help him or her orientate in the environment. There is also no teaching material for children who do not speak Lithuanian.

Another problem is that General Programs and Curricula do not include topics for intercultural education, there is no room for interpretations of different religions, or lessons for learning about different social realities. This results in increasing intolerance and even hostility to others. And because of that migrant children have major integration problems.

3.6 Motivation

The teachers are mostly motivated to teach migrant children because it's a fairly new area, so very interesting. They are motivated by the opportunity to help master the subject and thus change the child's life for the better. They are inspired by the sense of professionalism when you work and believe that this path leads to success. Lithuanian language teachers see their motivation in helping young migrant children to learn the language in order to feel them better, more confident in the country, school. The teachers agree that the result is the most gratifying and motivating factor. By teaching and integrating migrant children in the classroom, they can also use their more diverse experiences to motivate local children, to help them look at things differently.

What concerns 'salary or incentives' the situation in schools differs. Some schools pay for counselling of those children and supplements for subject teachers. Teachers are happy with it. But other schools do not pay for that extra job, any bonus for conducting individual lessons during spare time, preparing assignments for the foreigners, and that is why there is nothing to talk about motivation here. It's hard for them when they don't get help and need to solve problems themselves.

We can draw the conclusions from the answers to the different questions concerning the current situation in relation to the integration of newly arrived immigrants and refugees in the classroom as following:

- The integration of a particular student mostly depends on the philosophy of a particular school and the personal motivation of its teachers who may be underprepared for working with immigrant students.
- The development of a school policy for the integration of immigrant children is of great importance.



- The difficulties arise for a multitude of reasons: the process of integration lacks a systematic view, teaching materials, common vision, the various shortcomings in legislation, negative attitudes towards immigrants, etc.



4 Analysis of the focus group research with stakeholders

Researchers assembled a group of individuals to discuss a specific topic – integration of migrants, aiming to draw from the complex personal experiences, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of the participants through a moderated interaction. Short presentation of the stakeholders focus group: five stakeholders participated in the research, who represented Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament) - Education and Science Committee, academic community of Lithuanian universities, Lithuanian Forum for Future of Education, NGOs, various Educational associations and committees.

4.1 National strategy and guidelines

The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania preserves that aliens who have the right to permanent or temporary residence in the Republic of Lithuania have the right to study, acquire education and qualifications. The state guarantees them primary, basic, secondary education and access to higher education or vocational training programs leading to a first qualification.

Several recent amendments to regulations on immigration and integration in Lithuania have come into force as of 1 January 2019. At the end of December, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour adopted the most important document regulating migrant integration in Lithuania—the Action Plan for Integration of Foreigners in Lithuanian Society, where Section Three is dedicated to education.

Lithuania has historically been a country of emigration. In the past, the number of Lithuanians leaving the country was higher than that of immigrants arriving. However, according to Statistics, since April 2019, the number of immigrants arriving in Lithuania has been higher than the number of people leaving the country, though arrivals remain relatively low in the EU context.

According to the data of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, in 2019, a total of 40,067 people came to Lithuania, of which 2.7 thousand were children. Compared to the data of 2018, the number of arrivals in Lithuania increased by almost 12 thousand. The data show that children's immigration to Lithuania take place in waves: from 2010 to 2014 the number of immigrant children has been constantly growing, in 2016–2017 decreased, in 2018 a new wave of growth has begun and in 2021 unexpectedly jumped up with immigrants via Belarusian border. However, children are most sensitive



to migration, as they often migrate involuntarily and are forced to move up with their family or loved ones.

The challenge of integration and inclusion in education is particularly relevant for migrants, not only newcomers but sometimes even more for re-emigrants, Lithuanian nationals. We do not have a national strategy; we have recommendations and guidelines. The successful integration of pupils with a migrant background is a relevant area of education policy in Lithuania.

The stakeholders in the focus group are of different backgrounds and diverse work experience thus their level of integration policy development varies.

A member of Lithuanian Parliament directly works with Legal Acts and Laws, follows European news in the field and often implements the relevant ones into national strategic documents. She says that the situation is continuously changing as the world goes around, and she tries to persuade politicians that more power and responsibility should be given to local governments and schools as they know the situations in their schools and communities the best.

Academics at the university state that their own participation is limited to the study programs development and review in terms of their relevance to migrant integration and inclusion. They review study programs and course materials once every academic year and point out that they don't participate in state policy process directly as higher education institutions have their own strategies for integration. Those strategies are supported by action plans and specific support measures. While developing these documents academics share experience with partner universities and follow EU recommendations.

