



# SIRIUS WATCH 2018

## **Role of non-formal education in migrant children inclusion: links with schools**

Synthesis report

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**PPMi**

SIRIUS is co-funded by the  
European Union



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**Acknowledgements:**

The team responsible for drafting this report would like to thank all SIRIUS national partners for mapping non-formal education opportunities and their links with schools in their respective countries and producing country reports, which served as the basis for this synthesis. Special thanks to Salesiani per il Sociale (Italian national partner of DBI), who agreed to fill-in SIRIUS Watch questionnaire for Italy. We are also thankful to SIRIUS collaborative partners – Don Bosco International (DBI) and Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLP) – who contributed their time and expertise and provided assistance and advice during the research process. We also gratefully acknowledge the advice and useful comments from the policy workshop participants<sup>1</sup>, whose feedback helped to improve and finalise this report.

**About SIRIUS**

SIRIUS is the international Policy Network on Migrant Education, active since 2012 and co-funded by the European Commission. Its overall objective is to feed the best evidence and practice into the major education policy debates by analyzing and co-creating knowledge on the main challenges and policy approaches for inclusive education in Europe, mobilising mainstream migration and education stakeholders and building the capacity of migrant and grassroots education initiatives.

SIRIUS Watch serves as one of the Network's tools to achieve this objective and aims to monitor and support policy development and implementation at different governance levels in the field of inclusive education, with a particular focus on migrant and refugee learners.

<sup>1</sup>The policy workshop took place on the 20th of September in Brussels, Belgium. The workshop report is available at <http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/>

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Setting the context

Classrooms in Europe are becoming increasingly diverse, with more students having roots from different parts of the world and speaking a multitude of languages. According to PISA 2015, more than one in ten 15-year-olds in European schools are first and second-generation migrants – with first-generation migrants representing a share of 4.8% of the PISA student cohort, and second-generation (i.e. students who were born in the country of assessment with both parents being foreign-born) representing a share of 6.5% (European Commission, 2016). These shares are likely to increase further given large political, demographic and economic imbalances around the world, as well as ever growing threats posed by climate change.

Indeed, the increasing regular migration has been overshadowed by the mass inflows of asylum seekers in the last three years. Over the course of 2015 and 2016, 1.3 million people applied for asylum in an EU country (Eurostat, 2017). In 2017, this number accounted to 705,000 asylum seekers (Eurostat, 2018). More than 30% of all asylum requests in 2017 concerned children, many of whom were unaccompanied minors (UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM, 2017). Eurostat reports that 13% of asylum-seeking children in 2017 arrived alone, unaccompanied by a parent or a caretaker (Eurostat, 2018). The major destination countries for unaccompanied migrant children were Italy (31.9 per cent), followed by Germany (28.9 per cent), Greece (7.8 per cent), the United Kingdom (7 per cent), Austria (4.3 per cent), and Sweden (4.1 per cent). The figure below illustrates on how asylum applications of children younger than 18 years old were distributed across EU Member States over the last three years.

**Figure 1. Asylum applications of 0-18 years old in EU Member States in 2015-2017.**



Source: Eurostat (2018).

With such an unprecedented increase in the number of vulnerable children within Europe, frequently concentrated in specific countries and locations, it is vital that the legal and policy frameworks, as well as effective delivery systems, are in place to respond to their needs and support their inclusion. Education plays a key role in this process and the success of refugee and migrant children integration is, therefore, heavily dependent on how educational policy frameworks are designed and implemented (Tanzos & Köhler, 2018).

Schools and school communities have the potential not only to integrate a migrant child in mainstream education, but also to create welcoming structures and promote tolerance and respect for diversity in the school community through cooperation with other stakeholders (Köhler, 2017). Furthermore, it is argued that the success of a child in school depends on how the child can manage expectations raised by the family, the school and the peers. For migrant children, these expectations may be clashing due to linguistic or cultural differences between the family and the school. Therefore, there is a need to not only ensure child's access to mainstream education, but to bring the school and the



child's family and community together in order to enhance children's learning experiences, once they are already at school (Patricia Phelan et al., 1998).

However, despite several legal and policy provisions, access to and equal participation in both formal and non-formal education remains a challenge for many migrant and refugee children. As reported by FRA (2017) and multiple SIRIUS reviews in the recent years the common challenges to accessing education across all age groups include: long waiting periods (for asylum seeking children in particular), language barriers, lack of information on educational opportunities, bureaucracy and lack of flexibility in the school systems, uneven school preparedness to accommodate the needs of diverse children, unfavourable school climate and so on. Addressing these challenges, requires adapting existing education structures and finding innovative solutions to how our schools are functioning. Opening up schools to bring wider expertise, innovative teaching and learning methods, flexible approaches employed by non-formal education providers is more often seen as one of the tools to support education of the most vulnerable groups of children, but also enrich learning for all students. A close link between schools and their environment allows them to better adapt to specific local circumstances. It enables schools to strengthen their cooperation with local community and to offer more meaningful learning experiences for young people beyond school and formal learning structures.

## 1.2. SIRIUS Watch 2018

### 1.2.1. Focus and structure

Although little empirical evidence exists, studies into school – community cooperation have shown the extensive benefits of networks and partnerships of formal and non-formal learning for children. Involvement in non-formal learning through activities such as sports, volunteering and arts have shown to build a child's self-worth, learning identity, creativity and active citizenship. Activities targeting disadvantaged youth, for example migrant children, have proven to be particularly valuable as they support the child to develop useful skills, gain necessary knowledge and build social networks in the host country (Budginaite et al, 2016). Non-governmental organisations have the advantage that they can often create a safe space to engage in social and political activities, especially for vulnerable groups such as migrants, due to their more flexible nature. Many NGOs and youth organisations have a great deal of expertise in addressing issues of non-violence and non-discrimination that go beyond the standard training that teachers and other school staff have and therefore, can serve as an additional support mechanism for teachers when dealing with diversity or teaching about diversity in the classroom (van Driel et al, 2017). Furthermore, the methods of non-formal and informal learning are also increasingly penetrating into formal education and schools frequently cooperate with youth and other civil society organisations for certain extracurricular activities, as well as activities that are part of the formal education plan.

**Cooperation between non-formal education actors and schools can therefore provide an extra dimension to traditional education practices** and increase tolerance, openness, respect for diversity and understanding among children, as well as reinforce school efforts in addressing specific needs of vulnerable groups of children (Golubeva, 2018).

There is, however, little knowledge to date on what policy and system provisions are in place to encourage school collaboration with NGOs and youth organisations, and how national and local authorities can empower both schools and non-formal education actors to work together for inclusion and equity more systematically. SIRIUS Watch 2018 aims to contribute to addressing this knowledge gap and provide an exploratory overview of variety of approaches already practiced across Europe. The key focus questions for this review are outlined in the box below.

#### Box 1. Key focus questions

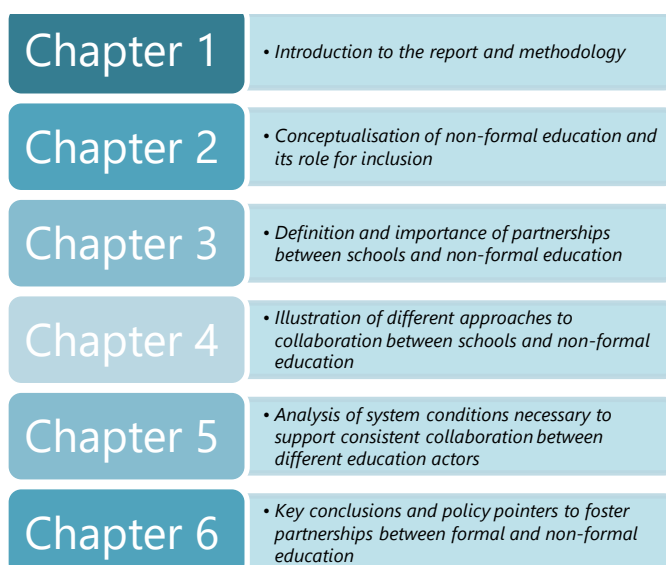
1. How can partnerships between formal education (primary and secondary schools) and non-formal education sector (e.g., NGOs, businesses, community organisations) facilitate inclusion of migrant and refugee children in education?
2. Are there any instances of collaboration between formal and non-formal education actors across Europe?
3. How national and local authorities can empower schools and non-formal education actors to work together for inclusion and equity more systematically?

This review in no way aims to suggest that non-formal education sector is the sole solution for the successful inclusion of migrant and refugee children into European societies and take off responsibility from formal education systems to reform to better meet the needs of diverse learner populations. It rather seeks to map how synergies between formal and non-formal education sector can be explored further to

capitalize on the strengths and know-how of both, and how such collaboration can be enhanced with the support of policy-makers at the national, regional and local levels.

In the attempt to answer the key questions outlined above, this report firstly looks at the development of education discourse around non-formal education and the way it came into prominence, as well as what existing evidence tells us regarding the role of non-formal learning in facilitating migrant and refugee children inclusion (Chapter 2). The Chapter 3 of this report conceptualizes the notion of partnerships between formal and non-formal education actors and explores how such partnerships can work better for improving children's learning experiences. The Chapter 4 illustrates how synergies between schools and non-formal education actors can be facilitated and provides insights into a range of examples of various projects and programmes targeting the whole school community, initiated by educational authorities, CSOs or schools themselves across selected countries in Europe. The Chapter 5 provides initial analysis on how these inspirational examples can be mainstreamed and looks at the broader system conditions that could improve schools' and non-formal education actors' capacity to innovate and seek synergies in their work more systematically. The report is concluded with the summary of key findings and possible policy directions for education authorities in order to create more favourable environment for partnerships between different stakeholders to thrive and bring larger impacts for learners, migrant and refugee pupils in particular (Chapter 6).

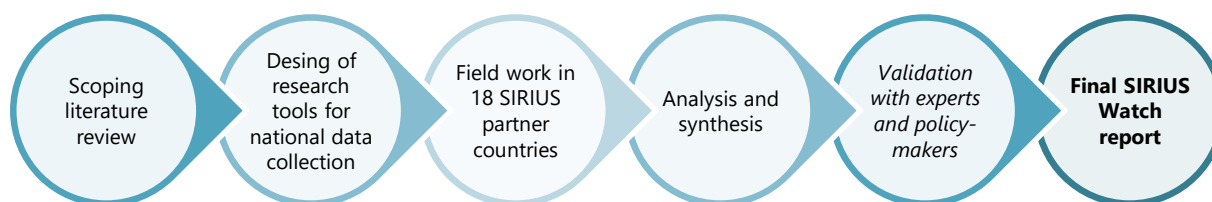
**Figure 2. Structure of SIRIUS Watch 2018**



### 1.2.2. Methods and scope

The data collected and analysed in this report were based on the review of research evidence available to date, as well as on contributions of SIRIUS national partners to a SIRIUS Watch questionnaire, developed based on the initial scoping literature review. In each of the 17 EU Member States covered by this report<sup>2</sup>, researchers and experts from SIRIUS partner countries carried out desk-based research and interviews with relevant stakeholders to respond to the questionnaires on the links between formal and non-formal education sectors to better address migrant children education needs. The figure below outlines the sequence of research steps taken for the preparation of this report.

**Figure 3. Research process**



A descriptive analysis approach was used to synthesise the key issues and themes arising from the responses to the questionnaire; as well as other evidence and reports from national, regional and international organisations. The synthesis was further complemented by the results of SIRIUS National Round Tables (whenever the topic of the round table focused on non-formal education and its role in migrant children inclusion) and Peer Learning Activities, review of recent literature and policy developments at the EU and national level and research work on

<sup>2</sup> Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Germany (Bavaria), Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain (Catalonia), Sweden, UK (England with the focus on Leeds city). It should be acknowledged however, that the national reviews cannot be considered exhaustive, they rather aim to provide a picture on different arrangements that are practiced in various Member States at different levels. Some of the examples described in this report are the initiatives of particular regions or cities, rather than nationally mainstreamed practices.

the topic by SIRIUS partners. Furthermore, the draft findings were discussed during the policy workshop (Brussels, September 20, 2018) and further complemented with the inputs from the workshop participants.

Given the timeframe and scope of this analysis, the report aims to provide just **an initial overview and exploration** into how partnerships between formal and non-formal education actors can be facilitated to enhance learning experiences of migrant and refugee children. It, therefore, does not pretend to be an exhaustive review and **examples** indicated in this report **are just illustrations of possible directions** on how such collaboration can be organised, selectively referring either to the national, regional or local level. Given the exploratory nature of this report, there are also certain limitations to comparative analysis of policies between countries and regions covered by this report; however, the research team attempted to provide generalisations whenever it was possible.

Although **the study looked at both primary and (lower and upper) secondary education levels** and at a variety of innovative approaches schools and CSO implement depending on the age of their students, the ISCED<sup>3</sup> level did not stand out as an important factor when analysing key conditions supporting collaboration of different education stakeholders. Therefore, the analysis in this report does not distinguish between the levels of education, though that might be an interesting angle to look at in more in-depth future studies.

## Box 2. Note on key terms used in this report

The term **migrant children** include *"all foreign nationals below 18 years old who are forcibly displaced or migrate to another country, be it with their (extended) family, with a non-family member (separated children) or alone (unaccompanied children), whether or not seeking asylum"*.

**Formal education** – education that occurs in an organised and structured environment (such as in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to certification. Formal education programmes are thus recognised as such by the relevant national education authorities or equivalent authorities, e.g. any other institution in cooperation with the national or sub-national education authorities. For the purposes of this review we looked at the formal education provisions at the **primary and secondary education levels**.

**Non-formal education** - education that is institutionalized, intentional and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/or a complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals. It is often provided to guarantee the right of access to education for all. It caters for people of all ages but does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway-structure; it may be short in duration and/or low intensity. Non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal qualifications by the relevant national educational authorities or to no qualifications at all. For the purposes of this review, non-formal learning is understood as **extra-curricular activities provided in schools**, as well as **education opportunities available outside schools** and provided by NGOs, youth organisations, community actors, business sector in the area of arts, sports, volunteering, civic education, tolerance education, entrepreneurship education, etc.

**Partnerships between schools and non-formal education** actors for the purposes of this review refer to joint activities organised by schools and non-formal education actors (either as part of official school curricula (e.g., *physics lesson in the museum of natural science or school research project involving local community*) or extra-curricular activities provided in the school building (e.g., *school drama club after lessons*) or outside school (e.g., *volunteering in local community centres and recognition of competences gained during this experience in the students' individual learning plan used at school*) with the aim to enhance learning of specific groups of children (e.g. migrant and refugee children), bring it closer to the real-life context and provide well-rounded development for children and youth.

Source: European Commission (2017), *The protection of children in migration*, COM(2017) 211 final, Brussels; UNESCO UIS 2013 *Global*; Cedefop (2014), *Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 130 terms*. 2nd ed. Luxembourg: Publications Office, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> See further: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International\\_Standard\\_Classification\\_of\\_Education\\_\(ISCED\)](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED)).



## CHAPTER 2. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF INCLUSIVE LEARNING

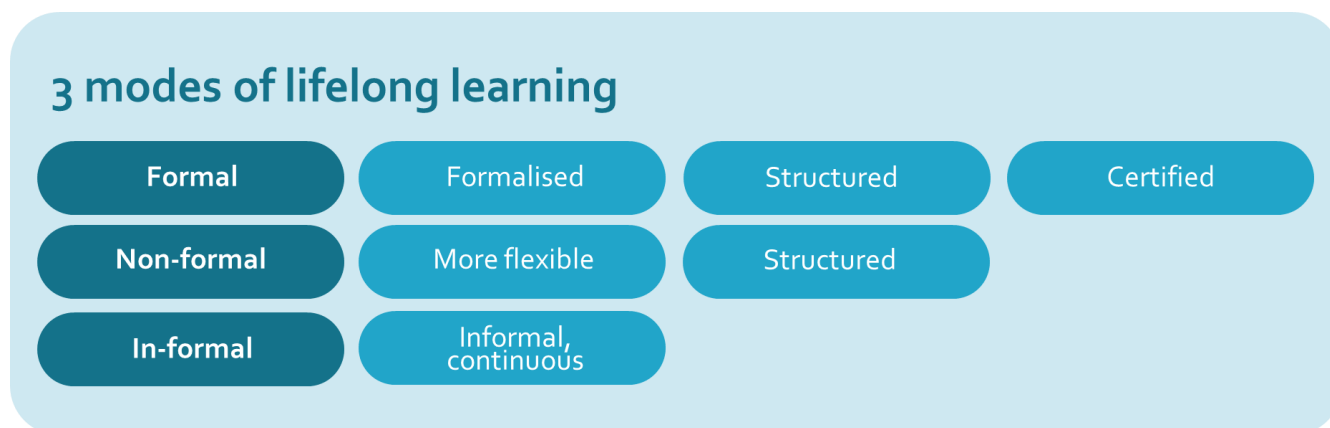
### 2.1. Non-formal education: concepts and definitions

The long-term evolution of Europe's education systems is being increasingly affected by several important external drivers such as the continent's demographic trends, the continued technological advancements, changes in Europe's social fabric, etc. Indeed, the fast changes caused by many factors such as **new technology and media, environmental crises and refugee situation, uncertainty and identity are transforming education** (Redecker et al, 2011). They have an impact on where we learn and how we learn, as well as what learning outcomes are needed to cope with challenges and situations faced in everyday life, at workplace and in society at large. All these developments have caused **learning contexts and spaces to widen, going beyond schools and formal education**. Learning can happen almost anywhere, anyplace, anytime. Consequently, there is an increasing role non-formal and informal learning plays in this context.

Non-formal education and informal learning have started gaining more prominence with the introduction of the **lifelong learning paradigm** in the late 90s and have been reinforced by the ratification of Lisbon strategy 2000 and later by ET 2010 and ET 2020 Strategy<sup>4</sup>. The interconnectedness of schools with their communities and other education actors and learning spaces continues to be part of the EU debates on education as an important approach to boost key competences for prosperous and inclusive societies. These discussions are also at the centre of the EU ambitious vision for European Education Area, as well as one of the key principles of the new measures introduced as part of the 'Future of Learning' package<sup>5</sup>.

Given their inter-linked nature, the distinction between informal, non-formal and formal education is a blurred one (Cedefop, 2014). Formal education has been traditionally seen as the state-run system, organized, following particular structure, and delivered by national authorities, certified and recognised as official. Non-formal education is typically in contrast with that definition, and encompasses any institutionalized, organized learning that is outside of the formal system (see figure below).

**Figure 4. Three modes of lifelong learning**



Source: Cedefop (2014).

While there is little doubt about the definition of formal education, non-formal education is a much broader and therefore less clearly defined concept. It may also **vary from country to country and fall under different jurisdictions and regulations**. However, in most of the cases non-formal education is acknowledged as an important part of national Lifelong Learning Strategies, though in some cases referring to educational opportunities for adults only (see examples of national discourses in Table 1 below). In many countries non-formal education may take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to people of all ages. It has less clearly defined curricula and does not always lead to certification, which gives it weaker social and financial position (Bois-Reymond, 2003). Non-formal education programmes are

<sup>4</sup> 2941th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting Brussels, 12 May 2009.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/107622.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/107622.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/future-learning-package-2018-jan-17\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/future-learning-package-2018-jan-17_en)

characterized by their variety, flexibility and ability to respond quickly to new educational needs of children. It may cover many learning fields, such as youth work, life skills, sport associations, voluntary service, training, etc.