Leaders of educational NGOs explain that human rights and educational NGOs facilitate immigrant integration and assimilation in Lithuania, who are voicing for the rights of immigrants and envisaging measures for migrant integration through their lobbying, education, awareness, cultural integration, and media mechanisms. NGOs act as a facilitating force for political debates, communication, political decision making, and to create a favourable environment for immigration integration into the Lithuanian society. The primary interpretation is that the third sector organizations play a significant role in the migrant integration into the society, empowering educational mechanisms and procedures. Teachers state that integration is governed by the "Procedure for Continuing Education in General Education Programs (2005). It describes the procedure for admitting foreign arrivals to schools. Persons who have come from abroad are admitted to the general class of their peers or to the equalization class (group). According to the child's achievements and parents' motivation, a child has the right to study in a higher or lower class, respectively. Under this procedure, school for a person from abroad draws up an individual education plan, provides education / training assistance.



Academic researchers at the Innovative Studies Institute European Distance and E-Learning Network work with decision making and preparing recommendations for schools how to use effectively distance learning tools and materials during pandemics and other emergency situations, including individual teaching and supervision of migrants.

University researchers not only advise on the organization of distance learning, but also, if necessary, create the necessary infrastructural resources. They also offer courses for individual teachers - they are invited remotely to prepare for lessons and consultations, help them to create active distance learning environment and video lessons, ensuring the operation in the distance learning environment according to the scenario chosen by a teacher, the specifics of the curriculum and the needs of a specific child. The Centre belongs to the EU network of E-learning and cooperates with a lot of European institutions sharing best experiences and practises, it changes and adapts teaching strategies and guidelines when the needs emerge or new successful initiatives and practices give the idea to introduce to our educational community.

Members of several working groups in the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports draw attention to the Lithuanian General Curricula which is currently under review and the content must be updated by 2022. It will reflect the global trend - the development and strengthening of children's general competencies and special attention should be given to disadvantaged, having exceptional needs children, including migrants.

All speakers point out that readiness of the Lithuanian education system to accept migrants or children from returning families is more or less defined in national laws, strategies and guidelines however they determined the problems and described the factors hindering the effective integration. The main problem is that national strategies and guidelines sharply differ from the practice and real situations in schools. They also conclude that the concept of education of migrant children is ever-changing.

4.2 Existing practices and long-term predictions

All the speakers agreed that efforts are being made in Lithuania to improve the integration of migrant pupils: to find out the needs of migrant education services, the needs of schools to promote the integration of the learning of a returned or incoming child, identified in schools as proven integration measures.

There are some differences between transnational recommendations and our national guidelines as our operational education documents introduce not only immigrants or refugees but also re-emigrants - children of Lithuanian background who have returned from emigration to Lithuania. They are



accepted to educational system following the same rules as immigrants nevertheless their integration process differs.

Recommendations prepared by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports on the education and integration of persons returning to Lithuania from abroad (2019) include assessment of their education, training and psychosocial - emotional needs, methods and content of education, as well as foresees additional funding. Up to 30% additional funding is provided for the education of a foreign student, and they can be allocated for additional Lithuanian language lessons, other individual educational needs of a child, non-formal education activities and integration opportunities. The amount of governmental funding is not sufficient for the educational needs of migrant children, schools cannot hire enough teaching assistants, equip children with modern technologies and recourses what is extremely important for distance learning during the pandemic.

Experts emphasise that Universities together with NGOs develop projects and get funding to support schools with innovative recourses and train teachers to work with them.

They correspondingly point out some deviations from transnational recommendations within national strategies and guidelines, and say that it is not possible to implement them "according to the letter of law". Migrant students before starting consecutive learning in general education have to do one-year course of Lithuanian language in the equalizer - in a special class or leveling mobile group. Lithuanian re-emigrants who have arrived or returned to live in the Republic of Lithuania and having spent outside for more than three years, also have to do Lithuanian language course.

Lithuanian language teaching in the equalization class allocates from 20 to 25 hours per week, and from the second half of the year topics of Lithuanian history, geography and civic education in Lithuanian are integrated and other general education subjects' terms are introduced in Lithuanian.

Municipalities can make their own decisions on the integration of migrants in mainstream schools, drafting legislation governing the integration of migrant pupils. In Lithuania, we have successful educational programs and educational institutions that have a wide range of students experience in the education and integration of migrants, operate internationally, and therefore from foreign countries students can continue to study there successfully and more easily integrate into both the education system and society.

We also have a number of private schools which are being funded by donors and parents, they have specific strategies and regulations to use individual approach to work with aliens. Though language barriers, the challenges of adapting to a different country and culture, as well as living in poverty-stricken areas are still some of the enormous obstacles that interfere with learning among displaced children and hinder social integration among immigrants in general. Immigrant children are less likely



to enroll in early childhood education programmes, tend to have more restricted access to quality education, leave school earlier, and have lower academic achievements than their native peers.

All speakers emphasize that prioritizing language learning, encouraging the enrolment of young children in early childhood education programmes, conducting targeted home visits to help parents understand the new school system, preparing teachers for diverse classrooms and discouraging school practices that tend to increase inequalities among all students, such as grade repetition, ability grouping and early tracking, are some of the ways to help integrate the newcomers into the host communities.

Developed and constantly expanding a network of schools prepared to take migrant children share their best practices, models and recommendations for organizing the education on how to successfully integrate a foreign or returning pupil.

Since 2019, Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and the governmental programme “Create for Lithuania” generates a network of schools teaching students from abroad. The main goal is to strengthen the readiness of schools in different regions of Lithuania working with children who have returned / arrived in Lithuania in a comprehensive (academic, socially and emotionally) to integrate direct migration an experienced child into the education system. School communities’ understanding increases in diversity and cultural alterations, also it opens greater opportunities for host communities to better recognize cultural similarities prior to differences and strengthen exchanges. These are good examples to share which help to shape schools in which all children are safe and welcome, and societies where all people are willing and able to appreciate their differences in cultural background, perspectives and values.

Efforts are being made in Lithuania to improve the integration of migrant pupils: to find out the needs of migrant education services, the needs of schools to promote the integration of the learning of a returned or incoming child, identified in schools as proven integration measures. By participating in project activities, models and recommendations for organizing the education of migrant children are being presented to schools on how to successfully integrate a foreign or returning pupil. In spite of hard work and some effective achievements quite often immigrant children are left-behind, for instance, are reported to suffer from lower psychological wellbeing under some circumstances, as well as from lower self-esteem and weaker educational performance. Schools still illustrate a notable absence in work on transnational child-raising, thus don’t say that there has been a lack of attention to transnational families and education more broadly.



University research shows that pupils with a migrant background compared to other peers' achievement is lower on average, a smaller proportion of them feel good at school and are less satisfied with their lives, most of them leave the education system earlier.

The speakers specify that long term predictions indicate the following priority areas for action measures: universal ensuring the right of education, to assist schools with various methodological and didactic organizational procedures in migrant education, reinforce support for teachers and schools, as well as teachers' competences to work in a multicultural environment to improve multilingual upbringing and surroundings, to reinforce the development of inclusive education.

Future schools should all know how to plan and organize learning in a digital environment and encourage learners to be active and collaborative. Teachers should review digital learning and acquire skills how to encourage self-planning, self-confidence, how to reach desired results and examine the possibilities offered by the digital environment

Although in Lithuania, compared to other European countries, the number of migrant children and the share among all children is not high (in 2018 - 3.7% among all children aged 0–15), it has been growing in recently, increasing the need to improve the inflow and return of foreigners. We see the necessity to expand the network of host schools, to apply effective integration measures, to improve competences of teachers, to ensure the necessary financial and material resources.



5 Analysis of teachers' perspective on integration of immigrant children and refugees

30 Lithuanian teachers participated in the qualitative survey. The teachers all had both positive and negative experiences with integrating students into general education. Everyone stresses the importance of teacher development related to migrant social, cultural, mental and academic welfare.

Self-efficacy

As the results of the conducted study show teachers believe in their capacity to work with migrant children and are convinced to become more capable and change their behaviors necessary to address migrant students' needs. Their self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to influence on both, personal and academic development of migrant children.