**Table 1. Understanding and organisation of non-formal education in different countries**

<p><b>Croatia</b></p>	<p>According to the national Strategy of Education, Science and Technology non-formal education is an integral part of lifelong learning. Non-formal education is also defined with the Act on Education of adults as organised education processes aimed to improve employability, increase personal development and provide help in various social activities. Adult NFE activities are mostly funded through various projects. From policy point of view, non-formal education is described in the context of adult education.</p> <p>There is <b>no clear definition and approach towards non-formal education for school-age children</b> and how it can complement school curricula; therefore, its organisation and thematic focus varies from school to school. However, non-formal education for children is implemented either via school curricula, or children are involved in various non-formal educational programmes held by civil society organisations.</p>
<p><b>Estonia</b></p>	<p>In Estonia <b>non-formal education exists in the form of extra-curricular activities (or hobby education) within or outside schools, youth programmes, -projects and -organizations</b>. According to the Local Government Organisation Act non-formal education is the responsibility of local governments which means that municipalities (a) determine the priorities, (b) plan the work of youth programs in collaboration with the local youth council (if it exists) and (c) support youth organisations financially. However, the Ministry of Education and Research has its role as well – according to the Law on Youth Work the Ministry creates the national programs, supports the activities of the youth organizations financially, monitors the area of non-formal education to the extent allowed by the law and controls the use of the finances allocated from the state budget. The <b>national priorities in hobby education are (a) culture, (b) sports and (c) natural sciences and technology</b> (Koik, 2016). According to the Concept of the Support System of Youth Hobby Education every local government which would like to apply for the state funding in the field of youth hobby education, has to provide services at least in these three priority areas.</p>
<p><b>Finland</b></p>	<p>In Finland, non-formal and informal education is part of the national strategy for Life Long Guidance (LLG) and is an important part of regional education development plans. However, the organisation of non-formal education can vary across different regions and local LLG networks can include a variety of stakeholders: generally, members from all levels of education, trade unions as well as educational and employment authorities. Non-formal education for children can refer to extra-curricular activities within school, voluntary education programmes outside school, etc. <b>Finland's national curriculum obliges schools to part-take in out-of-school education</b> (Finnish National Board of Education, 2014), showing the support and formal appreciation for non-formal education on a national level. <b>In some areas it is implemented throughout the country in a coordinated approach</b>. For instance, non-formal education in the area of science and math is primarily provided by the LUMA Centre, which coordinates non-formal learning all over the country in collaboration with universities, businesses, schools and many other stakeholders.</p> <p>There is no official guidance though on how non-formal education at primary and secondary level is validated. However, many schools can apply informal practices on recognising children's skills and competences acquired outside of school.</p>
<p><b>France</b></p>	<p>In France, non-formal education is less institutionalized and is seen as parallel to formal education, which addresses the needs of people of all ages. This pathway does not lead to certification or diploma. Most often, <b>it is provided by popular movements and associations for education. The status of non-formal education centres can be diverse: private associations, state or municipal associations</b>, the league for education ("ligue de l'enseignement") being among them.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education is, however, regulating a few non-formal education plans in the secondary education: after school time - "devoirs faits" / homework support, "accompagnement éducatif"/educational support, "association sportive" (called "AS"): sports association; summer courses - " école ouverte"/ open school. The primary school level NFE (such as after school (until 16.30): "nouvelles activités périscolaires" (called « NAP »): new parischolar activities (arts, sports etc) is regulated by local authorities. These activities are usually funded by the state, if it is provided within school and through parental fees or NGO funding, if it is provided outside schools.</p>
<p><b>Germany</b></p>	<p>Generally, the Bundesländer have responsibility for regulating and administering education, science and culture. <b>Organisation of non-formal education is also decentralized</b>. However, <b>the Federal Government can support various non-formal and extracurricular pilot projects</b>. For instance, until 2025 it aims to implement all-day educational and care services for all pupils in primary-school age. The Federal Government aims to equip general educational and vocational training schools with the digital package in order to enable pupils to acquire the necessary digital competences. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research also supports and promotes non-formal science education, especially when it comes to science learning for sustainability (LernortLabor, 2016).</p> <p>One of the common forms of provision of non-formal education in collaboration with formal sector is the concept of "Offene Ganztageschulen" (<b>open all-day schools</b>), which is regulated at the Lander level. There is no validation system for non-formal education in Germany. Only in vocational training, it is possible to receive recognition for qualifications that were acquired in 'other ways' than through the</p>

	<p>respective vocational training. However, mostly the respective regulations only concern cases where qualifications were acquired in other formal contexts and have already been legitimized through examination and certification. Aside from the external examination there are various procedures in order to make non-formal and informally acquired competences visible like Kompetenzpässe (competence certificates), etc. However, these procedures are not consistent and can vary across regions. While there is a large variety of validation methods for non-formal and informal competences, hardly any of them is fully recognized. A legal framework is missing that creates orientation, transparency, and reliability (Gaylor, 2015).</p>
<b>Greece</b>	<p>In Greece, <b>non-formal education sector mostly refers to adult education</b>. General legal framework, the programmes, the coordination between sectors of non-formal education etc., fall under the responsibility of the Directorate for Life Long Learning. <b>Non-formal education for pupils</b>, although encouraged by the state and the Ministry, <b>mainly relies on actions and initiatives by non-governmental organizations</b>, following approval by the Ministry or regional authorities and directorates of Education. Currently, Institute of Educational Policy is administering platform through which every NGO could submit its educational programme for the IEP to evaluate its pedagogical relevance. Based on IEP evaluation, the Ministry of Education then approves or declines the NGO proposal. An important precondition for this approval is that the non-formal curriculum which the NGO submits does not overlap with the curriculum of formal education.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>There are <b>two main strands of non-formal education</b> in Ireland: <b>community education, aimed at adults</b> with no (or low levels of) formal qualifications, of which some provision is funded by Solas, the national training agency; and <b>youth work services</b>, which are regulated by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) who also fund some programmes directed towards young people living in disadvantaged areas and/or at risk of drug use. However, while covering young people of secondary school age, youth work services are largely parallel to, rather than in cooperation with, formal education provision.</p> <p>There are also a number of NGOs, which provide NFE activities for vulnerable groups of children, including migrants and refugees. However, these activities are not defined or linked to school curricula. Funding relies on a variety of sources and is very uncertain.</p>
<b>Italy</b>	<p>In Italy, non-formal education falls under Lifelong Learning Strategy and mostly refers to <b>adult education opportunities provided by a variety of associations and educational centres</b>. The national law promotes and helps establishing regional networks for lifelong learning that help adults to build their own formal, non-formal and informal learning paths.</p> <p>When it comes to the school level, the national discourse mostly covers the adoption of non-formal education methods in schools to modernise education to meet the demands of the 21st century. There are various NGOs and CSOs providing NFE activities; however, they are not regulated nationally and can cover a variety of themes.</p>
<b>Lithuania</b>	<p>According to the Lithuanian Education Law (1991), non-formal education programmes for children are divided into 1) <b>extra-curricular activities</b>, 2) <b>education programmes</b> (supplementing formal education) provided in <b>arts, music, and sport schools</b>, and 3) <b>educative programmes provided in camps</b>. These programmes are funded by non-formal education vouchers. Each student has 15 EUR/month for participation in programmes accredited by their municipality administration; which transfers money to a certain provider.</p> <p>In order to improve the system of non-formal education, create a new funding model and promote the development of this type of education, the <b>Concept of Non-formal Education of Children</b> was revised in 2012 (the original Concept was first adopted in 2005). The main institutions responsible for non-formal education are the Ministry of Education and Science and the municipalities. The Ministry sets strategic objectives in the field of non-formal education and organises, coordinates and controls its implementation. Municipalities organise this education in their territories: they manage non-formal education funds, form networks of providers, fund art, sport and music schools, supervise them and ensure quality (Concept of Non-formal Education, 2012). The key problems of non-formal education in Lithuania pointed out by the stakeholders are a lack of effective organisation, quality assurance, accessibility and funding.</p>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<p>In the Netherlands, <b>formal and non-formal education is decentralized</b>, and therefore, differs from municipality to municipality. There are municipalities which creatively link their regional non-formal education organizations to the official local educational plan. These municipalities try to prevent the isolation of certain target groups, such as the elderly, benefit recipients, illiterates and immigrant women, through an integrated approach. However, in many municipalities there is no consistent approach towards NFE.</p> <p>Generally, <b>NFE can take place both in school</b> (purchased from e.g. cultural welfare, cultural and sports institutions) <b>and outside schools</b> - in community centres, sports clubs, etc. Many schools, however, follow a broad concept of school hours, which means that the school is open from 7 am until 7 pm. This is to provide extra-curricular activities on school grounds for all children and the municipality usually subsidises these activities. The most popular focus of such activities are citizenship education and sports.</p>
<b>Norway</b>	<p>The <b>Ministry of Education and Integration and Ministry of Justice and Public Security share the responsibility for non-formal education in Norway</b>. Bringing the principles of equity and inclusion into education policy also requires engaging other sectors, such as health and social welfare (Ministry of Health and Care Service), and child protection services (Ministry of Children and Equality). Albeit programmes/initiatives/strategies on informal/non-formal learning (often signified as volunteer activities in organizational work) are</p>

	<p>appreciated and recognized, there are relatively few arrangements of formal recognition that makes these directly transferrable/applicable to formal education and training. The national core curriculum is highly decentralized. The subject curricula include competence aims for the pupils after certain grades. These aims are quite broad, and each school further develops and operationalises the aims. Through the local curricula work, each school are free to choose content and methods. Although there is not a recommendation on the national or regional level on how many hours schools should devote to various non-formal and extracurricular activities, there is a huge potential to include and develop non-formal education both inside and outside school. All school activities, covering NFE, are funded by the state budget.</p>
<p><b>Poland</b></p>	<p><b>Non-formal education is considered an essential part of life-long learning</b> in Poland and the Integrated Qualifications System introduced in 2016 and is viewed as an equally important subsystem of education. Non-formal education and training being a part of LLL policy is dealt with by the Cross-sectoral Group for Lifelong Learning and Integrated Qualification System chaired by the Minister of National Education.</p> <p>Non-formal education and training in Poland is provided by a variety of public, non-governmental and commercial entities. Depending on their legal status, their activities are being regulated and supervised either by the local government or a respective ministry. Since mid-1990s the role of non-formal education providers in supporting schools in both their educational and social activities is accepted and promoted. <b>This is partly evident in the standards for school evaluation which points to the purposefulness of cooperation between schools and other local community actors.</b> Out of school activities (such as lectures and activities in museums, guided tours, educational trips) seem more popular than in-school activities (Hernik et al. 2012). However, it is common for school heads to invite NGO's to hold trainings in school both directed at students as well as teaching staff. Non-formal educational activities can be funded from a variety of sources: local educational authorities' own funds, public and private grant programmes, parental board funds, sponsoring. The thematic range of non-formal educational opportunities for primary and secondary school students is not regulated and remains very wide. Activities in the fields of civic education, sports and arts, safety and health care, as well as environment protection seem to be among the most popular ones (Hernik et al. 2012).</p>
<p><b>Portugal</b></p>	<p>In Portugal <b>non-formal education can be regulated by different ministries and public institutions, depending on the type of activities provided.</b> For instance, it is defined in the Mission of the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth and in the Basic Law of the Portuguese Education System. As in many other countries it is considered an important part of Lifelong Learning.</p> <p>There are a range of different types of institutions carrying out non-formal activities in Portugal. NFE can be provided by non-for-profit organisations, funded by state and private sector, usually functioning at the local or regional level. Some activities are also provided by private companies, specially study support, sports and arts activities.</p> <p>At a national level and with regards to non-formal education in schools, the Portuguese Ministry of Education funds extra-curriculum activities (AECs) which can be managed by the schools, the municipalities, parents' associations or non-governmental organizations. These activities happen inside the schools, are not compulsory and are offered to all the primary school children. Activities can be from 3 to 7 hours a week and are an important resource for the families. Public schools can offer other non-formal activities in partnership with other organisations, however it doesn't happen often and depends on each school board to decide to do so. For older children and for young people, the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth, supports and funds youth activities and youth associations in topics such as <b>Citizenship, Sports, Civic Participation, Culture, Technology and Interculturality.</b></p>
<p><b>Slovenia</b></p>	<p>The organization of non-formal education activities in the elementary and upper secondary school settings is regulated and financed by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, but schools are autonomous in defining the content and number of non-formal education activities (in the school annual working plan). In <b>elementary school, a non-formal education refers to the interest activities as a part of extended school program</b> in which pupils participate voluntarily. At the level of <b>upper secondary school, the curriculum defines the interest activities as mandatory part</b> of vocational and professional schools. The curriculum for <b>gymnasium prescribes the non-formal education as compulsory optional contents of the gymnasium program</b>, which should be implemented in the scope of 300 hours in four years (per student). Also, the compulsory optional contents are divided in three parts: 1) compulsory for all students (citizenship culture, librarian and informational knowledge, culture and arts, sport day, health education, education for peace and non-violence; at least 15 hours per each content, in sum 110 hours), 2) contents related to the type of gymnasium (musical, artistic, technical contents), and 3) free optional content (e.g. logic, cross-curricular excursions or camps, research projects, voluntary social work, sport training, participation in art and culture associations or scout organization, theatre/musical/film subscription). The compulsory contents are mostly teacher led, while the free optional contents could also be led by the external organisations.</p> <p>On the other hand, the non-governmental sector, which provides most of the non-formal education activities for children in Slovenia, is organized according to the private organizational legislation and is regulated by the Slovenian Ministry of Public Administration.</p>
<p><b>Spain</b></p>	<p>In Spain, the term <b>non-formal education is often used in the discourse on lifelong learning.</b> Education policy is decentralised and regulated by each autonomous community. In Catalonia, all educational activities organised outside school (such as youth camps, volunteering, summer courses, sport activities) are regulated by the <b>Department of Work, Social Affairs and Families.</b></p>



Sweden	<p><b>Non-formal education programs and projects are mainly provided through organisations and groups in civil society such as youth organizations, humanitarian organizations and social enterprises.</b> It can also be provided through schools, organizations or services set up to complement formal systems for example, courses in art, music or sports or private lessons to prepare pupils for their examinations. The <b>curriculum for the compulsory school system</b>, the pre-school class and the recreation centre (Läroplan för grundskola, förskoleklassen och fritidshem; Lgr 11, 2011), includes goals and guidelines for school work in primary and lower secondary education. It also contains many key formulas that <b>provide guidance for non-formal learning</b> and how education in schools should be designed to promote all pupils' development, learning and a lifelong desire to learn. According to the curriculum, pupils' assessment should be determined through the use of all available information about the student's knowledge including the one the pupils acquired in their spare time.</p> <p>Funding for non-formal learning projects and activities can be drawn from governmental school grants, project funding through the Swedish Agency for Youth and Society (SAYS), State Development Funds granted by SNAE and other types of governmental agencies and public funds. The purpose of the contributions is to give children and students better opportunities to learn and achieve the national goals.</p>
UK (England)	<p><b>The level and types of collaboration between formal and non-formal education in different schools vary greatly and depend on the capacity of the school to meet specific (curriculum-related or other) requirements, the offer of such services from formal educators locally and the ability of the school to meet the financial requirements of such collaboration.</b> Most non-formal, educational activities are fee-based. However, the UK government at the national level, LAs at the regional and local level collaborate with national organisations such as The British Council, and NGOs such as British Red Cross and The Refugee Council, and also a number of regional and local organisations to support vulnerable groups of children (e.g., migrants and refugees) in their educational participation and attainments. Sports and arts, cultural events and language facilitation classes are the main thematic focus areas.</p>

Source: SIRIUS Watch national reviews (2018).

Initial exploration into non-formal education systems in selected Member States conducted by SIRIUS national partners demonstrate that **there is a variety of non-formal education activities in terms of thematic focus and their organisation offered in different countries** (conceptual summary is provided in Figure 5 below). The most widespread examples mentioned in the country reports referred to art and music education, sport activities, science and entrepreneurship, and youth work. It is observed from a number of national reports that **the arts and sports activities are often considered as a key bridge into societal participation and social inclusion** and are a frequent type of non-formal education offered across many countries.

**Figure 5. Examples of non-formal education activities in EU MS**



Source: SIRIUS Watch national reviews (2018).

One of the key differences one can observe between formal and non-formal education is that the latter is entirely based on the partnerships with local communities and civil society or other actors, **providing flexibility in content and delivery modalities to meet the local requirements of learners**, in circumstances where the formal education system is not yet able to do so. Therefore, in non-formal education not only the content is important, but also practical experience through an active learning environment.

Recognising the value of non-formal education methods for the 21<sup>st</sup> century education, there is a multitude of reforms going on in school education to incorporate elements of non-formal learning, such as individualised curricula approaches, self-regulated and experiential learning, project work (Bois-Reymond, 2003).

However, despite this, **there seems to be no complete agreement among educators and authorities on the importance of non-formal education programmes per se** and whether strengthening this element of learning takes away from investment in improving the formal school system. In many countries non-formal education is recognised and appears in education policy discourse and existing regulatory frameworks as an important element



of adult learning, rather than a full-fledged part of school-aged children's learning. As a result, literature and advocacy groups highlight **a number of persisting challenges** that currently affect the effective delivery of non-formal education activities for children and their official recognition as part of children's holistic development for the need of the 21<sup>st</sup> century societies:

- **validation and effective assessment** of skills and competences acquired through out-of-school activities and their inclusion into children's learning portfolio;
- **definition of roles** of both education authorities and formal and non-formal educators in the provision and integration of non-formal education;
- **ensuring quality provision** of non-formal education and **monitoring of learning outcomes**, resulting from participating in non-formal education activities (United Nations, 2017; LLLP, 2018).

Nevertheless, our mapping suggests that there are many different settings and systems in which meaningful learning of children can be fostered. Education authorities are ultimately responsible for guaranteeing the right to education which includes both improving the formal system and strengthening the environment for a robust, quality non-formal system to better meet the specific learning needs of vulnerable children. Further sections demonstrate how non-formal learning can contribute to children's development and more specifically help enhance migrant children learning experiences.

## 2.2. Role of non-formal education in children's development

As children spend 85% of their active time outside of school, the impact of non-formal education on their development can be huge. However, this impact cannot be generalised, as it depends strongly on the type and design of activity children are involved in (Medrich, 1982).

As seen above, non-formal learning activities tend to focus on subjects and topics complementary to the usual school curriculum (such as media education, environmental education, peace education or entrepreneurial learning) and are often more practical (via sports clubs or voluntary work programmes). Depending on the type and thematic focus of non-formal education programmes, they can contribute to different aspects of children's development: ranging from strengthening academic skills to non-cognitive development (European Commission, 2015c).

### Cognitive development and learning motivation

The impact of non-formal education on the development of children has been researched from a variety of angles. One benefit of non-formal education lies in the role it can play in stimulating the child's interest in learning and motivation in going to school. Eshach (2007) in its research on the effects of non-formal and informal learning on the emotional and cognitive domains of children found that out-of-school activities, such as field trips to museums and science centres, can **create excitement, spark interest, and develop positive attitudes towards science** unlike traditional formal ways of learning. Non-formal education programmes can also help to overcome shortages in school science teaching caused by limited budgets, time constraints, or lack in infrastructure (Affeldt et al, 2017).

Furthermore, research has shown that increased interest in science corresponds to **increased performance** in science classes as children are more attentive and more actively participating. Eshach showed that students can **gain knowledge from field trips**, not only through the exhibition itself, but also through the discourse and interaction that takes place. Through dialogue on the experiences of children, they create knowledge together (Eshach, 2007).

Burlacu (2012) also found that non-formal education can impact the confidence of children by **boosting self-esteem, self-awareness and feeling of responsibility** among learners. It also impacts the child's creativity and motivation to learn. A different setting for education, such as a museum, can allow for the child to develop more creative approaches to learning and problem solving compared to the classroom environment. Non-formal education can also allow for more focus on arts and music to stimulate creativity (Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, 2016).

Findings of parents and teachers' survey conducted by Skirmantiene (2012) also indicated that children's participation in non-formal learning activities help develop such students' competences as self-sufficiency, self-confidence, responsibility and attentiveness. According to the survey respondents, such activities complement learning in school setting and ensure children's active engagement after school, helping them to positively socialize in a society and develop their personality more holistically.

### Development of social skills and civic competences

Some studies indicate the important role of non-formal education for positive socialisation of children, for example **promoting active citizenship, communication skills, peer-networking** (Skirmantiene, 2012; Burlacu, 2012). The social setting enables children to gain experiences and insights in social values and norms, since the interactions between children take place in an organized setting (for example

the sports club or youth centre) where the non-formal educators (coaches, counselors, etc.) can intervene (Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Ministry of Family and Integration, 2013).

Social and political participation are aspects of **active citizenship** that can also be strengthened through non-formal education. The Council Recommendations on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2018, p. 10) mention the importance of active citizenship for peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies. Although most schools involve civic engagement topics in their curricula, **NGO's and other organisations can often provide a more flexible and secure setting to discuss political topics**. Furthermore, they provide opportunities for volunteering which is a key manifestation of active citizenship (Golubeva, 2018). Volunteering allows youth to work and cooperate with others outside of disciplinary powers. It stimulates them to become independent and to develop their relationships and attitudes towards important elements of society such as multiculturalism, sexuality, violence, etc (European Commission, 2015c). Bežjak and Klemencic (2014) list several theories on the benefits of volunteering for active citizenship. It is argued that volunteering promotes civic values, political participation and improves democracy. People active in volunteering are for example more likely to vote and participate in political processes.