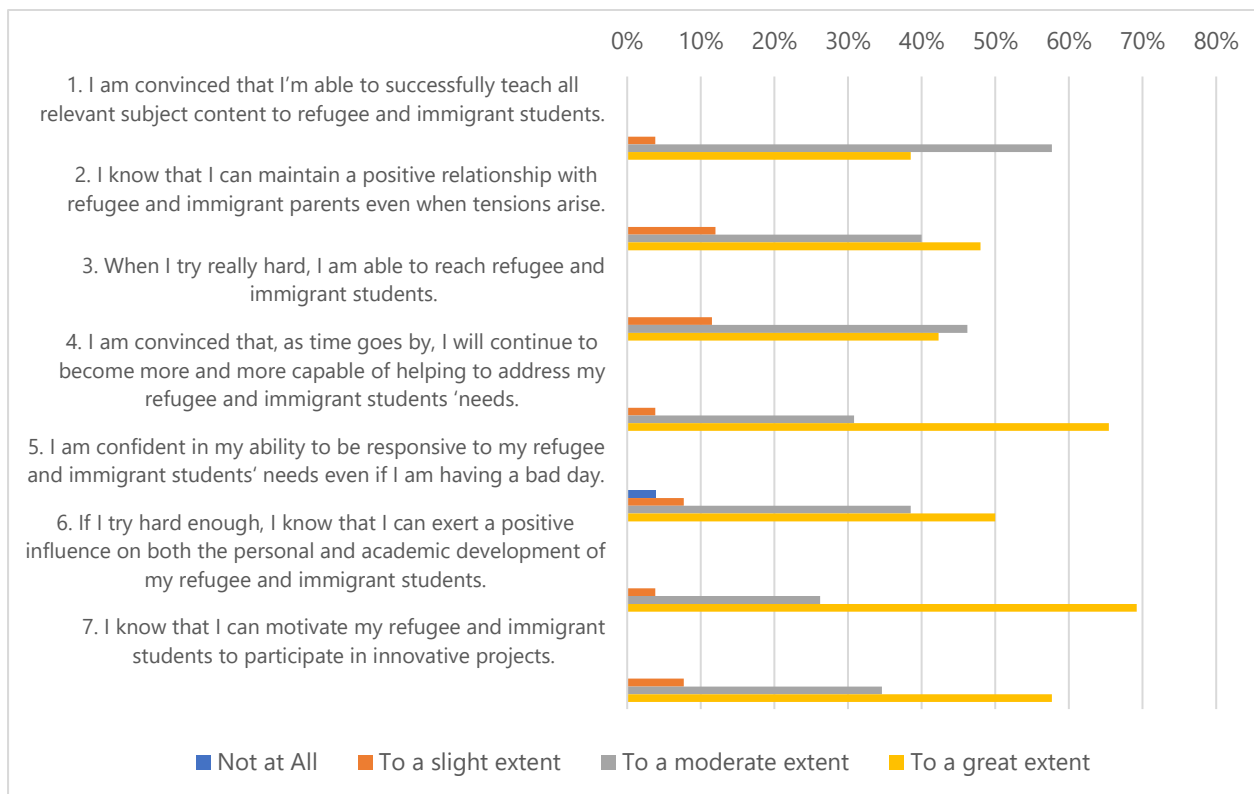


Chart no.1 Self-efficacy

The gathered data represents that only 38 % of Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study are well prepared while 57,7 % of teachers are moderately able to successfully teach all relevant subject content to refugee and immigrant students. 48 % of respondents can maintain a greatly positive and 40 % moderate relationship with refugee and immigrant parents even when tensions arise and 46,2 % of teachers are moderately able to reach refugee and immigrant students when they try really hard while 65,4 % of respondents are definitely convinced that, as time goes by, they will continue to become more and more capable of helping to address my refugee and immigrant students' needs. 50,0 % of teachers that took part in the research are greatly confident in their ability to be responsive to refugee and immigrant students' needs even having a bad day, while 38,5 % are only moderately confident in that. However even 69,2 % of teachers greatly believe that If they try hard enough, they know that they can exert a positive influence on both the personal and academic development of refugee and immigrant students and 57,7 % are confident that they can motivate refugee and immigrant students to participate in innovative projects although 34,6 % are only moderately confident in that.

Implementing Practices



When teachers implement practices that value different forms of migrant children’s lifespan, new teaching-learning models and new types of practices can emerge that enhance students' integration and equitable participation.

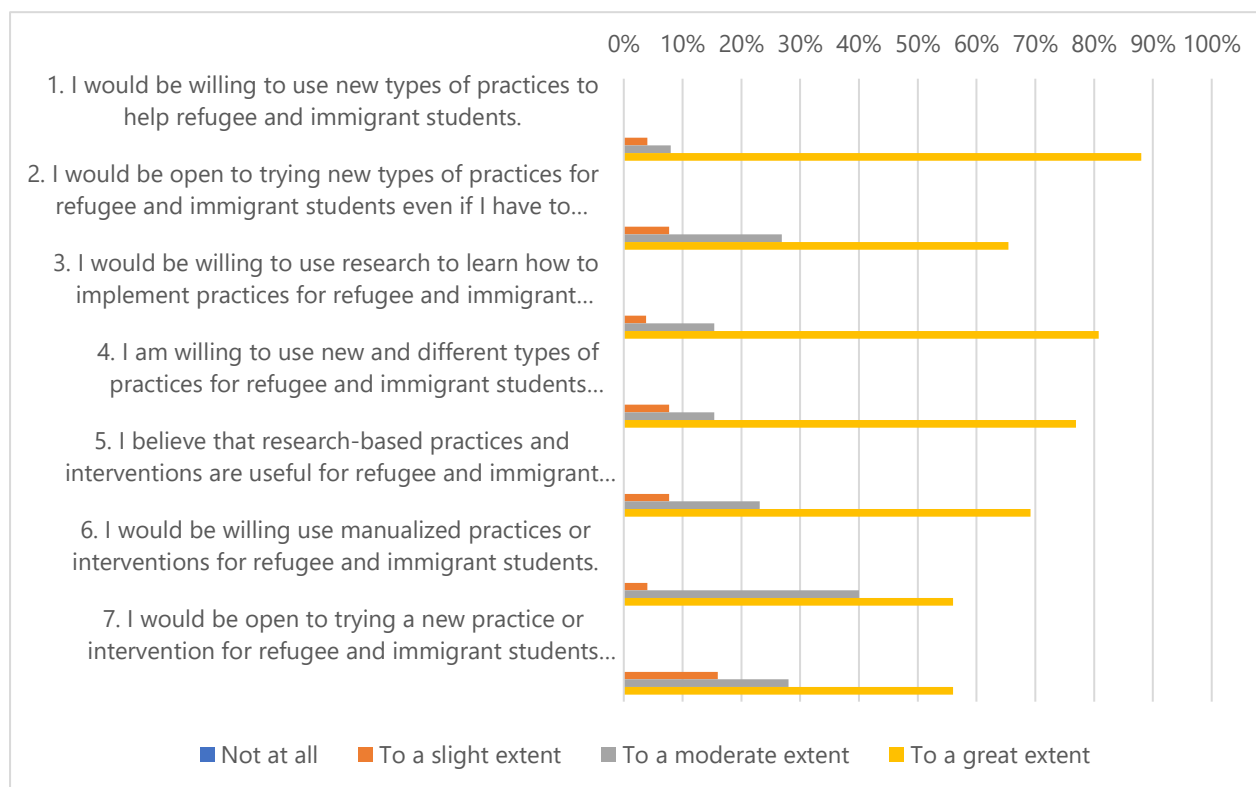


Chart no.2 Implementing Practices

Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study are very keen on learning new educational tools and practices: 88,0% of respondents would be willing to use new types of practices to help refugee and immigrant students, 65,4 % would be open to trying new types of practices for refugee and immigrant students even if I have to follow a treatment manual, 80,8 % would be willing to use research to learn how to implement practices for refugee and immigrant students, 76,9 % are willing to use new and different types of practices for refugee and immigrant students developed by researchers, 69,2 % believe that research-based practices and interventions are useful for refugee and immigrant students. 56 % of teachers would be willing to use manualized practices or interventions for refugee and immigrant students and would be open to trying a new practice or intervention for refugee and immigrant students even if it were different from what I am used to doing.

Cultural competency

Preparing teachers to use multicultural education principles is a dilemma facing many early childhood programs. While many have well intended behaviors, many lack the knowledge base of



multicultural education. Our study suggests that teachers working in culturally-diverse contexts would greatly benefit on collaborative creativity with their migrant students.