### Promoting inter-group contact

Non-formal education programmes can **play an important role in connecting people, integrating newcomers** and working on shared issues in the community together (Downes, 2012). Non-formal education institutions, such as sports clubs, can allow people from different layers of society to participate in a more interactive and casual setting compared to formal education, better integrating the element of socialisation (European Youth Portal, 2014). Non-formal education therefore has the ability to function as a meeting point for people from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds in segregated communities.

### Second chance education and transition to the labour market

Non-formal education can function as a support system for children dropping or potentially dropping out from school to enter the labour market faster. Non-formal education actors can ensure that these children gain experiences related to work and training, next to their formal education (Du Bois-Remond 2003). According to some employers, high school students do not always have a good sense of the labour market and of the skills that are required for certain jobs. Non-formal education through voluntary work, practical experiences and internships **can provide this link between formal education and the labour market** (Hoitink, 2008).

Furthermore, non-formal education can function as a bridge or additional step back to formal education. A student may have prior negative experiences with schools and the emphasis on academic achievement can negatively influence a child's self-esteem. Non-formal education has different options to recognise achievements of children and is therefore sometimes can better build self-esteem and positive identity of children. For example, it does not involve formal assessments to the same extent as schools and can therefore acknowledge other learners' successes than merely academic achievements (Downes, 2010).

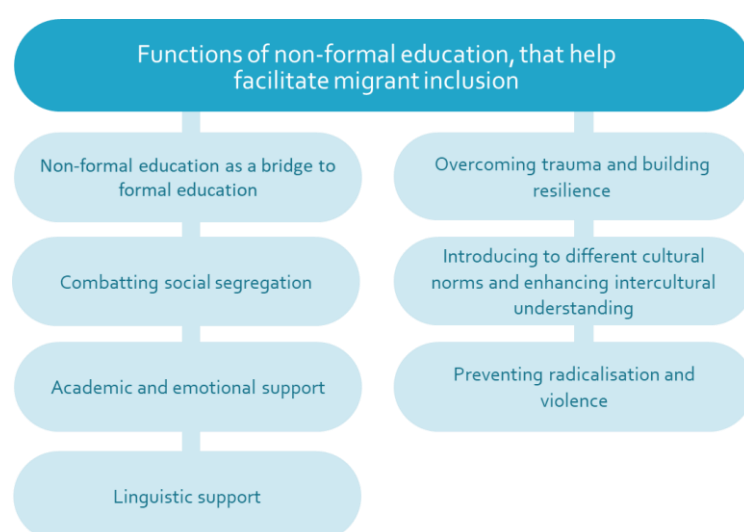
## 2.3. Complementary role of non-formal learning in facilitating migrant and refugee children's inclusion in education

Besides offering diverse learning and development opportunities for all children, non-formal education can be particularly beneficial for migrant children facilitating their integration in mainstream education. These children are often overrepresented among socio-economically disadvantaged groups and face additional barriers when it comes to enrolment in school, regular school attendance, academic achievements, drop-out rates and types of school diploma obtained. Schools alone often have difficulties in dealing effectively with the challenges faced by migrant children both in school and at home. Therefore, the involvement of non-formal education actors can provide opportunities for these children to integrate and better perform in school by offering more nuanced and situated learning (Malcolm et al, 2003; Heckmann, 2008). Despite this assumption, some data shows that the participation of refugee children in non-formal education activities outside school, such as sports, is significantly lower than among their native peers. Interestingly, when such activities are organised within school premises and as part of the school curriculum, migrant and refugee children tend to participate in those more actively (Spieß, 2016). Some of the support activities that NFE actors can provide for children with migrant background are described below and summarised in the Figure 6.

### Non-formal education as a bridge to formal education

Due to linguistic, as well as psychological barriers, many migrant children are not able to directly enrol in mainstream education. NGO's and other non-formal education programmes can be used as a transition tool to **reintegrate children into the formal education system**. Such opportunities are often provided directly in refugee camps, helping ensure continuity of learning for newly arriving children. As non-formal educators are not bound to national curricula and time-tables, they are often better able to adjust to the needs of individual children (Bislimi, 2017). These activities usually focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills, as well as socio-emotional development. For instance, non-formal education provided by the Norwegian Refugee Council for refugees in Lebanese refugee camps, aims to provide children with a sense of normalcy and protection through light education intervention (basic skills in reading and maths) combined with recreational and psycho-social activities, such as storytelling, sports and other games. The NRC also helps to establish pathways to certified formal education (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2017).

**Figure 6. Supporting migrant children inclusion through NFE**



Source: literature review.

facilitate transition to a formal setting and provide additional support while the child is already in school (Bislimi, 2017). However, a very few studies have been conducted on the impact of such introductory non-formal education opportunities on facilitating migrant children inclusion in classroom.

### Combatting social segregation

Non-formal education can help migrant or minority children engage in activities outside their ethnic community. Many schools in Europe are overpopulated with children coming from immigrant and disadvantaged social backgrounds. Also, there is concentration of educational disadvantages in particular localities within many regions and cities where cycles of disadvantage become entrenched, contributing to social segregation (Council of Europe, 2017). The participation of migrant children in informal activities and non-formal education **can help to promote better social inclusion**, because it provides migrant children with opportunities to create networks in the wider community, if non-formal education opportunities allow different groups of society to participate (Budginaite et al, 2016). According to the intergroup contact theory, "prejudices and hostility between members of different cultures can be reduced by bringing members of the groups into contact with each other, which needs to take place under appropriate conditions where they have a roughly equal status" (Maletic, 2016). As NGOs often have more focused expertise in religious differences and addressing issues of violence and discrimination, they can provide a **safe space for inter-group contact and interaction** and therefore, contribute to the **development of cultural understanding and tolerance** on both sides (Van Driel, 2016).

However, the mere attendance of school and mixing with peers does not yet provide for integration in the school community. Schools can actually reproduce the same segregation as visible in the surrounding community. Migrant children often do not feel like they belong at school or in the country as a whole. OECD statistics show the impact of this phenomenon on school achievements, as migrant children who feel they belong at school perform better than those who do not (OECD, 2015b).

### Academic and emotional support

Research by the OECD has indicated that participation in non-formal education through sports can contribute to better **performance of migrant children at school**. PISA results showed that migrant students involved in sports activities similar to those in their country of origin performed better in the PISA test than those whose sports in their country of origin are different from the sports in the host country. This is explained by the empirical evidence collected by OECD that immigrant students strongly benefit from sports if their sport in the country of origin is similar to the sports played in the host country. It allows them to participate quicker in such activities with native peers and therefore strengthens their integration. This, in turn, positively affects their academic achievements (OECD, 2018b).

Though non-formal education can seem as an easy and flexible solution for newly arriving children, it should not be seen as a replacement for school. It is rather a way to

The involvement of mentors and role models from the same ethnic background can also support migrant children and their families **to integrate better and understand the school system in their host country**. Often mentors are older immigrant peers who have successfully completed education in the host country themselves and are therefore able to guide the children in terms of individual homework support, but also in relation to family matters that teachers may not be able to relate to or understand. In the Netherlands, for example, there are many individuals and organisations taking part in these mentoring activities (Heckmann, 2008). Research from schools in Australia has shown that the involvement of migrant community organisations and ethnic communities themselves led to more **successful engagement** with migrant children and their families **in education** (Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2015).

An example of **academic support** provided through mentoring can be found in the Junge Vorbilder project in Hamburg, Germany. At the end of lower secondary education, most migrant children are tracked to vocational school. The project aims to give extra mentoring and academic support to these children who have the ambition to go to upper secondary education and pursue higher education. All mentors are immigrants themselves who attended higher education. Typically, the success and effectiveness of mentoring projects rely on efficient collaboration with schools (Alici, 2017).

### Linguistic support

Knowledge of the host country's language is often considered as a proxy for integration. To achieve academic proficiency in the host country's language, **continuous language support** is needed aside from preparatory classes and social conversations (De Sutter, 2018). In several EU countries, no additional language support (apart from 2 years of initial support on average) in school is provided, but NGOs can fulfil the role of tutoring. This allows children to participate fully in mainstream education, while receiving individual support and guidance in learning the new language (Köhler, 2017). For instance, in France, an NGO called the Boutique works with people from different ages to learn French as a second language. For children, the activities include singing, story-telling, rhyming and other creative approaches to reading and writing other than formal language education (Auger, 2018).

On the other hand, NGO's and non-formal educators **can play a role in preserving the cultural heritage and supporting the learning of migrant children's mother tongue languages**. As schools and formal education are often focused on the culture and language of the host country, the child may therefore feel that its native culture is less valued in its current environment. Furthermore, studies have shown that children who learn the language and culture of their native country as well as the language and culture of their host country contribute better to society than those who only focus on attaining the host country's language and cultural orientation (Maletic, 2016). The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education highlighted in 2017 the potential for non-formal education to teach minority languages and cultures outside school hours to support the cultural values of minorities (United Nations, 2017).

### Overcoming trauma and building resilience

Additional complicating factors, such as traumatic experiences, play a prominent role in shaping migrant (especially refugee) children's learning and integration process (Le Pichon-Vortsman, 2016). Schools are often not equipped with the necessary expertise and professionals to support these children overcome emotional and psychological challenges that prevent their successful learning and functioning in the host society. NGOs and additional support services can step in and offer necessary support. For instance, sports activities and mindfulness activities such as yoga support children from conflict areas to **process their traumas and stress and build self-confidence** (Cardarelli, 2017). Furthermore, NGO's can develop tailored programmes for children who have experienced traumatic situations and help them overcome the psychological consequences as well as teach necessary life skills to prepare for formal enrolment (Maldonado, 2017).

Research has also shown the **importance of arts and culture for the integration of migrants and refugees as a useful tool to express feelings and emotions** related to the experience of migrating and the experiences with integration and inclusion in the host society (McGregor, 2016). A project in a Greek refugee camp, for example, worked with refugee children through art, drama and photography and involved psychologists to grasp the value of their work as expression of emotions. This artwork as expression of trauma then supported project staff members to better understand the needs of the children, particularly in terms of curriculum (Delaney, 2017).

Participating in non-formal education activities also contributes to **building self-confidence and resilience in children**, which is particularly relevant for disadvantaged children and children at risk (Downes, 2017). PISA 2015 results demonstrate that available after-school activities can help develop migrant students' academic, social and emotional resilience; however, at the same time migrant children are much less likely to participate in such activities than native students (OECD, 2018b). It is argued that sports, for example, support the development of more than only athletic skills. Examples of projects in Portugal and Ireland show that football practice targets not only the football skills of the players, but also the personal, organisational, social and civic skills, for example aggression management (Sträter, 2012). Furthermore, sports are recently being used as tool for trauma processing in post-disaster settings as it helps participants build a routine in their lives and fosters



team spirit and mutual trust. The success of sports for this purpose strongly depends on the quality of the trainers involved and their ability to help the participants to develop these interpersonal skills listed above (Gschwend, 2008).

### **Familiarising with and understanding different cultural norms**

Non-formal education can play a crucial role in **familiarising children and parents with the social and cultural norms of the host society**. Sport clubs, for example, are able to reflect the culture and identity of the country (dress code, hierarchy, mixed-gender or single gender sports, values taught through sports such as democracy, respect etc.). On the one hand, sports can help pupils and their parents understand how their host country views matters such as male – female social contact, how people are supposed to interact with each other and how people deal with frustration and loss. This understanding helps them better communicate with and integrate in the host community. However, if the sport culture is dictated by the host culture only, it may also prevent migrant children from participating, especially if the accepted rules are in conflict with migrant child's cultural norms and traditions. For instance, lack of fully covering sports clothing could exclude Muslim girls from playing (Hertting, 2013). Therefore, sports clubs need to adjust as well to accommodate for other cultures.

Interestingly, in almost all countries in Europe the happiness of migrant children at school is higher among those who participate in the host country's national holidays compared to those who do not. This supports the conclusion of the OECD that mixed classes per se or mixed societies do not yet guarantee inclusion of the migrant student and understanding of his/her background (and therefore feeling welcome and accepted at school). Discussions and exchanges of culture and understanding of the host community's culture by the immigrant child have the potential to contribute to a better integration in school (OECD, 2015b).

### **Preventing radicalisation and violence**

Recent studies have shown that there is an increase in social exclusion and intolerance in the EU Member States, which causes some migrant groups to feel alienated and unwelcome, leading to unrest, extremism and/or violence (Van Driel, 2016). Research by Kviestienė (2003) states that after school opportunities and appropriate social policy are the main factors influencing behavioural attitudes. Leisure time, during which children can direct their attention to chosen activities, helps to develop immunity to harmful habits like substance abuse, criminal behaviour, etc. The teacher-parent online survey also confirmed the importance of extra-curricular activities: 63% of teachers and 59,2% parents claimed that non-formal education contributes to crime prevention (Skirmantiene, 2012, p. 113). NGO's and youth organisations often have more expertise in the field of preventing violence and discrimination and can respond in a more ad hoc and flexible way to the needs of the community (Van Driel, 2016).

Non-formal education helps migrant youth to build positive relationships and provides an opportunity to send different, alternative messages about information spread by radical groups (UNESCO, 2017). An example is the Kreuzberg Initiative in Germany, which organises workshops (sometimes in schools), peer trainings and exchanges between Arab and Israeli youth to encourage them to develop their own views on political and religious matters and to prevent violence and extremism (European Commission, 2015b). 2016 EP Resolution and Paris Declaration highlight that participation in sports and volunteering activities are particularly important, as it develops civic, social and intercultural competences, teaches the spirit of teamwork and respect for diversity, lays foundations for constructive and peaceful dialogue among communities, and eventually combats social phenomena like violence, radicalism, racism, xenophobia, etc. (Informal meeting of EU Education Ministers, 2015; European Parliament, 2016).

This review indicates that non-formal education next to formal education has the potential to improve learning experiences, personal development and integration of migrant children. However, it has been highlighted that **non-formal education should not be seen as a substitute to formal education, but rather complement it, contributing to holistic development of learner**. Limited evidence indicates, however, that migrant children are still less likely to take part in non-formal activities, regardless of the findings on the importance of these activities for their development, often due to the lack of available services or financial resources, cultural biases, segregation and other reasons. In this light, it is crucial that education authorities guarantee the availability and affordability of good quality education both in formal and non-formal settings, making sure that they are inter-linked and provide continuity and completeness of children's development. The next chapter further defines the need for such links and highlights how collaboration between different learning spaces can be organised.



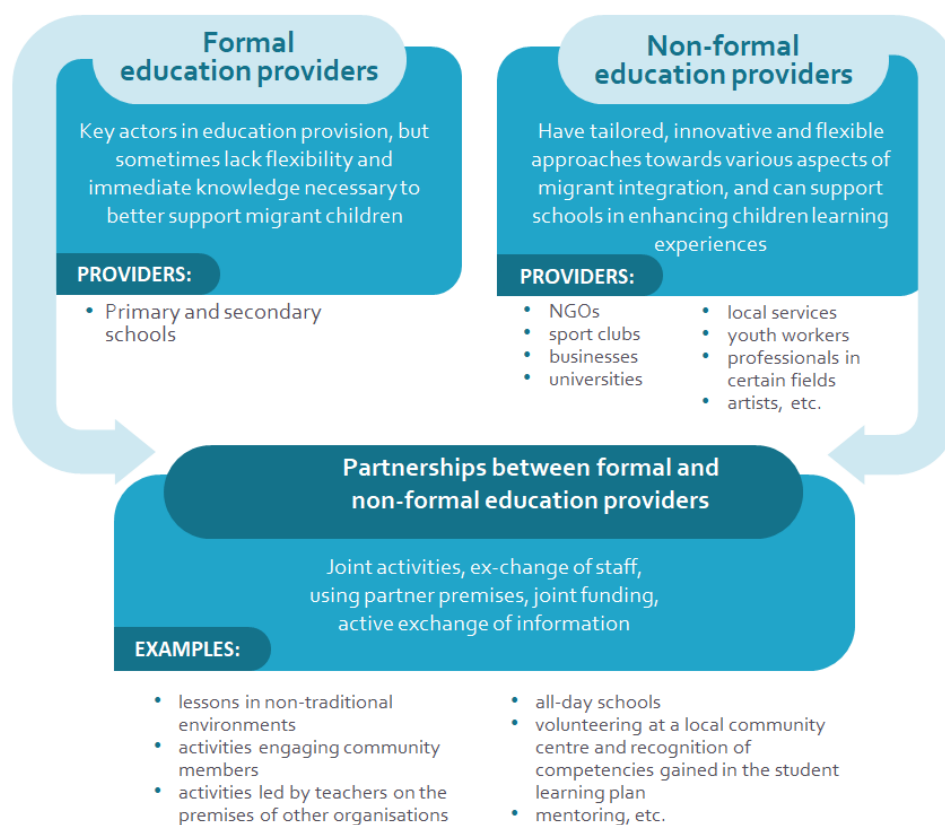
## CHAPTER 3. EVIDENCE FOR SYNERGIES

The previous chapter argued that non-formal education can serve as a tool to reintegrate migrant children into formal education systems, improve their performance at school, help them recover from trauma, promote social inclusion, etc. We assume that collaboration between formal and non-formal education actors can reinforce these positive effects. In this section we will further explain the terms we use, provide an overview of what kind of partnerships can exist based on research and policy evidence in selected Member States, and review the benefits of such collaboration documented in literature.

### 3.1. What do we mean by partnerships?

Collaboration between schools and non-formal education providers can take on a variety of forms. Analysis of country profiles prepared for this report and literature review shows that the key features of partnerships include joint activities or pooling resources, including exchange of staff, using partner premises, joint funding, etc. Examples of activities that illustrate partnerships between schools and community include lessons in non-traditional environments, activities led by teachers on the premises of other organisations, mentoring programmes involving outside actors, student volunteering in community centres and consequent recognition of competences gained in students' learning plans, community members holding workshops at school, joint projects involving school and community, etc (see the summary in the Figure 7 below). In this report we treat the terms **collaboration**, **partnership** and **synergies** as synonyms in the context of combining formal and non-formal education to ensure continuity and completeness of children's development.

**Figure 7. Concept of partnerships between schools and community actors**



Source: compiled by PPMI.

Siurala (2012) has distinguished three perspectives on how formal and non-formal learning can be related. Firstly, **non-formal learning can be seen as independent from formal learning**. This would mean that there is no need for cooperation since the two learning environments are independent of each other. Secondly, **non-formal learning can be seen as an alternative to formal learning**, perhaps concentrating more on the social skills, focusing on learner-centred activities which the formal system is too rigid to deal with effectively. Thirdly, **non-formal learning can be seen as complementary to formal learning** and using learned-centred and practice-based methods and reinforcing children's learning and skills being developed at school (Ibid.).

The third perspective seems to be more appropriate in the current context, when there are many learning opportunities available to children outside of school, which are also often more attractive and appealing to children. Therefore, to ensure continuity and completeness of children's learning – we need to have different areas and spaces of learning building on each other. This makes it important to talk about effective integration of the benefits of both and reconceptualizing in practice how these different forms of learning come together and how they respond to the needs of children.

In this case it is also important to acknowledge that **cooperation between formal and non-formal learning can affect and modify both parties**. Schools are expected to offer more experiential learning, activating children's preconceptions, experiences and knowledge, linking learners' background and demands set by the curricula. From the point of view of formal education this means informalisation. On the other hand, emphasis for recognition of learning in different spaces and complementing learner's portfolios may require non-formal education institutions to find the ways to certify gained skills, explain learning situations and prepare learners for skill demonstration, which from the point of view of non-formal learning can mean more formalisation (European Commission, 2015c). This integration process is, however, inevitable and the tasks of education authorities is to ensure how it can be the most beneficial for learners.