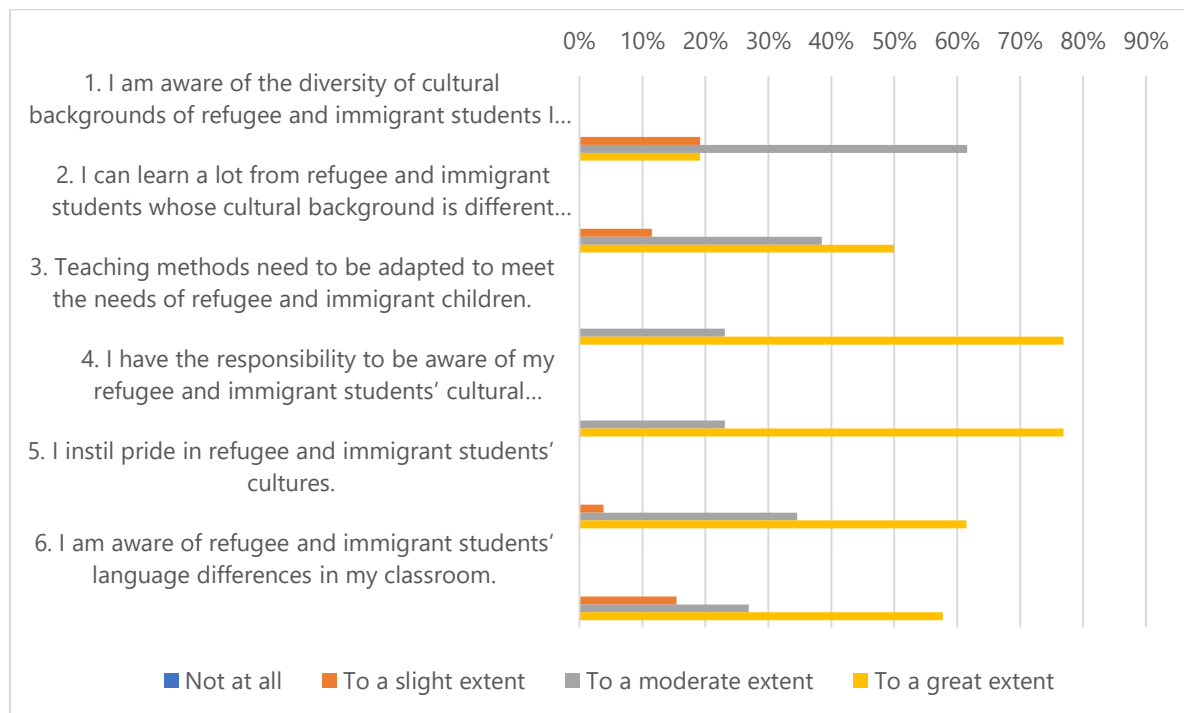


Chart No.3 Cultural competency

The gathered data represents that only 19 % of Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study are greatly aware of the diversity of cultural backgrounds of refugee and immigrant students they are working with while 61,6 % have moderate knowledge of the issue. However, 50 % of the teachers greatly believe they can learn a lot from refugee and immigrant students whose cultural background is different. Most of the respondents – 76,9 % agree that teaching methods need to be adapted to meet the needs of refugee and immigrant children and the same number believe that they have the responsibility to be aware of my refugee and immigrant students’ cultural backgrounds. 61,5 % work to great extent to instil pride in refugee and immigrant students’ cultures while 57,7 % are aware of refugee and immigrant students’ language differences in the classroom.

Competency/Preparation

All the respondents of the study conducted in Lithuanian stress the importance of teachers and other staff development related to their professional and personal growth. Many of the school professionals expressed a strong desire to establish respectable communication both: inside entire school community and outside organizations, such as universities and in-service training institutions, to increase teachers’ intercultural competence.

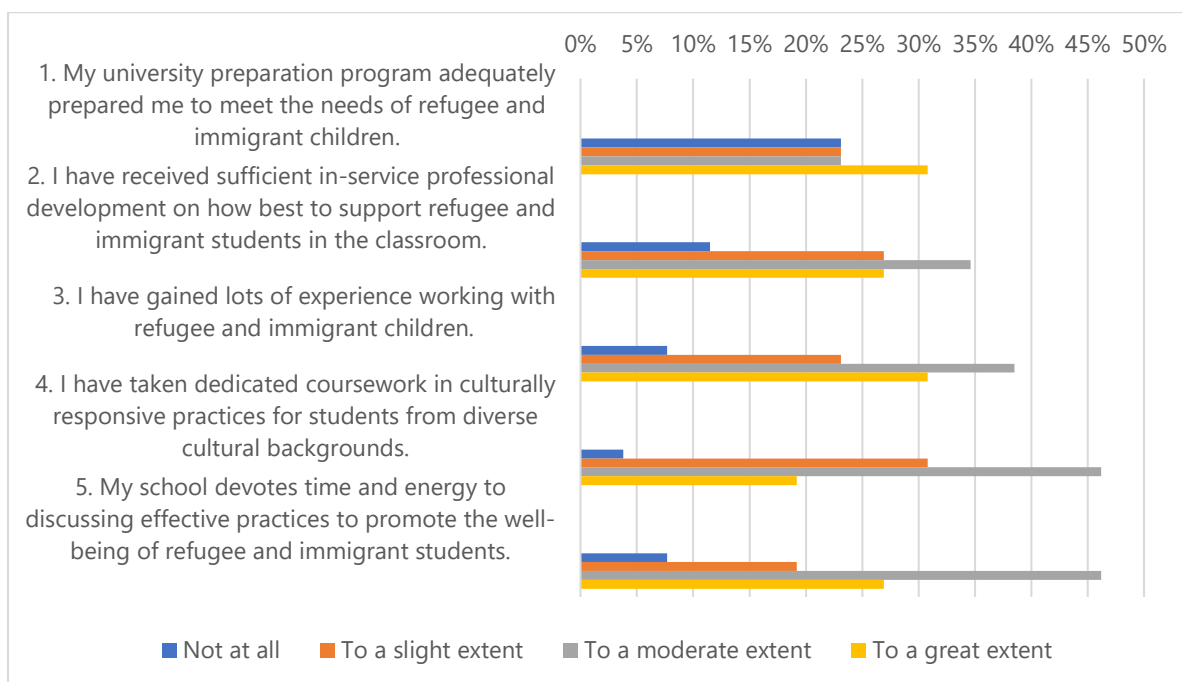


Chart No. 4 Competency/Preparation

Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study have different view if the university preparation program adequately prepared them to meet the needs of refugee and immigrant children: 23,1% believe it doesn't, 23,1 % believe it does to a slight extent, 23,1 % believe it does to a moderate extent while 30,8 % believe it does to a great extent. 34,6% have received moderately sufficient in-service professional development on how best to support refugee and immigrant students in the classroom, while 11,5 % didn't receive it at all. 26,9 % believe they received slightly and the same proportion believe they received greatly sufficient professional development. Teachers have diverse experience working with refugee and immigrant children: 30,8 % believe they gained great experience, 38,5 % moderate, 23,1% slight and 7,7 % didn't gain experience working with refugee and immigrant children. Only 19,2 % have greatly taken dedicated coursework in culturally responsive practices for students from diverse cultural backgrounds and only 26,9 % believe their school devotes time and energy to discussing effective practices to promote the well-being of refugee and immigrant students.

Student needs

The conducted study in Lithuania shows that Education Programs should be designed to meet the complex of social and educational needs of migrant children. Schools coping with increases in



enrollment of migrant children face significant challenges in addressing the migrant students' exceptional social, emotional and educational needs.

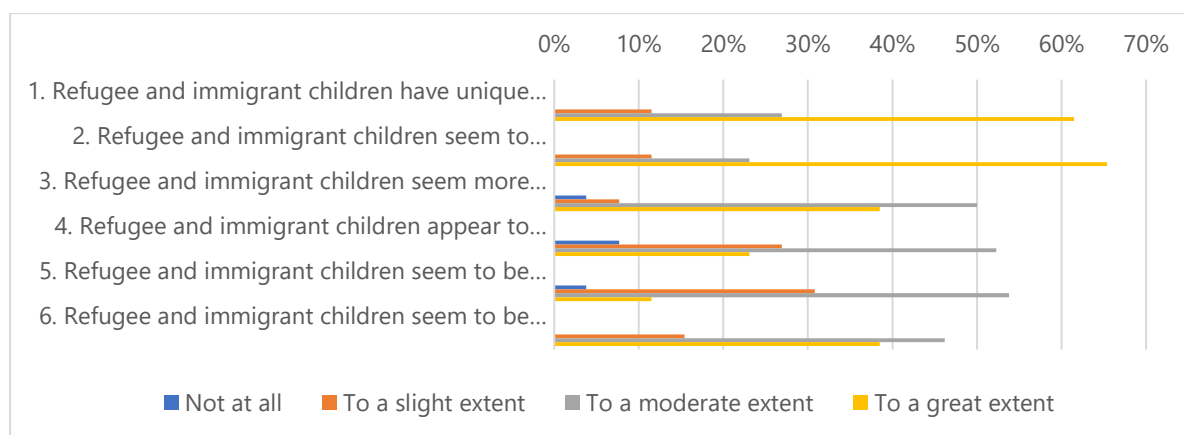


Chart No. 5 Student needs

61,5 % of Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study strongly believe that refugee and immigrant children have unique social and emotional needs compared to other students, 65,4 % strongly believe that refugee and immigrant children seem to experience more social problems than other students. Only 38,5 % believe that refugee and immigrant children seem greatly more anxious or nervous than other students while other believe the difference is moderate or slight. Only 23,1 % believe that refugee and immigrant children appear to have greatly more acting out behaviours than other students and only 11,5 % believe refugee and immigrant children seem to be greatly more depressed or sad than other students, while 53,8 % of respondents believe the depression or sadness level is moderate and 30,8 % believe is slight. 38,5 % believe refugee and immigrant children seem to be greatly and 46,2 % believe moderately negatively affected by traumatic experiences that have occurred in their lives compared to other students.

Demographic information

Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study represent the actual proportion of gender in educational background. Only 15 % of the respondents of the research were male as the education system is female dominant in the whole country.

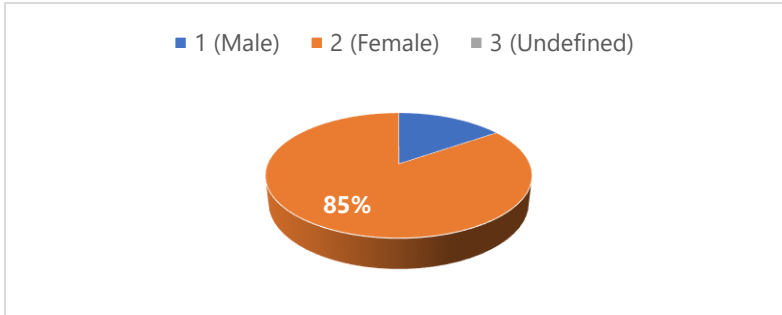


Chart No.6 Gender proportion of the respondents

85 % of Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study represent high schools while only 15 % work in elementary education institutions.