### 3.2. Why do synergies between schools and non-formal education matter?

Since the routines of children consist of school environment, after school activities and family life; it is important that the environments children participate in coordinate their efforts and **ensure continuity in the life of children** (Schreuder et al, 2011). The partnerships between teachers, non-formal education providers and parents could serve at least two purposes. First, exchanging information about a child helps stakeholders to know better what that child experiences in different settings and better respond to it (Schreuder et al, 2011: 247). Second, collaboration between schools and non-formal education providers could help coordinate the content of activities and ensure continuity of learning, as well as providing additional support when the child needs it. Educators claim that child development can be stimulated more effectively if children can pursue their interests at home, at school and in their structured free time simultaneously. This way, a child's activities and interests are inter-linked even though the child lives in several different environments (Schreuder et al, 2011: 237). Furthermore, such collaboration helps to **develop new methods of engaging** within the changing educational landscape and diverse student population, as well as **take into account the full scope of learning**, which is particularly important for migrant and refugee children who may have more difficulties opening up themselves and demonstrating their potential within formal school structures (European Commission, 2015c).

This way, the importance of community education through non-formal learning and youth work is recognised as a way **to engage marginalised students** (Downes et al, 2017: 64). It seems that partnerships between schools and their communities might be used **to overcome difficulties in promoting values and behavioural practices** that socio-economically disadvantaged children do not always have possibilities to learn at home. Children from lower socio-economic backgrounds risk not learning about the importance of setting goals, succeeding in education or having a job at home. In order to be able to function successfully in society, it is necessary to give young people the opportunity to develop various competences that would help them later in life (Hoitnink et al, 2008).

Various strategic policy documents attempting to conceptualise what a good school is show the shifting role of formal education settings; nowadays, schools are expected not only to teach formal programmes but also to equip children with tools to meet life challenges better and deal with uncertainty. Since there are a lot of skills children need to acquire to be successful in life; schools or teachers alone are not prepared to address all the needs of contemporary society. Therefore, one of the purposes of school and community partnerships could be **filling the gaps with additional expertise** that is useful for children, which schools alone are not always able to offer.

There are a number of instances when schools can use this additional expertise to increase the quality of education or to enable children to learn in a more engaging way. For instance, the Lithuanian NGO Network evaluated that the citizenship education programme provided at Lithuanian schools did not meet the needs of contemporary society, as it did not promote competences that could help students participate in social and political life; e.g. teamwork, creativity, critical thinking, independent work, etc. (The Network of Non-Governmental Educational Organisations, 2017). NGOs outreached to the Ministry of Education with the proposal to change the content and form of civic education involving the non-governmental sector, as it could provide the appropriate practical conditions for developing the relevant competences. By engaging children in projects, practical workshops, internships or voluntary work, NGOs could help students learn things in practice by having hands-on experiences outside of school.

Schools can also cooperate with/involve outside expertise to **promote tolerance, develop media and financial literacy**, etc. Schools could partner with community members on various topics and occasions. Some student organisations invite children to participate in practical workshops on media influence, which empower them to question the bias of corporate media, recognise hidden advertising or propaganda (Republica.lt, 2017).

Furthermore, partnerships between schools and civil society actors might help **address social problems** such as bullying, xenophobia or radicalisation. Coming from different fields, experts and organisations have accumulated experience in addressing various issues that go beyond the standard teacher training (Van Driel et al, 2016:73). For example, religious and non-religious community leaders can engage at the local level to reach out to people who might be vulnerable to violent radicalisation and take the lead in unmasking the misuse of religion as a justification for violent extremism (Van Driel et al, 2016:73).

In addition, community actors can **reach target groups**, which are more difficult to reach for schools (UNESCO, 2006: 83). Being flexible, NGOs provide services and hold activities in an environment that is familiar to target groups. A quite common example across Europe is educational activities held in refugee community centres. Various NGOs that run community centres invite professional language teachers that offer lessons of national and other languages (Trampoline House, 2018). Moreover, civil society organisations work in the field providing social integration services and counselling; they gain experience in how to work with sensitive target groups like refugees and can partner with formal education providers by inviting them to give lessons. This way, each partner can contribute based on their particular area of expertise, while refugees benefit from activities taking place in an environment that is familiar to them.

One more benefit of school and NGO collaborations might be **access to funding** for common projects. Grant schemes tend to favour schools that have resources and experience to develop comprehensive project ideas and prepare high quality applications. Schools located in socio-economically disadvantaged regions might have fewer resources to prepare competitive grant applications and fewer opportunities to receive funding. Therefore, they usually rely on external support from state agencies, universities, NGOs or other relevant stakeholders (PPMI, 2018:82). In this situation, collaboration between schools and community actors might benefit schools. NGOs can use their fundraising experience to help struggling schools access funding to innovative projects, and in this way facilitate partnerships.

Also, non-formal education providers could collaborate with schools in order **to engage children with migrant backgrounds into non-formal education programmes**. This collaboration could encourage students to join activities outside of school and consequently allow children to take advantage of non-formal education (Spiess et al., 2016). Based on the German Socio-Economic Panel and the joint migration survey, German sociologists sought to find out to what extent children with migrant background, children with refugee background and children without migrant background make use of extracurricular programmes inside and outside of school. The results showed that refugee children participate in extracurricular school activities just as frequently as or even more frequently than other children. However, at both the primary and secondary school age, children of refugees participate less often in sports activities outside of school (Spiess et al., 2016). These findings show that the importance of schools as an integration tool goes beyond the regular school curriculum. It seems that school is a more favourable environment for refugee children to participate in extra-curricular activities. It is quite natural since schools often serve as the primary source of information about afterschool activities for newcomers as the school is already a familiar and safe environment, and usually activities held at school are free or considerably cheaper, which might be a critical factor when deciding how to spend a free time. In addition, it is evident that the potential of educational activities outside of school to support social integration is not yet being fully exhausted. Taking that into account, efforts to integrate students with migrant backgrounds should also focus on non-formal education activities outside of school and target migrant children and youth directly. This can include collaborating with schools to attract children, developing joint programmes, bringing activities closer to a school's location, or even inviting non-formal education providers to hold activities on school campuses, etc.

To conclude, the benefits of partnerships between schools and community actors can manifest in three directions. First, collaborations between education stakeholders contributes to **overall child development** by ensuring continuity in their routines as well as compensating for the gaps in values and behavioural practices that disadvantaged children risk not to learn at home. Second, involving community actors in school activities can **provide additional expertise** that schools lack, especially when addressing particular needs of migrant children, and in this way reinforce educational response of the host countries. Finally, partnering in fundraising and bringing NFE activities closer to difficult to reach target groups can **increase participation among migrant children** in non-formal education activities and **promote school-community partnerships** per se. How such partnerships and links between formal and non-formal learning providers unfold is illustrated in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4. PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS ACROSS EUROPE: ILLUSTRATIONS

Despite the fact that understanding of importance of links between formal and non-formal learning to holistic children's development, and positive migrant children's learning experiences in particular, is growing in research and policy discourse, such collaboration is still limited and unsystematic in practice across many EU Member States. SIRIUS Watch national reports demonstrate, however, that there are a number of initiatives and promising examples both at local and national level that could serve as an inspiration for education stakeholders to mainstream such practices and create favourable environment for multi-stakeholder partnerships for inclusion to thrive.

Analysing different examples of how schools and non-formal education actors can work together to ensure inclusive and equitable learning experiences, the following tendencies can be observed: 1) in many countries collaboration is partly facilitated through national or regional governmental policies and programmes; 2) most of the projects and initiatives, and in particularly those targeting migrant and refugee children, documented in national reviews were established by NGOs and community organisations; 3) individual schools are well placed to collaborate with non-formal education actors, provided they have necessary resources and capacity. The current chapter discusses projects and partnerships initiated by each of the groups and provides examples of inspiring initiatives.

### 4.1. Partnerships promoted by state policies and programmes

#### Programmes with a broad target audience

Analysis of country briefings demonstrate that most of the examples of national or regional NFE programmes across Europe usually **target all children universally without an explicit focus on migrant children**, but migrant children can benefit from them. The aims of such programmes vary; however, typically programmes strive to fulfil children's self-expression needs; develop critical thinking; promote respect for human rights, citizenship, the democratic approach to the diversity of views, beliefs and ways of life; decrease the effects of poverty; promote integration into labour market, etc. Thematically, such programmes and projects range from providing education opportunities in sports and arts, science, ICT skills, citizenship, entrepreneurship, youth work and volunteering, etc. Such NFE opportunities are usually available in the form of extra-curricular activities within and outside schools, hobby/supplementary art schools, CSO programmes targeted at children and financed through the state budget, and others. However, **only a few countries regulate the inclusion of such activities into the school learning plan** (e.g., Lithuania, Finland, Portugal (through extra-curricular activities (AEC) programme).

Even though the link between different types of education (formal, non-formal, informal), usually within the broader concept of lifelong learning, is recognised by the majority of Member States covered by this report, very few countries promote collaboration of formal and non-formal providers explicitly. Furthermore, there is no clear understanding among stakeholders about the concept of non-formal education as such, as well as how it can help achieve stated national curricular goals. However, national reviews documented **some national as well as local (mainly ad-hoc) policies to create synergies between formal- and non-formal education generally**. For instance, in 2018 the Estonian Youth Work Centre (a national level organisation governed by the Ministry of Education and Research) supported financially 48 projects aimed at integrating formal- and non-formal education by promoting co-operation between the youth work organizations and general- and vocational schools. 12 of those projects focused on creating new ICT solutions for learning. The Estonian Youth Work Centre has also carried out the regional information days to educate schools of the opportunities to integrate formal- and non-formal education (Haugas and Mägi, 2018). In Finland, out-of-school education is included into the school learning plan and schools themselves offer a variety of NFE activities for their pupils, also often devising a strategy on how children's outcomes resulting from participation in such activities can be taken into account in their formal learning. Furthermore, each municipality is responsible for designing its own integration strategy (when it comes to the inclusion of migrant and refugee children), part of each is mobilising local stakeholders (including schools and NFE actors) to facilitate migrant children learning process (Yeasmin, 2018). However, due to the lack of national school monitoring and evaluation system in Finland, there is no evidence on how consistent the quality of such collaboration is<sup>6</sup>. In Poland, **the standards for school evaluation envision schools to cooperate with local organisations** to cater for students' particular needs (Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Remarks of the representative of the Finnish Ministry of Education during SIRIUS Policy workshop (September 20, 2018).



One of the common forms of collaboration between the formal and non-formal sector regulated and funded by the government is the concept of **open all-day schools**, or whole day schools. The partnerships are based on the combination of formal education in the morning provided by school teachers, and extra-curricular activities in the afternoon, often held by outside actors. The afternoon activities might vary between schools; though, typically they include homework support, sport activities, music, creative workshops, etc. (Köhler and Lotter, 2018; Yeasmin, 2018). Examples of all-day schools can be found in Germany, Finland, Estonia, Greece and other countries. Starting September 2018, Lithuania is also piloting an all-day school for pre-schoolers and primary school students (Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, 2018).

### Box 3. Organisation of open all-day schools in Germany

Between year 2003 and 2009, German federal government allocated 4 billion EUR for the **establishment and expansion of all-day schools**. To support the introduction of all-day schools, each Bundesland set up a local service agency to enable the transfer of good practices, exchange of experience, and provision of training courses.

All-day schools propose a variety of educational activities such as sports, graphic arts, literature, theatre, dance, music and nature outings, as well as a hot meal at lunchtime and help with homework. The schools' partners in this context are voluntary youth organisations, parish churches, bodies set up by the youth welfare office, lobby groups and parent associations promoting a high standard of educational childcare. The all-day schools strive to ensure a conceptual link between morning and afternoon classes. For example, a number of Berlin schools partner with social circus *Cabuwazi* that aims to facilitate learning through games and play, and promote collaboration and interaction between peers. One of the recent circus practices is *Cabuwazi Beyond Borders* that complements the circus activities with language training.

The organisation of all-day schools typically takes place on two levels: first, regional education departments sign agreements with all related parties to establish an organisational and financial framework; and second level concerns implementation that occurs at schools. The funding sources vary between the regions: in some cases, the costs for extracurricular activities are shared by regional government, municipalities, and parental contributions (e.g. North Rein Westphalia); and in other cases all costs are covered by the regional government (like in Lower Saxony). Today, Germany has more than 16,000 all-day schools. The share of students at all-day schools is increasing constantly: in 2002 it was about 10 percent, and by the 2014/2015 school year the figure had more than tripled to almost 38 percent, and the number of schools registered as full-time is up to almost 60 percent. Federal government fund evaluation activities in order to consistently improve the all-day school concept.

Source: Köhler and Lotter (2018).

As seen from the example above, the introduction and extension of the all-day schools in German Bundesländer represent a key step for the establishment of the continuous and nationwide cooperation between formal and non-formal sectors. Through the extension a platform and a time frame for collaboration were provided. Especially, schools with highly engaged and motivated head masters and teachers thereby got the opportunity to offer a diverse learning environment that is adapted to the respective pupils. This enables schools and classes to focus directly on the needs of their pupils (Köhler and Lotter, 2018). Such opportunities might also act as effective and holistic integration centres for newcomers or enable pupils from less-educated families to reach higher education.

Establishment of effective partnerships between schools and other education stakeholders in the district can be the result of a **joint initiative of the district schools, civil society organisations and district council**. The practice shows that such initiatives are continuous and more sustainable, as all the parties involved have the sense of ownership and responsibility for the outcomes. However, as the Dutch example from the district Pendrecht demonstrates (see Box 4 below) the coordination role of the city council can be decisive for the effective work of such partnerships.

### Box 4. Child Faculty Pendrecht district programme in the Netherlands

Pendrecht neighbourhood in Rotterdam (the Netherlands) has a unique programme *The Child Faculty Pendrecht* covering all 1093 primary school students. The programme aims to properly prepare children for the future by ensuring safe and collaborative environment for their learning in neighbourhood spaces. The programme provides a wide range of extracurricular activities in sports, art and culture, language, arithmetic, craftsmanship, learning and social skills, which take place during and after school. The headquarters of the Children's Faculty is the old library in the neighbourhood building, which hosts majority of them. However, a small part of activities take place in schools. Children can participate in designing those activities themselves through the children's council. Children can take part in these activities five days a week, throughout the school year, on Sundays and during the holidays.

The initiative emerged from partnerships between community organisation, schools and other neighbourhood actors. Since the majority of



population consists of migrants (80%), they are the direct and main programme's beneficiaries. The programme receives financial support from De Verre Bergen Foundation. The interim evaluation indicates improved learning experiences for children. The evaluation argues that the integral range of formal and non-formal activities the Child Faculty offers ensures better results for (migrant) children than that other schools in the vicinity show.

Source: Tudjman and Koster (2018).

Another way to promote links between schools and non-formal education sector to ensure holistic children's development and learning opportunities for all is **governmental initiatives aimed at establishment of nation-wide NFE programmes** which would outreach to certain groups of young people outside of school and also collaborate with schools on certain issues. This is in contrast with some of the initiatives described above, where schools were the main target groups or implementors of the programme, with the aim to open them up and integrate some of the non-formal education methods into their work. Usually, such programmes target particular aspect of education or aim to develop a certain set of competences, e.g., entrepreneurship education, citizenship education, arts and music education. Some of such initiatives can have more specific goals or target group, e.g., **ensuring equal education opportunities for vulnerable or disadvantaged students**, such as the large-scale governmental programme (Programa Escolhas) in Portugal (migrant children among others are an important target group of the program) (see Box 5 below). The Programme supports multi-stakeholder project teams (including NGOs and school teachers), as well as provides conditional funding for the projects which fulfil this criterion.

#### **Box 5. Governmental non-formal education programme 'Escolhas' (Choices) in Portugal**

In 2001, Portuguese Government and High Commission for Migration introduced *Progama Escolhas (Choices Programme)* aiming at social inclusion of disadvantaged children. The programme funds non-formal education projects and development of skills that allow vulnerable children to participate successfully in school and in life. Projects aim to support children academically, also contribute to their personal and social development. Therefore, projects feature academic activities like language learning, literacy skills, exam preparation; different youth workers and specialists hold various workshops, there is a focus on digital skills too. Evaluations show that a considerably large proportion of participating **children** are with **migrant** background. Activities might take place at schools, or children from several schools might be gathered together and participate in activities outside school building.

**Collaboration** between different stakeholders is an important aspect of *Progama Escolhas*. For instance, in some cases applicants are required to form a consortium of entities representing different expertise, and school participation in them is considered highly important. Researchers recognise *Progama Escolhas* as an example showcasing an essential role NFE plays in social inclusion by promoting learning success, personal and social competences, motivation and future expectations (Calado, 2014). The successful outcomes of the *Progama Escolhas* push stakeholders to rethink professional training and competences in formal education contexts (Silva, 2016; Silva & Silva, 2018). Programme is in its 6th generation currently having 112 local projects that are either already funded or at the stage of signing contracts. Throughout its different generations, *Progama Escolhas* has been financed by the State Budget and EU funds. Currently, the programme is supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds.

Source: Silva, Costa & Caetano (2018), SIRIUS (2018).

Different municipalities in the United Kingdom also invest in various youth services and non-formal education. They are available to all children living in a specific neighbourhood or going to school there. The majority of programmes are free to take part in; therefore, all children have access to them. However, it seems that collaboration with schools is either limited or non-existent.

#### **Box 6. Non-formal education activities in youth centres in the UK**

Almost every borough in London has Youth Services that run activities in youth centres on the daily basis. The services are provided either to children aged 6 to 9 or young people aged 13 to 19, and up to 25 years with learning disabilities. Youth centres offer wide-ranging activities that build young people skills and confidence; provide targeted advice and support for young people with additional needs; provide employment and training advice; prevent antisocial behaviour or crime; help with substance misuse, mental health issues; works with young people who have been arrested or convicted of a criminal offence, etc. In addition, youth centres offer a range of sports activities, indoor games, opportunities to volunteer and gain qualification, healthy life styles programmes such as healthy eating and sessions on relationships and sexual health, life skill activities such as cooking and homework club. The personnel consist of youth workers, career advisors, early help case managers, substance misuse workers and other qualified specialists. Opening hours vary, but usually youth centres are open during daytime until 5 pm, and on certain days in the evenings until 8 or 9 pm.

Source: Camden (2018); Hackney (2018) and Tower Hamlets (2018).

Programme in France showcase the way partnerships between schools and specialists outside of school can help to support children while dealing with learning difficulties, social issues, etc. The programme is based on the multidisciplinary teams of specialists who gather together and are able to apply holistic approach to help vulnerable children. Non-formal education might be used as one of approaches. The programme aimed at all children living in France, and migrant children can also benefit from it.

### Box 7. Interdisciplinary teams aiming to identify learning difficulties in France

In 2005, French Government aiming to prevent early school leaving and promote social inclusion introduced an Educational Success Programme (fr. Programme de Réussite Éducative) and delegated municipalities to implement it through local branches of National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities. The idea is to gather multidisciplinary teams of specialists in order to cooperate and propose solutions in school and outside of school for each child experiencing difficulties. The specialists might include social workers, teachers, non-formal education providers, speech therapists, psychologists, etc. Each child has its own case coordinator who monitors child's progress and ensures that child receives support on different perspectives including academic, social, medical, cultural and sport. The initial contact with authorities is made by a grown-up – parent, teacher or other professional – who first identifies children facing difficulties. The programme supports children aged 3–16 years, though, is mostly implemented in the 1st grade. The financing varies between municipalities, the costs can be shared by the National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities, the cities, the Family Allowance Fund, etc.

Source: Auger (2018).

Even though many of these programmes do not target migrant children specifically, migrant and refugee learners can benefit from these and similar initiatives just as much as any other group of children. There is limited evidence on how accessible and popular NFE activities offered in different countries across Europe are, in particularly for migrant children. However, a few studies suggest that migrant children are less likely to take part in non-formal learning than their native peers (Darmody and Smyth, 2017), especially when such activities are provided outside of the school building (Spiess, 2016). The possible reasons for these patterns based on anecdotal evidence from country reports may include:

- **Lack of information** about the available opportunities as well as language barriers;
- Poorly developed and **uneven network of institutions of non-formal education** for school-children (especially in smaller towns and rural areas), a **lack of diversity of activities**, especially sensitive for different cultures and traditions (there is a predominance of education programmes in music and sports).
- The **issue of affordability** (as in a number of countries extra-curricular activities might be the subject for additional fee) (Smyth and Ryan, 2018).