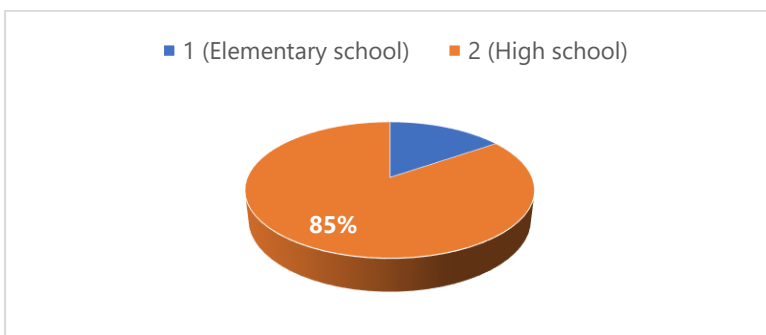


Chart No.7 Education level of the respondents

Most of the respondents have long term experience in the education and have been working as teachers from 2 to 11+ years. The largest part of the respondents - 36 % have been accumulated 11+ years of educational experience.

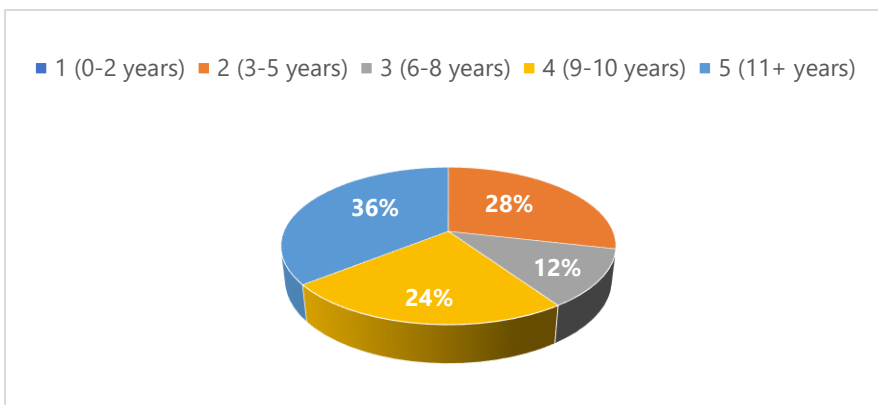


Chart No.8 Experience of the respondents

However, none of the Lithuanian teachers that took part in the study consider themselves as refugee or immigrant.



6 Conclusion

A review of the Lithuanian experience shows that with the increase of the number of returning and arriving children from abroad Lithuania makes its efforts to improve their integration into education process. Research studies have been carried out to identify migrant children education services needs on one side and the needs of schools to ensure successful integration of those children into school and society life on the other side. Successful and useful integration measures in schools have been also identified, developed and constantly expanding the network of schools which are ready to host migrant children. Through the activities of the projects the development of organizational models for the education of migrant children and recommendations for schools on how to successfully to integrate a foreign or returning student are being finalized.

However, in order to overcome the still frequent difficulties in the education and integration of migrant pupils, it is important to take into consideration the experience of other European countries, which have more experience working with such children as well as take comprehensive measures of promotion the integration at all levels of education management - national, local and school.

According to the teachers from different schools who participated in the focus group discussion the main obstacles that Lithuanian educational institutions are facing at the moment are Lithuanian language education and promotion (official language of Lithuania, language of instruction in schools), a lack of tolerance and competencies of educators

The teachers believe that joint efforts of school community, a cooperative environment within the school is determined to be one of the most successful methods to help the teachers in their work with migrant children.

Stakeholders were concerned that Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania does not provide a unified system according to which students returning from abroad or immigrants would be integrated. Therefore, each school decides independently how to integrate an arriving student. A successful student integration depends on the efforts and competencies of the school community. Persisting challenges in relation to migrant education, access to basic services and to the social inclusion of migrants demonstrate that additional actions should be taken by all parties – national and local authorities, teacher training institutions schools, and students, including their parents.

Some of the most important research keys:



1. Teachers lack knowledge of how to work with migrant students. They stress the importance of teachers and other staff competence development related to their professional and personal growth.
2. The children of immigrants and returnees from abroad face the following problems: language barrier, differences in programs and learning, integration into the school community, stereotypes against the immigrant's existence.
3. Teachers are very keen on learning new educational tools and practices to help refugee and immigrant students and are open to try new types methodologies and approaches.
4. Teaching strategies and methods should offer inclusive approaches for supporting the integration of migrant/refugee students and promoting the well-being of the whole school community.
5. To assure a successful integration the cooperation inside school communities - parents, teachers, students and school administration - becomes essential to support unique social and emotional migrant children needs.
6. The emphasis should be laid on the expansion of students' cognitive, emotional, and linguistic skills, intercultural communication social interactions in classroom and networking with the local community.
7. Further needs reported included didactic counselling, resources for supporting teaching, economic resources and school organisational issues.

The study identified some success and liabilities in migrant integration into educational community and potential root causes of difficulties in the complexity of teaching in an intercultural context suggesting a multidimensional approach for analysing educational issues.



7 Literature

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