In this light, it is important that education authorities ensure affordability and accessibility of available learning opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Many educational systems are putting efforts to give primary-level students access to NFE through already mentioned all-day schools. Their expenses usually are covered or subsidised by municipalities; therefore, considerably many families can afford it (e.g. in Germany, the Netherlands, Slovenia, etc.). New NFE funding model introduced in Lithuania also ensures better access to extra-curricular activities for all children, especially to those from rural areas. All children in Lithuania have a voucher for NFE activities of 15EUR/month. It means that extra-curricular providers get paid for each child attending activities and are motivated to engage as many children as possible; therefore, the activities take place closer to children who live in rural areas. Before the introduction of the voucher, one of the issues that these children struggled with was long travel distances to and from extra-curricular activities, and they were dependant on transport services, which were not systematically provided across municipalities (National Audit Report, 2015). With the reform, the NFE activities also got cheaper at least to the families living in rural areas. Since municipalities cover 15EUR/month, families in the regions in most cases do not need to pay additional fees (though in big cities many providers simply raised the prices) (Lipnickienė, 2018).

Also, it is crucial **that public authorities inform newly-arriving families** about educational options **in languages they understand and at places that are relevant to newcomers**, like migrant centres and municipal bodies. The Finnish City of Vantaa set a very good example on how to ensure that necessary information would reach migrant families (see Box 6 below).

### Box 8. Information guide for migrant families in Finland

The Department of Education in Vantaa (Finland) has published a guide to support families that have recently moved to Finland. The goal of the brochure is to answer questions that parents may have with regard to school work, and to explain how a child's learning, growth and school work may be supported through the co-operation between home and school. **The newly-arrived families are introduced to general elements of Finnish education system, including afternoon activities, clubs and extracurricular activities.** Also, parents are

provided with more specific information on enrolment, membership fees, the typical duration of activities, etc. The guide is published online as well as disseminated in hard copies.

Source: City of Vantaa, Department of Education (2018).

### Governmental initiatives specifically aimed at migrant and refugee children inclusion

When it comes to collaborative projects between NGOs and schools targeting migrants specifically, there are a number of programmes that promote educational activities taking place directly in refugee reception centres and sometimes at schools. Governments across the EU put efforts that refugee children **would have access to educational activities while staying in reception centres**. Usually NGOs are entrusted with the provision of those activities. In Norway, authorities aim to ensure that children could learn Norwegian language, attend workshops on Norwegian culture, have homework support and participate in excursions after school in the reception centres, where they come back after school (Andersen, 2018). The Greek Government aiming to ensure quality of refugee education invited non-governmental organisations to register online and obtain relevant certification for their activities at reception centres (Palaiologou, 2018).

#### Box 9. Provision of educational opportunities for refugees in Greece

The Greek Ministry of Education at the beginning of refugee crisis has established Reception Facilities for Refugee Education and Refugee Education Coordinators (2016) and invited organisations willing to provide educational activities in refugee reception centres to submit their proposals and fill out an online form in order to obtain relevant certification from the Institute of Educational Policy. This was an open call for registration that IEP organized in 2016 with the support of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. This platform is still open for non-governmental organizations who wish to operate in the field of refugee education.

At the moment, IEP is developing an online platform through which NGOs could submit their proposals for a non-formal education programme. The Institute will then check the pedagogical relevance of proposals and pass on to the Ministry of Education for approval. NGOs have to submit analytical information about their activities, content template and activities schedule. Furthermore, they undertake the obligation to submit a report on the progress and output of their actions. This database will help Central Government design any necessary amendments to its Educational Policy (for further information see: <https://www.iep.edu.gr/services/mitroo/mko/>).

Important precondition for such a programme to be approved is its complementarity with formal education programmes. Experts claim that the role of Refugee Education Coordinators has been particularly important in facilitating an easier access for refugee children to the school system. Usually, they are teachers working in public schools appointed by the Ministry of Education, Research & Religious Affairs to coordinate refugee educational activities in Reception Facilities for Refugee Education (RFREs) and to be the liaison between reception centres and refugee education facilities. In practice, their duties varied, from communication with refugee parents and teachers, to coordination of NGOs and general support to refugee students.

Source: Palaiologou (2018).

Polish Ministry of National Education also initiated a national programme to support refugee and migrant children inclusion into education. It is implemented as a grant programme allocating funding to NGOs and educational authorities willing to implement projects targeting migrant children or providing methodological support for their teachers.

#### Box 10. Programme aimed at migrant integration into education in Poland

Polish Ministry of National Education for a number of years runs a national grant programme "Supporting Educational Initiatives in a Multicultural School Environment". The programme supports four types of projects: 1) intensive summer language courses preparing refugee students to attend Polish schools, 2) projects fostering national language, traditions and cultures of ethnic and national minorities; 3) development of educational materials and tools and 4) trainings for teachers and school staff providing tools to facilitate the integration and education of students with migrant background. The programme funds NGOs and local educational authorities that would like to implement these types of projects.

A popular format are summer camps for refugee children who are about to start their education in a Polish school in the following school year. For example, a project run by the foundation 'Multiocalenie' invited a group of refugee children to stay in a summer resort for two weeks. Participants joined an intensive Polish language preparation course in the morning and spend afternoons playing with their Polish peers. Follow-up activities (such as joint participation in a city game by the camp's participants and their Polish classmates) have been planned to

facilitate the integration process in the critical period after the beginning of the school year.

Source: Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz (2018).

Several countries launched **regional integration strategies**, which aim to mobilise the efforts and response of local stakeholders to ensure effective response to migrant and refugee children's educational needs. For instance, **in NRW (Germany)** the "Kommunale Integrationszentren" (**local integration centres**) are very well established and financed by the Ministry for School and Education and the Ministry for Children, Families, Refugees and Integration of NRW. Amongst other functions, they are responsible for the connection and the support of stakeholders in the field of integration. They also improve the education opportunities for migrant and refugee children and young people, acting as important coordinators of educational projects and bring stakeholders of the same and of different working fields together (Köhler and Lotter, 2018). **Alytus integration centre** supported by Alytus municipality and located in one of the secondary schools is another example of a regional efforts to support integration of newcomers – in this case it caters for the needs of Lithuanian returning emigrants, who often do not have sufficient language and academic skills, as well as social networks to easily re-integrate back into the society (Lipnickiene, 2018). The centre offers activities like Lithuanian language classes, Lithuanian folk singing and dancing activities, excursions to various cultural and historical sights, etc. In addition, the centre employs a speech therapist and psychologist that offer related support for children. The activities take place after lessons and their duration vary. The fact that the centre is located at school premises facilitates collaboration between centre staff (who are often the school teachers) and school staff, exchanging about the progress and needs of children attending the centre activities (Ibid.). The city of Athens also took action to open school environment, which brings together refugee and Greek children (see Box 11 below).

#### **Box 11. Open schools initiative in Athens, Greece**

The City of Athens in 2018 transformed 25 schools into environments open for extra-curricular activities and language courses for all Athenian refugees. The school premises were customised for centres of action where the refugees as well as local community is invited to take part in recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities. Schools remain open until 9:30 p.m. on weekdays and between 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends. Experts believe that using school facilities this way brings local community together, increases interaction between neighbours, and contributes to a direct exchange among newcomers and resident population. In 2018, the initiative covers 25 public schools in the municipality of Athens, which provide 170 courses with a total of 10 thousand participants. The Council of Europe has included the program in the Guide for Good City Practices on human rights and migrant and refugee integration. The program has a broader direction, addressed not only to refugees and migrants. This initiative is funded by Stavros Niarchos Foundation (for more information see: [https://www.athensopenschools.gr/news/view/new\\_activities\\_oct\\_2018](https://www.athensopenschools.gr/news/view/new_activities_oct_2018)).

Source: Palaiologou (2018); Council of Europe (2018).

In Finland, regional integration programmes developed by municipalities also encourage synergies between formal and non-formal education providers to facilitate inclusion of migrant and refugee pupils. These policies encourage schools (in cooperation with external actors) to introduce additional activities in the school environment, such as cultural events, social workshops (e.g., on UN day, anti-racism activities), newsletters, activities and trainings for tutors, principals, teachers and other school staff (Yeasmin, 2018). Rovaniemi Municipality Integration Policy encourages schools to use the resources of community actors to enrich migrant children learning experiences. This way school should organize counseling, language club activities. Multilingual pupils' participation in summer club activities is supported in co-operation with the immigration office (Integration Program, 2014-2020). However, Finland still faces difficulties in quality assessment of these partnerships between schools and outside actors, as strategies do not have built-in monitoring and evaluation tools. Currently, education stakeholders continue discussing on how to improve links between skills acquired by children in schools and through external activities, which provide additional education opportunities to gain competences set in formal school curricula (Yeasmin, 2018). Some other examples on how the links between formal and non-formal providers can be promoted include organization of **awareness raising campaigns, information sessions and workshops for education actors and students** with the aim to encourage schools and other community actors to unite their forces when addressing the needs of newly arriving pupils. For instance, in Portugal, under the collaboration of different national entities, two important campaigns at national level, linking formal with non-formal education, took place: *Campaign "What if it was me? To pack a bag and leave?"*, which was a joint initiative from the Refugee Support Platform, the High Commission for Migration, the Directorate-General of Education and the National Council of Youth; and *Campaign "Are not only numbers"*, organized by the International Organisation for Migrations and the High Commission of the United Nations for Refugees. The campaigns aimed to provoke discussion on the refugee crisis in schools, as well as discuss on how education and school environment could be improved to meet the needs of these children (Silva, Costa & Caetano, 2018).



However, the general observation based on the initiatives documented in SIRIUS Watch country reports is that **national programmes tend to support formal education sector**, when it comes to providing education opportunities for migrant children, rather than specifically promoting partnerships for inclusion. Usually such programmes support schools in providing state language support or mother tongue classes, hire additional professionals, such as multicultural mediators or counsellors, develop specific teaching materials, etc. When it comes to the specific collaborative projects, **apart from the coordination and mobilising function, the role of governments usually lies in the provision of funds, often organised in specific funding streams and targeted funds for project-based initiatives**. Funding may be organised at different levels, including the EU and national levels (see e.g. mentoring project in Germany financed by the federal government in Box 8 below), however, **local governments were identified as the key funders and supporters of local initiatives**.

#### Box 12. The mentoring project “Menschen stärken Menschen” in Germany

The project “Menschen stärken Menschen” (people encourage people) is funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ). Since the beginning of 2016, the BMFSFJ has been sponsoring more than 23 civil society program participants who implement mentoring for refugees in more than 500 places. The objective is to form tandems of people already living in Germany and newcomers. Interested people get in contact with the local implementing organizations, e.g. Caritas. Furthermore, individuals can design a project and apply for financial support to the Ministry. The mentoring covers all stages of support ranging from networking and providing advice on every-day matters, homework support up to high class educational mentoring to ensure the successful passing of school examinations. The program is highly diverse and touches many aspects of integration into the formal and non-formal education sector. Some of the participants are schools and thus are directly involved in the project. For example, in one school in Jena a team of teachers and volunteers established a project group where one native and one migrant child painted together. The paintings were sold and the returns were used to finance the school trip with all children.

The project “Menschen stärken Menschen” has been evaluated since June 2016 through an impact analysis. The evaluation found the project is highly successful in mobilizing volunteers and providing support to refugees in the form of non-formal learning. It was beneficial for building relevant competences not only of refugees (e.g., socio-emotional development, language learning), but also native volunteers (civic and social competences), which also affected their development (BMFSFJ, 2017).

Source: Köhler and Lotter (2018).

## 4.2. Non-governmental, civil society initiatives to promote school-community collaboration for migrant inclusion

Among examples of initiatives and programmes reported by SIRIUS national partners, **NGO-led projects were more likely to provide targeted support to specific groups of children**. As NGOs and CSOs are usually established with a particular goal and thematic area, aiming to respond to particular societal issues or address systemic gaps, it is quite natural that a number of examples of projects and programmes initiated by NGOs in the area of migrant and refugee inclusion were documented both in literature and country reviews. Many of them directly target migrant and refugee children and provide a variety of non-formal learning opportunities in different fields. In most of the cases, NGO educational programmes aim to complement the work of schools by providing tailored support to the specific target groups in areas where the school may lack necessary expertise. However, even though these programmes aim to complement formal education, **their link with schools and commitment for engaging with formal education providers systematically was not so evident**, as analysis of country reviews shows. Such cooperation is often incidental and depends on the commitment of project staff or proactiveness of school leaders and teachers in outreaching to relevant non-formal education providers.

On the one hand, such an abundance of initiatives provides a diversity of choice and availability of specific support for those in need, but on the other hand, can lead to **fragmentation and inconsistency of non-formal education offer**, especially when there is no sufficient communication about various initiatives. Anecdotal evidence and perceptions of stakeholders demonstrate that not rarely such projects are designed in isolation from schools and do not consider holistically learning outcomes of children that the project aims to achieve, in a way so that it complements children’s learning in school. This makes it more difficult to build sustainable and continuous partnerships with formal education providers. Therefore, one of the roles of education authorities is to tackle the possible lack of coordination and fragmentation of non-formal education provision, ensure transparent and effective information flow, and provide the platform for networking and joint projects.

Initiatives and projects that do include cooperation with schools in their design tend to focus on the following: a) targeted support to migrant and refugee children to enhance their learning experiences at school; b) provision of expertise and support to school staff; c) providing

general intercultural projects for the whole school community, with the aim to promote intercultural dialogue, tolerance and respect for diversity.

### Directly targeting vulnerable groups of children

When the initiative aims to provide specific support to migrant children, NGO-school partnership can take different forms ranging from one-off projects to continuous cooperation, and the form of cooperation can vary from joint projects to referrals to services. NGOs in this case, usually fill-in the gaps and provide support for issues that schools are not equipped to provide.

**Providing socio-emotional support and psychological guidance to children with traumatic experiences** is one of the frequent areas where NGOs, CSOs and external professional services collaborate with schools to facilitate migrant and refugee children integration. For instance, the Dutch Refugee Council supports an afterschool program 'Playing for Success' (lasting from 10 to 12 weeks, 1 afternoon per week for 2-3 hours long), which focuses on pupils between 9 and 14 years who for socio-emotional reasons face difficulties with learning and achievement at school. The program is meant as a complementary program to regular education. The selection of students for the program takes place via the school. Once a week, children with low achievements are brought to an inspiring location outside of school, such as a football stadium, to work on confidence building, self-esteem and motivation through positive learning experiences (Tudjman and Koster, 2018). Slovenian NGOs also offer a variety of psycho-social support programmes for young refugees, in cooperation with different actors and covering different themes, such as child friendly corners in refugee centres and psycho-social support in dormitories with unaccompanied minors (Gril, 2018).

#### Box 13. Blanchardstown and Mountview Youth Initiative (BMYI) providing socio-emotional support in Ireland

In Ireland, the Blanchardstown and Mountview Youth Initiative (BMYI) offers **after-school support to vulnerable children through counselling and recreational activities**. 70-80% of the children involved in the initiative have been referred by the school. The other 20% can be referred from the community when a family might refer a young person. This school – NGO contact is crucial, because the child might not know where to go with its problems and the NGO is reliant on referrals to reach children in need.

**BMYI builds close connections with local teachers**, particularly those engaged with vulnerable young people. Support happens by way of one-to-one counselling or in group sessions. There is a family support worker in BMYI who can connect with individual families. After-school work includes sport, cooking and other fun activities. Students can suggest topics which they would like help with, e.g. relationship and sex education. According to the manager of the programme, the counselling on this topic is often requested by secondary school students.

Source: Smyth and Ryan (2018).

There are also a variety of projects which do not directly deal with traumatic experiences of mental health issues but do involve psychologists in their activities in order to provide a holistic approach to the issue they aim to address. Examples of such projects can be seen in Greece, Germany and other countries, where psychologists often provide counselling to the educators or children only when needed during non-formal education activities.

**Arts and sports education** are one of the most widespread non-formal learning programmes used to facilitate migrant youngsters' integration in the host societies, as well as foster their sense of belonging at school, as country reviews document a variety of initiatives in this area. Such projects are very different in their design and focus - e.g., **social and communication skills through sports** (Lisbon Judo Club in Portugal (see Box 10 for more details), **language learning through sports** ('Bewegen, Kicken, Sprechen in Germany), **anti-discrimination campaigns through sports** (Sports Against Racism Ireland (SARI). SARI is part of the European initiative Sports Against Racism. Their work is primarily aimed at 5th and 6th class in primary schools. All activities are pre-planned with teachers and work takes place with one class group at a time. There is follow-up work carried out by teachers which involves an analysis of the impact of the workshops and the learning accessed by students. Since 2015 SARI has collaborated with 250 schools. In their anti-racism workshops, SARI uses big football personalities to promote integration and a racism-free society (Smyth and Ryan, 2018). A Polish refugee organisation organises sports programmes for primary school students living in refugee centres in Masovia region. Professionals train the children free of charge and sports equipment is covered through crowd funding initiatives (Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz, 2018).

#### Box 14. Integration of socio-economically disadvantaged and migrant children through sports in Portugal

In Portugal, the Lisbon Judo Club initiated its own project to **make martial arts available to the community**. Due to the lack of space for trainings, the organisers decided to collaborate with schools that faced high levels of drop-outs, bullying and underachievement. The children that attended the judo practice came from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. In collaboration with the schools, **the judo**

**project aimed to teach social skills and healthy living habits, including "friendship", "respect for the other", "discipline", "sense of rule", "concentration," and physical and human contact.** The Judo trainers developed a close relationship with the school and educational community in order to promote the consolidation of ethical teachings and basic human relationships among the children. The initiative is supported by the local municipality, the Association of Residents of Alto do Lumiar and by the National Commission of UNESCO in Portugal. After the first round of activities, the partnership reported that judo favors the reduction of bullying among children / students; improves school learning and the personal and social development of the child and contributes to the student's attachment to school.

Until 2012 the project **School Football Citizenship**, was promoted by the Portuguese Players Union (SJPF), with the support of the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Education. It had as main objective the promotion of inclusion through sports and the simultaneous learning of citizenship, good practice, fair play (friendship, tolerance/acceptance of diversity and social inclusion), and sports practice as a means for the promotion of health and wellbeing.

Source: Marques da Silva, Costa and Caetano (2018); and Tito Basto (2007).

The Swedish Postcode Lottery recently funded a project that researched and disseminated the best strategies among 19 basketball clubs to include newcomers. Activities were held aiming at the **integration** of unaccompanied minors and helping them to understand Swedish society. Secondly, the project focused on the promotion of **tolerance** towards migrants and the combating of xenophobia (Denkelaar, 2018). An umbrella organisation for sports in Finland, Liikkukaa ry, cooperates actively with both schools and the Red Cross to ensure the participation of immigrants in sports activities (Yeasmin, 2018).

**Language and academic support** are other popular activities that NGOs offer to vulnerable children, including migrants, on top of other NFE activities. Very often homework clubs and language classes take place in NGO-led centres, which might be called community or integration centres. Usually, children come to these facilities after school, and meet with volunteers who help children personally or in a group to do their homework and improve their language skills. The NGO might offer this as a mainstream activity to all children or the need might be identified by parents who inquire whether an integration centre would have resources. Examples of these initiatives have been found across many country briefings including France, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, UK, etc.

#### **Box 15. Homework club for refugee children in Leeds, England**

An organisation called **Leeds Refugee Forum** offers a **homework club**, which provides a safe and welcoming learning environment with an aim to meet the educational needs of refugee and asylum-seeking pupils. Volunteer tutors work with a small group of pupils to co-run activities within the context of the school's weekly homework club, assisting them with their educational tasks which include helping with homework, school projects and improving their English, maths and science. Over thirty pupils benefit from the support every year. Homework club works in partnership with Shakespeare Primary School to engage parents in their children's learning. Leeds Refugee Forum has engaged a great number of volunteers ranging from university students to retired teachers. The volunteers have made valuable contributions to boost refugee children's learning and confidence through the provision of one-to-one or small-group study support for those who need extra help with English and maths.

Source: Sharma-Brymer and Kakos (2018).

When teaching a new language, organisations and freelance teachers try to be creative and use interactive approaches. For example, Irish youth theatre employs a drama-based methodology to facilitate the acquisition of language skills, an NGO in Lithuania invites children to practice language during pottery workshops, an association in France proposes to "live the language" by participating in storytelling and writing workshops.

**Mentoring** is also an often-used tool to promote social inclusion of vulnerable children, prevent early school leaving, help children learn to set goals, plan their future or simply connect with people outside their usual environment. Mentoring can have different forms based on the concept, therefore, mentors also might be different individuals, including successful entrepreneurs, older volunteer or peer having more experience in certain things. Mentoring initiatives can either be more structured or completely informal. The example below illustrates school-business partnership in Netherlands that targets disadvantaged teenagers and young adults. In this case school plays a role of mediator: it identifies disadvantaged students and helps them discover out of school opportunities, in this case to have a mentor that helps to set goals and potentially make first steps towards better positions in labour market.

#### **Box 16. Mentoring project in Netherlands**

In the Utrecht region (Netherlands), the business association 'Samen voor Zeist' together with biggest vocational school implemented a mentoring project aimed at prevention of early school leaving, supporting participants in developing their future plans and increasing their labour market opportunities. 16–23 year old students were paired with businessmen and local community leaders. At least once every two weeks, the mentors had an appointment with 'their' student. The student's learning needs were guiding the mentoring trajectory. "The girl I coached had very clear wishes: she wanted to learn Dutch better, get a Dutch passport, she wanted to find out what further education she wanted to follow and she wanted to get her driver's license. <...> We had almost weekly appointments and did everything together. We worked on her goals, which she has already achieved in the meantime, but she also came to my house for cooking and we went to museums together." (Albert Froom, Leaders Trust International, Zeist.)

Source: Hoitink et al (2008).

### Initiatives targeting schools and teachers

Some partnerships revolve not only around providing support to youth in areas that school cannot cover but aiming at **building capacity of schools as a whole** to better address individual needs of migrant children. NGOs often aim to assist schools to address individual needs of migrant children better through various capacity building activities. Usually, schools are supported through activities like training provision, development of methodological tools and supervision for individual schools that are about to welcome migrant students.

For instance, Norwegian People's Aid developed **pedagogical tools for teachers** and other professionals to fight abuse in school. The materials could be accessed on a designated website and focused on potentially harmful expressions (Andersen, 2018). In Slovenia, the Ministry of Education initiated **trainings for teachers and professionals** working with migrant children across the 75 schools (Gril, 2018). In Croatia, the Forum for Freedom in Education implements projects aiming to **support teachers in dealing with topics such as diversity** in the classroom, **risk of radicalisation and promotion of democratic values** (Gospodnetić, 2018). In Turkey, NGOs designed programmes to educate volunteer Syrian teachers on the Turkish education standards, which helps them better prepare Syrian refugee children for enrolment in formal education (PPMI, 2017). In the Netherlands, an organisation called War Child trained teachers of six primary schools according to the TeamUp methodology<sup>7</sup> which was previously implemented in refugee centres. Teachers learn how to use sports activities in schools as tool for children to learn how **to deal with conflict, stress, aggression and similar emotions** (Tudjman and Koster, 2018).

#### Box 17. NGO trainings for the school staff in Norway

The Centre for Equality in Norway is an organisation experienced in migration, integration and dealing with diversity, which works to address equality issues in all layers of Norwegian society. In relation to migrant youth and integration, the work of the centre does not only focus on the children, but also **works with school staff directly through trainings, courses and workshops**, to increase their ability to work with a diverse classroom themselves. Through short-and long-term projects, the Centre provides tools to school staff to achieve a holistic approach to equality.

Source: Andersen (2018).

One of the needs that NGOs help addressing is handbooks on methods to work with diverse classrooms. Very often NGOs apply for Erasmus+ grants and together with partners from other countries develop intellectual outputs like guidelines, handbooks, curricula etc. (Integration through Education, 2017; Gril, 2018). Usually the materials are accessible in several languages online. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of these outputs very much depend on the project implementer's efforts to inform schools about existence of these materials and invite educators to use them.

In some cases, NGOs themselves can help identify struggling schools and offer their support and expertise (see e.g. Box 12 below on the grassroot movement Leeds City of Sanctuary).

#### Box 18. School-community partnership aiming to improve learning environment for migrant students in Leeds, England

The Leeds City of Sanctuary is part of a national movement that is striving to build a culture of welcome for all people seeking sanctuary in the UK. The movement itself is engaged in creating a network of people and organisations living and working in the city towards making it more welcoming, open and inclusive. One of the umbrella bodies within the national movement (City of Sanctuary), is Schools of Sanctuary.

<sup>7</sup> The TeamUp project is meant to stimulate and develop social-emotional skills for children by using structured recreational activities (sports, games, and dance) on fixed days/times. The games are non-verbal and tie in with specific socio-emotional themes through which children learn how to deal with conflict, stress, aggression etc.



It actively **monitors how welcoming a school is for migrant children** and consequently discusses with the school which measures could be taken to improve the whole school environment. Volunteers work with the school staff on both the system of the school itself, as well as on activities carried out by the students, which increases tolerance, acceptance and understanding towards different cultures. Once the school fulfils the criteria of being welcoming and accepting, it receives the status *School of Sanctuary*. The *Schools of Sanctuary* also serves as a network for schools to share their experiences on how they celebrate diversity and inclusion. Schools inform each other about their projects, publish news about schools that join the network, etc. The programme began in Yorkshire, England, and there are now Schools of Sanctuary in Wales and Northern Ireland as well as many English cities and towns, and the resources can be adapted for a variety of school demographics and education systems.

Another example of the tool that could be potentially used by schools for validating and documenting migrant children's skills and well-being is the **assessment methodology developed by the NGO 'Children's Society'**. The tool focusses holistically on the changes the child/young person would like to make in their lives, allowing the practitioner to develop actions to meet those goals while measuring distance travelled towards them at the same time. All children/young people are assessed on engagement with the service, and reviews take place every 4 to 12 weeks. The categories include Mental and Emotional health, Physical health, Safety, Having a Say, Hopes and dreams, Friendships, Education, employment and skills, relationships with family or carer, Housing – are clear indicators that not only help the children but also staff in measuring progress towards self-reliance and well-being.

Source: Leeds City of Sanctuary (2018), <https://leeds.cityofsanctuary.org/>; School of Sanctuary (2018), <https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org/>

A few SIRIUS national reports also provided examples on how **CSOs could collaborate directly with education authorities in creating materials and building capacity of education providers** on dealing with sensitive topics, such as racism and xenophobia. For instance, Centre for peace studies, NGO from Croatia has been collaborating with Faculty for Political Sciences of University in Zagreb, Centre for the Study of Ethnicity, Citizenship and Migration and African Society in Croatia on a project called "Against racism and xenophobia: toward ethnic and refugee equality". Activities within the project were funded through IPA funds. Activities included wide range of advocacy, education, research and public events in order to harmonise the collaboration between CSOs and public institutions in the fight against racism, xenophobia and ethnically based discrimination (Centre for Peace Studies, 2017). A series of public events and lectures have been organised. Additionally, Centre for peace studies took part in work groups for development of Act and strategies that combat racism, xenophobia as well as integration and migration policies, which could be used by formal and non-formal education providers when dealing with such topics in their activities.

Similarly, in Lithuania, a group of educational organisations is advocating for Ministry of Education and Science to systemically ensure partnerships between schools and NGOs while teaching civic education and providing NFE. The educational organisations claim that for civic education to be successful – i.e. to educate active and conscious citizens of Lithuania – it is necessary to change the content and form of civic education by creating opportunities for students to develop competences outside of school, focusing on practical methods over the theoretical, and ensuring NGO participation in this process (K. Lipnickienė, 2018).

### Promoting intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity

Integration is a two-way process, which aims not only to introduce migrant families to the host society, but also receiving societies have to learn to live in diverse cities. Therefore, non-governmental sector, schools and public authorities support projects that promote intercultural dialogue, raise awareness about migration, and simply allow different people to meet and overcome prejudice.

The most wide-spread method for **awareness raising** is campaigns based on viral videos published on social media, broadcasted on television, and in public transport. This way a message can reach many people various age; however, the results and impact usually are limited due to excess of information people get this way. These campaigns are used in various ways to convey different messages. For example, in Lithuania, social media campaign was based on several videos featuring local celebrities engage in common activities with foreign people living in Lithuania. The aim of these videos where to send a message that people from different cultural or religious background are people that might have the same hobbies as we do, have the same reasons why they like living in our country as we do, and so on (Friend Request Facebook campaign). In Denmark, citizens aiming to challenge Danish Government indirectly proclaiming that descendants of non-western countries are no longer considered as "Danish" initiated a viral video that aims to showcase the damage that is caused by the hateful rhetoric towards minority communities and create debate on questions who is/what is "Danish" (<http://shortyawards.com/2nd-socialgood/jegerdansk>). Of course, these campaigns per se are not considered as NFE activities, though, the videos can be used in a creative way at school to initiate discussions in the classroom, and teach children respect for diversity. On the other hand, by promoting tolerance among adults, children will also grow up open minded and ready to live in a multicultural society.

Besides media campaigns, **NGOs also reach out to schools and initiate practical workshops** for students. The forms of activities and interaction levels vary; however, mostly depend on the budget NGO has for a project and developed methodology. In Lithuania, the Red Cross employees sometimes reach out to schools on their own initiative offering to come to schools and hold a workshop on topics like migration, refugee crisis, tolerance, etc. (Lipnickiene, 2018). These workshops occur on ad hoc basis without a dedicated budget, solely based on the initiative and resources that NGO has. Though, activities that engage children tend to be more effective than lecture type workshops when children sit and listen to an adult. Therefore, more and more schools participate in projects that involve a lot of different interactive activities when children can learn by playing role games, watching or creating short films, visiting certain sites and meeting peers from other backgrounds. Community actors also create circumstances for children to take part in activities that raise awareness and promote respect for diversity. Quite recent example occurred in Canary Islands (Spain), where students produced a video to support refugee children. This was initiated by association of Child Friendly Cities (es. *Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia*) and Spanish Unesco Committee (*Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia*, 2018).

Activities aiming at bringing people together and promoting their interaction in a safe environment, are often perceived by stakeholders as having more sustainable result. The example from Northern Ireland also shows that well-thought methodology can also help people interact constructively. A group of NGOs came together to find solutions against misinformation about migrants and refugees, and developed The Belfast Friendship Club, which provides a safe place for interaction between different people. The club organizes workshops that bring together local people and asylum seekers (see box 13 below).

#### **Box 19. The Belfast Friendship Club in the Northern Ireland**

The Belfast Friendship Club (UK) initiated **Small Worlds café-style workshops** hosted by members of Belfast Friendship Club, which are typically refugees/asylum seekers in Northern Ireland. Small groups of 4 to 6 people meet at the table with hosts from different countries and have a conversation for 15 to 20 minutes at a time. The hosts introduce themselves and answer questions about the reasons they had to leave their countries of origin and about their life in Northern Ireland. The participants then move on to visit another 'Small World' (table) until they have met all of the hosts. Typically, Small Worlds workshops last to 1,5 to 2 hours. The purpose of this activity is to allow participants to have a meaningful interaction with people from other countries who host individual tables.

Small Worlds workshops have been organised throughout Northern Ireland since 2009 with many different audiences, including school children at both primary and secondary level, youth workers and teachers, community and youth groups, faith-based groups, business and community leaders. Experts explain that a lot of young people learn by experience and by the chance of actually getting to know people; therefore, initiatives that engage different people together help to realise that host society members and newly arrived people have far more in common than they thought.

Source: OpenDemocracy and Belfast Friendship Club websites, (2018).

In addition, there are many community centres across Europe that indirectly promote interactions between local community and asylum seekers as well as foreigners living in town. The primary function of these centres is providing a safe space for refugees and asylum seekers and a wide-range support (counselling, language classes, day care). However, the centres very often engage community members like neighbours and businesses in its activities too. For example, Trampoline House in Copenhagen (Denmark) invites neighbours to hang out at the centre during community dinners or social events, or contribute to activities by volunteering in language classes, barber shop, kitchen, organising a sport activity, etc. Norwegian Red Cross organise social gatherings for newly arrived people, for those who need new social circle (released from prison, trying to recover from substance abuse, mental illness) or simply feel lonely or isolated (Andersen, 2018). One company in Sweden launched a mobile application inviting local and migrant people to post and sign up for various activities to do together as well as chat function with instant translation, which facilitates the communication for people who do not speak the same language (Dankelaar, 2018). Another Swedish NGO based their mission to help different people become friends (see Box 20 below). Collaboration with schools in such initiatives are less evident though.

#### **Box 20. Initiative aimed at creating relationships between migrants and locals in Sweden**

Since 2013, the non-profit organisation Kompis Sverige in Sweden is helping established Swedes and newly arrived people to meet and become friends. The NGO founders believe that **creating relationships at the individual level is a necessary condition for a well-functioning multicultural society**; however, it is quite difficult for people to meet on their own. Organisation reaches out to migrant people through language schools and community centres, while social media helps to advertise the initiative among Swedish citizens.

First, interested people must register on the website, and either fill in a thorough questionnaire or book a timeslot for an interview. Employees

match people based on their interests, life situations, personality, etc. When organisation finds a good match, they schedule a meeting, where all new friend pairs are introduced. Afterwards it is up to pairs to plan their meetings. They can join the free group activities NGO arranges once a week, which can be anything from football to opera. People can bring other friends or family members to these activities. Friend pairs are also invited to visit museums and exhibitions, which offer free entry for participants. Typically, females are paired with females, male with male; and all participants are grouped into two groups: youth aged 15 to 21 and adults over 21 years-old. Couples are expected to hang out for at least six months, but the friendships created last longer. The organisation is funding its activities through donations by businesses and individuals, also applying to various grants, and municipality funding.

Source: Denkelaar (2018), Kompis Sverige (2018).

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An analysis of examples above demonstrates that there can be many types and forms of cooperation possibilities initiated by NGOs and CSOs, such as joint projects, training workshops, design and provision of extra-curricular activities for children. However, many interviewed stakeholders during the field work, report that there is **no systematic cooperation and evident synergies** between formal and non-formal learning actors. Many activities and programmes tend to be organised in isolation from each other and there are not always smooth information flows regarding possible cooperation opportunities. A German case-study on NGO-school partnerships revealed that many of the **NGO's learning materials did not cover topics closely related to the school curriculum** and they were therefore less easy to connect to formal education. NGO-school collaboration would be more successful if the teachers considered the event as strongly connected to their teaching and the quality of teaching. Furthermore, the NGOs did not always consider the **limited flexibility of the school**. NGOs sometimes planned rather ad-hoc events that could only be realised through enormous efforts of the school. It is therefore recommended that NGOs look into and work with existing school structures for non-formal education events to limit the pressure and stress of teachers (Bergmüller, 2016).

Another factor that can limit the creation of sustainable partnerships by NGOs is **uncertainty of funding**, which might force non-formal education providers carefully consider the activities they are engaging with and turn down requests for collaboration from schools (see e.g. Smyth and Ryan, 2018; Palaiologou, 2018). **Overreliance on short-term project funding** does not always ensure continuity of activities and achieving positive impact for children, if there is no possibility to maintain the work once the project funding is over.

The country reviews demonstrate that **very few NGO initiatives and programmes are actually evaluated**. In most cases, the results are measured based on the qualitative perceptions of programme participants or programme coordinators. Therefore, anecdotal evidence suggests that sometimes formal education providers are not certain about the quality of the non-formal learning programmes and their actual effects for children's development (see e.g., Yeasmin, 2018; Lipnickiene, 2018). For instance, a Lithuanian study found that although 42 per cent of all municipalities had prepared and approved procedures for external assessment of non-formal education programmes and those complementing formal education, they have not been carrying out external performance assessment, thus failing to ensure quality control of non-formal education of school-children (SMM, 2012). Linked with this, there is also **lack of validation and assessment tools** to measure how competences and skills gained through NFE activities contribute to overall children's learning plan. Furthermore, **the existing debate on validation of non-formal learning tend to mostly focus on higher or adult education** (LLL, 2018).

### 4.3. Partnerships initiated by schools

Although schools may often lack expertise to deal with particular challenges faced by migrant and refugee children, schools can be better placed to recognise and understand what additional services are needed to complement formal education, identify the children who need the services the most and then either refer them to outside services or invite professionals to school. Therefore, **schools themselves often engage in local partnerships with community members** that target the vulnerable children, such as migrant and refugee children, directly, through initiatives that are relevant for the setting of the school and its surroundings.

The evaluation of NGO-school cooperation in Germany highlighted three key motivations for teachers and schools to initiate such partnerships. Firstly, it relieves the increasing pressure and challenges teachers face in their daily work. Secondly, schools are more and more expected to open up and involve their community and connecting with local partners is an excellent opportunity to fulfil this requirement. Thirdly, the increasing freedom for teachers to define the content of class encouraged teachers to continue their professional development, for example through outside expert support (Bergmüller, 2016).

EU level comparative studies indicate that there are a number of such innovative and proactive schools across Europe, aiming to improve their pupils' learning experiences, and opening up to partnerships with wider stakeholders; however, **this tendency is still not systematic and mainstreamed** (see e.g., PPMI, 2018).

School-led initiatives can take a variety of forms. It can entail small partnerships between one school and one organisation to target a particular issue, but it can also involve wider partnerships which do not focus on a particular topic, but rather ensure that a wide range of services are directly available to the school and the pupils. Dutch education experts argue that a good community school (see the text box below) is a network of services in a community which "revolve around the school as a centre point", including for example after school care, libraries, sports facilities etc. (Schreuder, 2011).

### Box 21. Community schools in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands and Flanders, the development of the "Brede School" has gained popularity. This form of community schools involves partnerships between the school and community actors. Schools themselves can decide on and implement the principles of the community school, although in Flanders, they were often municipality-led. These schools also look to find subsidies themselves, rather than depending on structural government support. In the Netherlands, community primary schools are most well-established in the districts with migrant and socio-economically disadvantaged families. This development is a direct response to the need of parents and community actors in these neighbourhoods to be more involved in school affairs. Despite the introduction of the community school phenomenon, schools do not always implement the principles underlying the idea of the community school (such as creating a wide network of services) and often only cooperate with parents (Du Bois-Reymond, 2013).

Source: Du Bois-Reymond, 2013; Brederschool, 2018.

Similar approach is applied by some schools in Spain through establishing learning communities. In 1990s University of Barcelona promoted the implementation of Learning Communities (es. Comunidades de aprendizaje) in pre-school, primary school and secondary school; whereas, the method itself originated in South America. The results of this programme are better academic performance, lower dropout rates, less violence, better coexistence, higher quality of learning, higher rates of job placement, etc. The research suggests that activities comprising the model are universal and applicable to any educational environment. The practices described below feature methods of non-formal education and involve families and community members. Since these activities are based on a certain methodology, no additional funding is needed. Whether they are put to use depends entirely on the teacher motivation and determination.

### Box 22. Learning communities' approach in Spain

The Learning Communities are based on the application of the following activities, which can be applied separately or in combination. The first activity is **Interactive Groups**. Children make small teams of 4 or 5, as heterogeneous as possible in their levels of learning and interests. An adult from school personnel or community join each of the groups. The children must solve each challenge through an equal dialogue and move on to the next task after 15 or 20 minutes. Adults are in charge to promote the participation of all group members.

Another activity is called **Literary Circles**. The classroom setting is reorganised into a circle. Each child chooses the text ideas or excerpts that caught their attention and explain why they chose them. This is followed by an exchange of views between all participants with teacher moderation, who promotes equal participation. Most schools in Spain apply this learning approach. Teachers claim that it gives great results, as it approaches the book in a different way.

The third activity is the **Tutored Library**. The idea is to establish a space in school or in neighbourhood that could stay open and allow children to come to study. The tutors are volunteers who encourage interaction between different students, regardless of whether or not they are from the same grade.

Communities also **include family members**, which are offered a training space that become a commission that decides the content they study. The research showed that children with better academic performance have parents who continue to be trained/study. They increase their sense of learning, their expectations and commitment.

The **Educational participation of the community** seeks to integrate teachers, family members and even students into the management, planning and implementation of activities. The model also cares about the prevention and resolution of conflicts through consensus. In assemblies, the school community is committed to having a good coexistence.

Finally, **trainings** are offered to teachers. School headmaster in Salta (Spain) claims that some teachers find it difficult to accept different



approaches, and it takes time to adapt to them.

Source: Fernandez (2017).

**Availability of national or EU level funding programmes** with specific objectives aimed at promotion of partnerships and exchange of good practices among various education stakeholders, usually serve as one of the motivational factors for schools to design and engage in projects. For instance, **Erasmus+ funding programme** is the key EU programme to empower schools to develop their own projects and open up to the outside expertise, coming from schools or community actors from different EU countries. The projects contributing to migrant children inclusion take a variety of forms and target different audiences. First group of projects aim at teacher professional development; and usual activities include developing of methodological tools, teaching guidelines, exchange of experiences on how to teach diverse classrooms (e.g. Integration through Education (ITE), 2018). Another group of projects target all schoolchildren with awareness raising and tolerance promotion activities. For example, the Kaunas Jesuit Gymnasium works with schools from Italy, Spain, Netherlands and Turkey on a project called "Refugees Matter: from Challenges to Opportunities". The project aims to raise awareness and tolerance towards refugees within school community. The project includes a number of non-formal learning activities in collaboration with community stakeholders, like simulation games, debates, excursions, lectures, film screenings, photography exhibitions, volunteering, etc. (Lipnickiene, 2018). The third set of Erasmus+ projects target migrant children themselves aiming to increase their academic performance, employability, facilitate their inclusion into school and community environment, empower migrant youth to contribute to policy reform by articulating their educational needs and concerns, and with many more purposes (see some specific Erasmus+ illustrations from Slovenia in the box below).

### Box 23. School partnerships funded through Erasmus+ in Slovenia

Examples of three elementary schools currently involved in, and coordinating, three separate **Erasmus+ cooperation projects** focused on migration, integration and/or diversity at school in Slovenia.

**Elementary school Bršljin** works with three other schools across Europe on the project *Experiencing Diversity through Art* to help students from different cultures, aged from 12 to 15 years, learn about, explore and experience cultural diversity by using art as a medium for creative expression. In each country the students explore the theme of migration through literary stories and poems and the life stories of people who have migrated (from or in their local community).

The project *Do you speak culture? - Appreciate diversity to integrate culturally diverse students* (2017–2018) is coordinated by **Elementary school Gustav Šilih**, in collaboration with schools from Italy, Great Britain, Romania, Poland, Slovenia and France. The project assumes that a school is the beacon of community cohesion and expresses this through successful management of new arrivals in the education system. Posing the question 'Do you speak culture?' give the students the opportunity of appreciating their own cultural identity and understanding that of other people. In this equitable way the project promotes cultural exchange and mutual understanding in the spirit of cooperation, solidarity and mutual respect.

**Elementary school Jakob Aljaž** coordinated the project *Discovering cultural diversity with pupils and their parents*, aimed at sharing positive and rich experience in this area through international cooperation and exchange of good practices. Enabling the migrant pupils to actively express themselves and their culture could be a way to overcome discrimination and behavioural problems they still experience in the school. Their parents also participated in the project and the local community has been involved through media. The activities were carried out by migrant pupils and their parents with teachers' support and strived to encourage parents and pupils to actively learn about cultures of all of the pupils at the school.

Source: Gril (2018).

Some other small-scale initiatives involving out-of-school partners can include **lessons in non-traditional environments, guest speakers representing different professions to discuss a certain topic and/or profession orientation purposes, ad-hoc fieldtrips to museums or interactive exhibitions** (Lipnickiene, 2018). In Lithuania, for example, a bank set up a finance lab where teachers bring students to learn about personal finance management, planning of national budget, importance of saving and responsible borrowing (Swedbank, 2018). More ad-hoc cooperation can be established when schools undertake class trips to museums or scientific centres. However, research has shown that teachers who bring their children to a museum do not always have a specific goal for the visit or are unable to connect the visit to the classroom. Furthermore, museums often treat a school group as one single entity, rather than as a group of individuals with personal interests and characteristics. Research among the museum staff showed that their role merely involved the display of the information. This shows that a more in-depth cooperation between the school and the museum could make a field visit significantly more beneficial (Eshach, 2007).

The strong role of the school as encourager of sports can be especially beneficial for migrant girls. As also mentioned above, migrant parents value a strong relationship with school and often put more trust in the school than in the “unknown sports clubs”. The unfamiliarity with sports culture in the host country together with prevailing traditions and scepticism can make migrant girls’ parents prevent their daughters from playing. When a school closely cooperates with a sports club, for example by inviting the club for activities in the school itself, **the trusted school can build a bridge to the sports facilities**. The Kicking Girls project in Germany is a good example of such cooperation (Sträter, 2012).

Explorative analysis of barriers that can possibly explain, why not all schools yet engage in partnerships and involve non-formal education actors to enhance children’s learning experiences, and support integration of migrant and refugee children in particular, suggests the following potential reasons:

- **Schools which need help do not know which associations to contact or how to establish such partnerships.** In France, for example, NGO’s or community organisations are better aware of which schools are in need of additional support (in particular those with many migrant children) and projects are therefore more often initiated by the organisations than by the schools (Auger, 2018).
- **Lack of school vision and overarching strategy** when it comes to the community actors’ involvement. Some comparative studies report the phenomena of the so-called ‘project schools’ hectically applying for funding to implement a series of projects, which are not always connected or well thought-through and therefore not leading to any significant impact for the school or its learners (PPMI, 2018). In such schools most programs are introduced as a succession of fragmented initiatives, isolated from other programs, and the school becomes a hodgepodge of prevention and youth development initiatives, with little direction, coordination, sustainability, or impact (Durlak et al, 2010).
- **Uneven capacity and competence of school staff** to integrate non-formal learning effectively to design a holistic learning approach for their students. Schools are often short of staff and short of time. Usually there is no particular person among the school staff who has expertise and is allocated time for project development and fundraising. This represents a considerable barrier for many schools that simply lack the time and expertise to go through the often rather complicated application procedures as well as fund management (Köhler and Lotter, 2018; PPMI, 2018). Without the sufficient staff, connections to the non-formal sector and networks cannot be established in the way it would be necessary. Related to that is also the problem that each school designs its own concept of school life. This means, the non-formal sector – offering activities for schools – has to be informed quite well about the respective schooling concept and thus, adapt their activities to each individual school (Ibid).
- **Lack of training opportunities and support for school staff.** For instance, German country report concludes that teacher graduates are not prepared for the concept of all-day schools, but only for regular schools. In order to establish the concept of collaboration with the non-formal sector, preparation for this approach should start in university. For example, classes for social workers and teacher students together could be offered in order to prepare them together for the challenges they will face and identify potential for cooperation (Köhler and Lotter, 2018).
- **Regulatory constraints in education law** and policies may prevent schools from choosing the activities they want to implement (Yemini et.al., 2018). In centralised systems, such as Greece or Portugal, schools may have more constraints in organisation and interpretation of the school curricula, which may pose barriers for mainstreaming partnerships and links between formal and non-formal education areas (Palaiologou, 2018; Silva, Costa and Caetano, 2018). However, a recent initiative of the government in Portugal is to give schools freedom in defining 25% of its curricula, which aims to facilitate schools’ collaboration with external actors<sup>8</sup>.
- **Lack of synchronised understanding on how NFE can be conceptualised as an important element of achieving national and school curricular learning goals.** Integration of NFE activities into the formal learning process requires more coordination effort from the school staff, as well as effective planning on how such activity adds value to a particular learning outcome. It is crucial that non-formal education is continuous – one-off project with the museum does not yet constitute effective synergy and may not contribute to the development of particular competences of children. Some experts mention that there is also a ‘trust’ issue when it comes to collaboration between teachers and non-formal education staff, who might not have necessary pedagogical qualifications<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Comment from ACM during the SIRIUS policy workshop (September 20, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Inputs from the SIRIUS policy workshop (September 20, 2018).

## CHAPTER 5. CONDITIONS FACILITATING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Traditional schooling methods often fail to keep students and teachers engaged and to ensure that each individual students' needs are met. The ongoing development of inspiring schooling practices, going beyond formal education structures, is reflected in the growing body of research on the effectiveness of specific educational approaches. As we have seen in Chapter 4, some of these developments are driven and sustained by schools and teachers themselves and some are by civil society actors. They foster collaborative, risk-sharing cultures that develop and support positive change in schools and education systems. In some cases, such practices are initiated by the local or national education authorities. However, capitalising on the benefits of different learning spaces and promoting collaborative approach towards students' learning is still not systematic in Europe. While analysing the reported initiatives and broader literature, a number of factors stood out that can either facilitate or hinder collaboration between schools and community actors. We will explore some of these factors in the current chapter. These barriers often include a lack of consistent policy priorities, inadequate systems of teacher and school leader professional development, and school accountability mechanisms that tend to define school success too narrowly and discourage experimentation and opening up (Burns & Köster, 2016; Fullan & Langworthy, 2014).

### 5.1. Shift in the policy perspective

One of the factors that hinders partnerships between formal and non-formal education providers might be **insufficient recognition** (among different types of education stakeholders) of the benefits these partnerships bring. Some decision makers and educators within the formal education system still might see non-formal education as the *poor cousin* of formal education (UNESCO, 2006:88) and there is lack of clear conceptualisation of NFE as an additional tool for achieving national curricular goals.

The positive perception among policy makers towards NFE could encourage authorities to promote partnerships by developing national or regional strategies, investing into affordability and quality of NFE provision, providing necessary trainings, developing guidelines on collaboration, improving the capacities of schools and non-formal education actors to engage in collaboration instances, etc. Finland is one of a few countries that recognise the importance of such partnerships on strategic level and showcase the successful policy implementation.

#### **Box 24. Recognising importance of partnerships between formal and non-formal education on strategic and implementation levels in Finland**

From strategic point of view, **Finnish education system acknowledges the importance of synergies between formal and non-formal education** by including lessons outside school building in the regional educational curricula. The implementation of partnerships also seems successful. On top of usual extra-curricular activities, Finnish school encourage children to engage in activities that entails partnerships with outside actors: these activities may focus on citizenship education, entrepreneurship, volunteering, etc. Also, public authorities fund different projects aimed at creation of unusual learning contexts when formal and non-formal education connect. For example, students can collaborate with local radio broadcasting company and participate in selecting news topics. Especially wide supply of activities is available in the **field of science, mathematics and technology**. The Finnish National Board of Education established **LUMA programme** that later was institutionalised and currently serves as a network aiming to inspire and motivate children to take interest into mathematics, science and technology through the innovative methods and activities of science and technology education. The LUMA Centre in collaboration with universities, businesses, schools and other stakeholders organizes science clubs and science camps for children throughout Finland, supports the life-long learning of teachers working on different levels of education from early childhood to universities, and strengthens the development of research-based teaching, etc.

Source: Yeasmin (2018), LUMA (2018).

The lack of recognition for non-formal education might be illustrated with a couple of examples found in country reports. Some experts report that coordination between formal and non-formal education often lacks consistency. The country data refers to ad hoc practices aimed at recognising competences acquired through non-formal education programmes in a formal education setting. However, in practice there are relatively few arrangements when competences are formally recognised. Furthermore, the existing debate covers mostly the validation of non-formal learning at the higher education level or in adult education. Some say that the desired/ultimate outcome of coordination between

formal and non-formal education would be that higher education institutions recognise competences acquired through NFE and consider them while admitting students (Lipnickiene, 2018). Also, it seems that NFE activities are rarely officially integrated into school curricula. The information provided by country experts implies that learning plans do not define how much time schools should allocate to extra-curricular activities or provide guidelines on the format of such collaboration, with the exception of Finland, Lithuania and Portugal (among the 18 Member States covered by this report).

## 5.2. Need for national or regional strategies for non-formal education

The previous chapter suggested that partnerships between schools and communities with the view to enhance children's learning and facilitate the integration of migrant children typically occur on ad-hoc basis and are initiated by individual schools or community members. Collaboration on the local level is praiseworthy, as state or federal governments are not always aware of the exact need on the ground. However, a more systematic approach is necessary to ensure an even quality of schooling for all children and integration opportunities for migrant children.

The country fiche synthesis disclosed so far that **partnerships between schools and community actors is still a new policy matter and so far, are not considered a priority** by education authorities. Country experts indicated that efforts to create synergies between formal and non-formal education exist, but they are not widespread across Europe. Strategies describing concept of a good school or good quality education tend to mention the importance of continuity between formal and non-formal education. Individual countries encourage cooperation between schools and non-formal education: Estonia has funded projects promoting partnerships between youth work organisations and general and vocational schools (Haugas and Mägi, 2018); Finnish educational authorities support collaboration between schools and organisations when promoting interactive math, science and technology learning (Yeasmin, 2018), etc. Even though some countries generally recognise the importance of partnerships in their strategic documents; there is no always adequate follow-up at the implementation stage. Education strategies usually lack well defined goals, operationalised objectives and action plan, evaluation procedures or other quality assurance tools regarding how partnership should be implemented in practice. Therefore, it is crucial that education stakeholders develop general strategic goals into operationalised objectives, target indicators, implementation guidelines, etc. Effective monitoring and evaluation system of how these objectives are implemented also needs to be in place. Integrating criteria on measuring the extent and quality of 'communication and cooperation with school community' into external school evaluations could be one of the solutions. Education systems at the moment lack related quality assurance instruments designed to assess the status of reaching out. It seems that at the moment only Polish authorities monitor the schools' outreach to local stakeholders, which is an integral part of school evaluation plan (Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz, 2018).

When it comes to migrant children integration, the general trend is that national/regional policies do not have specific and verbalised aims to create synergies between formal and non-formal education in order to facilitate migrant children inclusion in education. Nevertheless, sporadic efforts to coordinate formal and non-formal education in this regard are visible. The Slovenian Government has established a model of migrant integration into education, which encourages mutual efforts of school and local environment in providing learning support, Slovene language and mother tongue lessons, and extra-curricular activities (Gril, 2018). Similarly, in Gdansk (Poland), the Immigrant Integration Model explicitly recommends that schools cooperate with external partners like higher education institutions and NGOs to meet the needs of students, parents, teachers and other school staff with the view of integrating migrant students. The Swedish Government took action to improve the conditions for cooperation between the public sector and civil society, initiating a study that identified measures that could improve the ability of civil society to carry out its activities and reduce the administrative burden on organisations (Denkelaar, 2018). Portuguese authorities also show an effort to encourage diversity in schools. Ministry of Education and the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue recognises schools, which, through their practices, promote appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity by awarding them with 'Intercultural School Stamp' (Marques da Silva, Costa, Caetano 2018). Also, some countries have made policy statements that recognise the importance of non-formal education aimed at migrant integration or emphasise the role of community organisations in the process of establishing contact between newcomers and local communities (e.g. Lithuania, Norway).

In addition, a **few countries have made explicit statements promoting equity and social cohesion** while developing non-formal education opportunities. Those who did, emphasise that non-formal education should help decrease the effects of poverty, cultural deprivation or tackle social integration problems (e.g., in Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary). There are differences in the definition of target groups, i.e. they might be defined in a broader sense or in a narrower way. For example, the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science has stated that non-formal education should be promoted to include children from culturally, geographically, socially and economically unfavourable environments or those with special needs into society (Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, 2012). By contrast, Croatia has identified Roma children as a target group at the strategic level, claiming that interventions aimed at the inclusion should start from preschool (Gospodnetić, 2018).



Several countries designed nation-wide education strategies encompassing both formal and non-formal education to provide all-rounded assistance to children from disadvantaged backgrounds, targeting migrant and refugee children in particular (such as Programa Escolhas in Portugal, or federal mentoring projects and all-day schools in Germany). For instance, the quality framework for all-day schools in Bavaria provides basic standards for the cooperation with external actors that schools have to fulfil. The standards imply e.g. the school's institutional, personal and thematic opening including a respectful and professional communication between schools and external partners. While the basic standards are very general, there are further options of advancement without normative character, e.g. continuous consultations between teachers and external stakeholders, inclusion of out-of-school learning places, community participation in school or local events, etc. (ISB, 2013). While the framework provides very detailed options for collaboration there is no explicit link with migrants' or refugees' inclusion. In contrast, the Bundesland Rheinland-Pfalz names explicitly the "Integration of migrant children" as a reason for the funding and building of all-day schools (KMK, 2015).

**Cross-sectoral approaches are present with regard to overall migrant integration but not with a focus on collaboration between formal and non-formal education.** A number of ministries participate in the preparation of strategies and action plans to think through all relevant steps. These kinds of strategies focus on policy measures related to foreigner employment, education, access to social and health services, attitudes of the host society, etc. Sometimes non-formal education for children might be mentioned as a narrow aspect within an action plan; however, these action plans do not make explicit reference to collaboration between formal and non-formal education providers. For example, in the Lithuanian strategy one of the measures in the field of education aims to enable foreign children to participate in formal and non-formal education programmes (Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 2017). Norwegian country report indicates that the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Immigration cooperate on the administrative level, while planning and funding programmes aimed at the participation of newly arrived students (Andersen, 2018).

Finally, exploratory analysis of country reports suggests that countries experiencing few migrant inflows **often have less developed models for integration into formal education.** The Lithuanian Educational Development Centre is currently developing this type of model. In Croatia, there is evidence of for ad-hoc collaboration taking place. The Zagreb Municipality organised several meetings with school representatives and civil society organisations to prepare for the schooling of asylum-seeking children that would attend a particular school. Meetings have helped schools prepare and have allowed them to network with organisations that work with refugees. In addition, a social worker employed by the Ministry of Interior has collaborated with a school and facilitated the enrolment of students, which usually lasts longer due to bureaucratic hurdles (Gospodnetić, 2018). The latter example proves that attention and support from high-level public authorities to individual cases of migrant integration considerably facilitate processes by solving certain bureaucratic issues more efficiently.

What emerges from this review of national reports is that there is a need for a much more accentuated strategic focus at national and regional levels on promotion of non-formal education generally and its integration into overall education strategy, defining particular aspects how it can contribute to better learning of children overall and disadvantaged groups of children in particular.

### 5.3. Funding opportunities and schemes

Finance is often mentioned in literature as one of the barriers to the development of a systematic strategy for collaboration at the national level (Downes, 2011). In order to implement a policy change, policy makers must not only set political priorities in certain fields but also **ensure that appropriate resources and implementation strategies are made available to support these priorities.**

Broader literature review suggests that in some countries the school funding models can **restrict the way school management can use available funds**, which limits their opportunities to engage in partnerships that require financial resources. Evidence in literature indicates that the main barrier to developing a school's capacity to adopt innovative practices relates more to the way funding is distributed and not simply to the amount of funds (PPMI, 2018:106).

At the same time there is **a lack of sustainable funding for civil society initiatives**, which results in fragmentation of projects and lack of continuity of activities. Even though NGOs identify the need to provide non-formal education opportunities to refugees or migrant children in general; the insufficient opportunities to get funding limits their capacity to continue successful projects, and consequently prevents long-term policy changes. For example, Lithuanian Caritas had organised a summer camp for migrant and other children, and though the camp proved to be successful they could not continue the initiative due to inability to get funding next year.

Previous chapters and subchapters demonstrated that there were very few examples of governmental programmes that **specifically encourage partnerships** between schools and communities **to facilitate migrant children inclusion.** Governmental programmes are much more likely to target all children; however, often socio-economically disadvantaged children face larger barriers in taking part in existing NFE

activities and the programmes themselves do not foresee mechanisms to address these barriers. Civil society organisations and schools are more likely to implement such initiatives based on the local needs of the community. Often, such projects are financed through European or international programmes, such as Erasmus + and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (European Commission, 2015c). However, overreliance on fragmented project funds can create sustainability risks, as was mentioned earlier. Interviewed stakeholders referred to the phenomenon of the so-called 'project schools', when schools try to participate in as many projects as possible, without making a lasting impact and change on the quality of teaching and learning. At the same time, these schools seem unable to continue the new practices with lower budgets and to innovate further once the support from extra funds ends (PPMI, 2018).

However, it seems that the EU has been a major source of funding for development of the non-formal education sector in some countries. The Erasmus+ programme has been supporting a **variety of partnerships targeting migrant children, their teachers, and children of host societies**. For example, there are projects aimed at creating methodological tools and guidelines to support teacher preparedness to teach immigrant and refugee children and provide them with inspiration on educational and integrational activities and their topics (Integration Through Education (ITE), 2018). Other projects focus on raising awareness and tolerance towards refugees within the school community by involving mainstream students in simulation games, debates, excursions, lectures, film screenings, photography exhibitions, volunteering, etc. (Refugees Matter, 2017). There are projects that aim to empower migrant youth to contribute to policy reform by articulating their educational needs and concerns at youth forums, round tables and meetings with stakeholders (Erasmus+, 2018). When it comes to the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund, the main share of funds are managed and programmed by Member States, which lay down their priorities in multiannual programmes (European Commission, 2015d). This means that there is a window for NGOs to advocate for the priority of migrant children integration through formal and non-formal education partnerships to be set and dedicate funding from EU funds.

When it comes to NFE affordability to children, it seems that basic extra-curricular activities and opportunities are free of charge around Europe, especially when they are provided at schools or under state funded programmes. For example, some activities offered under all day school approach when they are provided by school community are likely to be free; NGO provided services and activities are usually free too, as well as participation in school projects. On the other hand, activities that feature more sophisticated methodology, expensive tools, more qualified providers are usually subject to a fee. Similarly, participation in school projects might require extra costs when they entail transportation/travel costs, additional specific tools or supplies. Also, sometimes activities that are free of charge in their design are based on the first come first served principle, which limits access to disadvantaged children, as their families might lack relevant information to express willingness to participate on time. Taking these limitations into account, it seems that children from well-off families are more likely to get access to better quality NFE; therefore, policy makers should put efforts to develop more affordable and high-quality programmes to all children<sup>10</sup>.

#### 5.4. Professional development and methodological support

The importance of professional development for teachers – taking advantage of partnerships with community actors, using non-formal learning methods, dealing with diversity in the classroom – is emphasised in literature and EU documents (Downes, 2011: 327-328; European Commission, 2010). OECD data indicates that many **teachers themselves feel ill-prepared to teach ethnically diverse classes**. According to the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) data, large proportions of teachers in several countries reported that they need more professional development in the area of teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting. The proportions are large in the European countries that recently saw rapid increases in the linguistic and cultural diversity in their schools, notably Italy (27%) and Spain (19%) (OECD, 2015a: 16-17).

Our analysis of country briefings reveals that majority of countries have no systematic training for educational professionals on how to engage with non-formal education providers in EU countries. With regard to **pre-service training**, teacher training programmes in higher education institutions can sometimes include subjects that focus on equipping future teachers with abilities to apply non-formal education methods and raising awareness on topics like inclusion, multiculturalism, diversity, etc. However, managers of each study programme decide whether these subjects are mandatory or elective; therefore, the status of the subject varies. For example, the Education Process Planning course at the Lithuanian Vytautas Magnus University and Inclusive Teaching at Vilnius College are mandatory to all future teachers. While Education Project Management, Non-Formal Education, Cultural Diversity, Intercultural Education are elective courses (Vilnius College, 2017).

When it comes to **in-service support**, countries that have more experience with migration and integration consistently offer training activities for educational professionals. The providers involve business organisations, universities, NGOs and topics cover multicultural teaching, newcomer inclusion, intercultural learning, etc. However, training on the methods and strategies for engaging with NFE actors to enhance

<sup>10</sup> Based on the literature review and policy workshop discussions (September 20, 2018).

migrant children learning experiences is rather ad hoc in most of the studied countries. According to the research, there is no obligatory training in how to cooperate with non-formal education actors in Germany. However, within the quality framework for open all-day schools the Bavarian State Ministry for Education and Culture recommends the “Use of team-oriented trainings (for teachers and externals)” and “periodic and institutionalized forms of collaboration between school management, teachers and externals (e.g. team meetings)”. This shows that at least the importance of collaboration and trainings is recognized (Köhler and Lotter, 2018). In Lithuania, national authorities in the field of education disseminate methodological tools to teachers; collaborate with textbook writers to prevent cultural or social stereotypes; provide supervision for schools on refugee children education; and plan to hold training on how to teach Lithuanian from the zero level (Lipnickienė, 2018). In Estonia, public authorities implemented awareness raising activities on the benefits of cooperation between formal and non-formal education and encouraged schools to share their knowledge and experience (Haugas and Mägi, 2018). In Croatia, the Teacher Training Agency also focuses on competence development of Croatian language teachers, particularly on teaching Croatian as a foreign language (Gospodnetić, 2018). In addition, schools that receive students with migrant background face a challenge in assessing their previous learning experience, competences and skills they acquire in the process of migration and multiple transitions. Various stakeholders agree on the need for tools that would allow teachers to map children skills and competences.

Sometimes the gap in methodological support is filled by **Erasmus+ projects** initiated by NGOs. For example, the Social Educational Initiatives Centre Plus (Lithuanian NGO), together with four partner organisations from Poland, Italy, Portugal and Spain, have created an online platform giving access to various tools and guidelines for teachers and youth workers. The materials are available on the dedicated website in five languages: Lithuanian, Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian (Integration through Education, 2018).

Apart from uneven teacher training opportunities, it seems that additional incentives and specific guidelines are not introduced. EU Member States typically do not motivate schools employing incentives that would encourage engaging in partnerships with non-formal education sector for the inclusion of migrant children and young people. National experts also did not manage to find evidence about specific guidelines on school and non-formal education actors’ collaboration.

Besides teacher professional development, Holliday and Lederman (2014) suggest that practices and **professional development of staff working in non-formal learning environments is an issue** that needs more intense research and research-based development. It is important for the non-formal education sector in general which may be characterised by staff on short-term contracts and with high staff turnover, to build a strategic approach to learning and shared methodologies of teaching, wherever possible (Dawnes, 2011). The country reports produced for this study did not document availability of consistent training opportunities for non-formal education professionals, with the exception of the few examples. For instance, In Norway and Finland, stakeholders deliver special trainings for non-formal education professionals to prepare them for working with migrant and refugee children. In Germany, business organisations and NGOs provide extensive programmes for people either working in the field of migrant integration or willing to become certified social counsellors or refugee assistance specialists (ComFair, 2018).

## 5.5. Adequate level of school autonomy in decision making

The absence of strategic objectives for partnerships between formal and non-formal education at central level does not mean that schools are not initiating it on their own. As seen from the discussion above, innovative practice is often driven by grassroots, schools themselves or non-governmental organisations, especially when education system features a high level of decentralisation and school autonomy (PPMI, 2018: 66).

Research shows that ability of schools to adopt innovations and open up to wider stakeholders depends on their autonomy over teaching methods, operationalisation of curricular and learning goals and funding distribution. It is important for schools to be able to adjust the curriculum according to the children needs and choose suitable teaching methods (PPMI, 2018:106). On the other hand, it important to stress that while such autonomy may have advantages, systems with greater school discretion can have greater inequity in provision and outcomes. Flexibility to respond to needs of children and young people in a particular context may, in some cases, reinforce gendered and classed assumptions about their interests and capacities. Therefore, school autonomy must be accompanied by introduction of balanced accountability mechanisms, which should focus on mutual responsibility towards quality of education, while supporting experimentation, risk taking and innovation, and the participation of stakeholders in decision making (PPMI, 2018: 106).

## 5.6. Networks as a tool to promote engagement with non-formal actors

School-to-school collaboration and networks can also be an important factor in promoting innovation in teaching and learning organisation, involving wider stakeholders into the process (PPMI, 2018: 13). Networks can help fill gaps related to insufficient teacher preparedness to

teach multicultural classes and encourage collaboration with non-formal education providers. When there is fragmented methodological support, professional networking might be an important factor for innovative school practices to develop, spread and embed.

School-to-school collaboration activities facilitate the application of new methods and practices for several reasons. First, it gives school staff **access to information** about innovative pedagogies and organisational practices applied in different classrooms, provide an opportunity to discuss them, and generate new ideas (European Commission, 2014). By sharing knowledge, teachers **get inspired** to implement new practices after observing and peer-reviewing practices in other schools. In addition, peer learning activities can **shape teacher attitudes** towards certain teaching practices. Exchange of experience among colleagues might encourage teachers to rethink advantages and shortcomings of innovations and become enthusiastic about employing a new method at work (PPMI, 2018).

Peer learning may take different forms, ranging from flexible networking arrangements to more formalised structures. Knowledge exchange could be encouraged through joint training sessions, school visits, shadowing practices, exchange of curriculum ideas, etc. Also, international exchange projects might provide ideas and techniques that are unavailable in a specific country at that particular moment (PPMI, 2018: 97). Special efforts should be put into engaging schools from remote areas or socio-economically disadvantaged regions. Distance from other stakeholders might prevent collaboration; and therefore, limit their personnel attending seminars and getting feedback from peers (PPMI, 2018: 94).

Several country reports suggest that multi-stakeholder networks can facilitate collaboration between schools and NFE actors. For instance, in Germany, the municipality Nuremberg tries to establish local networks among relevant stakeholders in neighbourhoods with a special need of social development. The cooperation between day-care centres, schools, libraries, cultural centres, social services, churches, and associations is supposed to create synergies that again facilitate the detection of structural shortages, the clustering of resources, and the development and implementation of suitable solutions. As a result, measures can be directly oriented towards the local needs and improve existing supporting structures and developing opportunities for the residents. **Network coordinators** act as central contact persons for any kind of issues related to the network and its activities (for more information see: Referat für Jugend, Familie und Soziales) (Koehler and Lotter, 2018).

### Box 25. Example of multi-stakeholder network in Germany

Within the project “Ein Quadratkilometer Bildung” (one square kilometre of education) the participants try to create **a local network of education** in order to provide a successful participation in the education system and prospects for individual educational success for all children and young people. Within the network, a common understanding of quality is encouraged between day-care facilities for children, facilities for children and young people, and schools. The project is implemented in 10 different regions in Germany that are confronted with especially high social pressure and unequally distributed education opportunities. Different actors and also different funders are involved depending on the particular place - local initiatives of public partners of Bundesländer and municipalities and civil participants (foundations and private agencies). For instance, in NRW the project is funded among others by the municipalities and the regional government of NRW (for more information see: Ein Quadratkilometer Bildung).

In NRW “Ein Quadratkilometer Bildung” works in Dortmund, Wuppertal and Herten. The network structures differ slightly. Exemplary, the network in Wuppertal is explained in more detail. The network Wuppertal is located in the district “Nordstadt”, that is one of the most densely populated districts in Wuppertal. The district is characterised by a high unemployment rate, a low educational level and high poverty. The project started in August 2009 and after several months of initial phase it was officially opened in July 2010. It was established by the municipality of Wuppertal, the Land NRW, the Regionale Arbeitsstellen für Bildung, Integration und Demokratie (Regional Working Group for Education, Integration and Democracy) (RAA) Wuppertal and the Freudenberg Foundation.

“Ein Quadratkilometer Bildung” in Wuppertal has two central objectives: To extend the opportunities for children to develop 1) their language skills and 2) their personality. The program supports children individually to develop their reading, writing and maths skills; it aims to establish a literacy-culture in the district, provide individual learning support, and foster parental participation, integration and mentoring of the program implementation in schools. Furthermore, in each district that implements a “Quadratkilometer” there is a pedagogical workshop. That’s a place where pedagogical specialists, parents and volunteers meet, talk, exchange experiences and information, etc.

Source: Köhler and Lotter (2018).

## 5.7. The need for evaluation and research evidence

To identify a problem or monitor policy change, it is crucial to have at least some reliable data. Otherwise, it is impossible to argue whether the increased/decreased availability of non-formal education has an impact on the life chances of the people and communities taking part in



the activities. Country profile analysis demonstrates that **there are very few formal evaluations available on the quality of non-formal education**:

- Most evaluations and studies identified focused on **policies that regulate formal education for migrant students**. In Croatia, an NGO that conducted a study concluded that due to bureaucratic obstacles refugee children are enrolled into schools later than determined by public policies, assessment of previous schooling is not standardised, the duration of language training is not sufficient for newly-arrived students, (Bužinkić, 2017). Greek researchers (see e.g., Palaiologou 2018) assessed the children education processes in refugee camps and recommended to organize intensive courses for children that have gaps in their knowledge, introduce certification mechanisms for junior and senior school leaving certificates, prepare guidelines and principles for NGOs working with refugee children education in refugee camps, etc.
- **Portuguese authorities on a regular basis evaluate nationwide Choices Programme** (pt. Escolhas Program) that aims to promote social inclusion of children and young people from vulnerable backgrounds. Also, authorities plan to evaluate implementation of migrant integration strategy and migrant integration into education system. At the moment several ongoing studies analyse refugee reception policies, role and practices of institutions responsible for refugee integration and psychological adjustment of refugee population in Portugal.
- In Lithuania, public authorities initiated **two evaluations assessing non-formal education provision**. The National Audit Report concluded that quality of NFE programmes was insufficient due to the absence of external evaluation of extra-curricular programmes, absence of quality requirements for NFE providers and lack of resources. The report also noted that children living in remote or rural areas do not have equally good access to NFE; data on NFE providers, participants and funding is inaccurate; and municipalities provide a considerable large amount of funding to a limited number of NFE programmes (Lithuanian Audit Office, 2015). After a pilot of new NFE funding mechanism (voucher system) in four municipalities, consequent evaluation concluded that the new funding system increased the variety of extra-curricular activities available to children, influenced the decrease of prices for many programmes, and improved overall access to non-formal education for many children.

Even though the importance of linking different learning spaces and capitalise on the benefits of both tend to be mentioned in national strategies for education; however, specific implementation structures and evaluations of whether these goals are achieved are lacking in many Member States. Though non-formal education opportunities have increased much in the past years, it seems that the search for finding best practices and understanding their effects has only started.

Sirius national partners report that **very rarely official statistics and monitoring data is collected on the quality, accessibility and affordability of non-formal education activities**, for disadvantaged groups of children in particular. When such activities are evaluated then it is usually done on the basis of satisfaction measurements among participants. Many of available evaluations are largely qualitative and process-based, often amounting to little more than a stock-take of actions taken. It is likely that more projects have been evaluated but documents are not readily available. This is particularly true of smaller-scale projects receiving funds from the European Commission or charitable foundations.

Taking the scarcity of the evaluation data, it is imperative to make sure that more systematic monitoring is conducted to explore the key strengths and elements of school-community partnerships, to what extent they influence specific children's skills and learning success, and which specific arrangements contribute to the integration of migrant and refugee children in the best way, as well as how different cultural and societal contexts influence programmes' impact.

## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY POINTERS

The benefits that non-formal education has on improving learning outcomes, personal child development and migrant children integration are widely recognised in literature. NFE activities might stimulate a child's interest in learning and motivate them to stay in school. Also, participation in NFE might develop various student personality traits like self-confidence, responsibility, attentiveness, etc. With regard to migrant children, NFE programmes are often used as transition and support tools to integrate them into formal education. Also, NFE can help children while learning new languages, developing intercultural and social skills, overcoming traumatic experiences and stress, preserving cultural heritage and native language, etc.

Our literature review and document analysis have shown that partnerships between schools and community actors can have a number of important benefits. First, collaboration between education stakeholders contributes to overall child development by ensuring continuity in their routines and ensuring holistic development by linking learning experiences acquired in different areas of life. Second, involving community actors in school activities can provide schools with additional expertise they may lack, and in this way support schools in equipping children with competences that will help them later in life. Finally, partnering in fundraising and bringing NFE activities closer to difficult-to-reach target groups can increase participation among migrant children in NFE activities and promote school-community partnerships *per se*.

This review explored the availability and consistency of such collaborative practices among schools and non-formal education actors, and how they can facilitate migrant and refugee children inclusion in education and communities at large, as well as whether and how such partnerships can be promoted on the system level. The study's conclusions and policy implications are presented below.

### Availability of projects and initiatives and their complementarity

**Key finding 1.** Partnerships between schools and non-formal education providers are not yet widespread and systematic.

This review has revealed that partnerships between formal and non-formal education providers are still rather ad hoc in many Member States, with a few exceptions when they are promoted strategically. Civil society organisations and individual schools initiate this kind of collaboration much more often than municipalities or national education authorities. Even though examples demonstrate that when education authorities play a coordination and supportive role, such collaboration projects are much more sustainable and continuous. There seems to be no complete agreement among educators and authorities on the importance of non-formal education programmes *per se* and whether strengthening this element of learning takes away from investment in improving the formal school system. Furthermore, there is often the issue of inconsistency of the quality of educational initiatives led by non-formal education sector. Our review indicates a number of persisting challenges that currently affect the effective delivery of non-formal education activities for children and their official recognition as part of children's holistic development for the need of the 21<sup>st</sup> century societies:

- validation and effective assessment of skills and competences acquired through out-of-school activities and their inclusion into children's learning portfolio;
- definition of roles of both education authorities and formal and non-formal educators in the provision and integration of non-formal education;
- ensuring quality provision and monitoring of learning outcomes as a result of participating in non-formal education activities.

#### Way forward

- ✓ Education stakeholders need to embrace the potential of collaboration between formal and non-formal education and systematically recognise the benefits it brings to all children.
- ✓ There is a need for clear strategies and implementation framework on how synergies between formal and non-formal learning could be promoted, leaving sufficient flexibility at the local level on designing the format of such collaboration. These strategies should include in-built monitoring element and definition of roles of policy-makers and practitioners in this process.
- ✓ There is a need to synchronize the understanding of how NFE can be conceptualized as an important element of achieving broader curricula goals across Europe (for instance, EU and national level curricula frameworks could specify the role of NFE in facilitating the acquisition of some of the skills and competences). Therefore, there is a need for a clear strategy on what learning objectives can be met by NFE and partnerships between schools and NFE and how this can be measured. The framework defining operation of NFE

providers is needed – which would also help to monitor the quality.

*Key finding 2.* Governmental initiatives usually target all children universally without an explicit aim at migrant integration; however, often they can benefit migrant children as well, provided supporting mechanisms are present to ensure the take up of such opportunities by migrant and refugee children.

When implementing NFE programmes, governments usually target all children without an explicit aim at migrant integration. The typical examples of state programmes usually include all-day schools, in-school NFE provision, vouchers for NFE, and other schemes. The extent to which migrant children can benefit from these programmes depends largely on their affordability, availability across the regions and targeted information dissemination about available education opportunities. However, there are examples when national governments design large-scale nation-wide NFE programmes targeting directly migrant or refugee children (such as Reception facilities for refugee education in Greece or Choices programme in Portugal). Also, it has been observed that municipalities, especially in more decentralised education systems, are often proactive in supporting multi-stakeholder partnerships for inclusion through funding or coordination. However, the scale and quality of such initiatives varies from municipality to municipality.

#### Way forward

- ✓ There is a need to develop a shared vision for multi-stakeholder collaboration, identifying existing strengths and support for partnerships and building on those strengths. Examples suggest that availability of clear regulatory frameworks for collaboration, as well as responsible contact points linking different stakeholders together can ensure better synergies between various educational offers.
- ✓ Public authorities should ensure that available NFE programmes are accessible to different groups of children. It is important to provide newly-arriving families with necessary information about educational options in languages they understand and at places that are relevant and accessible to them. Relevant information should be collected, published in a friendly manner, constantly updated, and spread in places that migrant families frequent.
- ✓ When possible, public authorities should also tailor national programmes to the needs of migrant children and increase their accessibility in terms of membership fees waivers and physical accessibility.
- ✓ Education authorities should also invest in developing a wide network of diverse and high quality non-formal education opportunities (especially in smaller towns and rural areas), which could be sensitive to the diversity of target population.

*Key finding 3.* Even though civil society actors implement various programmes that target migrant children specifically; the examples suggest that such projects are often not consistent in engaging with formal education provision and often function in isolation.

With regard to NGO and community-led partnerships, the review demonstrates that they implement a variety of projects that aim to improve the wellbeing of migrant children in particular. In cases like these, the non-governmental sector fills the gaps in the field that are not covered or are insufficiently covered by state programmes. Initiatives may benefit migrant children in different ways: children themselves can take part in intercultural learning, psychological counselling, art and sport, and many more workshops; schools that educate these children can get methodological assistance and tools; as well as children of a host society might participate in awareness raising activities or intercultural learning. Even though NGOs address the fields that are often complementary or overlapping with formal education, there are no continuous and systematic collaboration with schools in this regard – it occurs on ad hoc bases. Previous studies and interviews with national stakeholders suggest that the possible reasons are: lack of clear conceptualisation of such partnerships at the project planning stage; fragmentation of education actors (schools are not always open to external stakeholders – as it requires additional planning and monitoring of the quality of activities); lack of time and resources for projects and capacity of NGOs to ensure complementary activities with schools, etc.

#### Way forward

- ✓ Public authorities should ensure sustainable funding for NGO initiatives; and civil society actors should advocate for allocation of funding too;
- ✓ While planning projects, NGOs should consider the competences that a project will provide to students and how they feed into learning plans, and overall child development; which could encourage systemic approach and less one-time projects;
- ✓ Public authorities should create networking platforms for the non-governmental sector and schools pertaining to various educational

matters. For example, authorities at the local level could invite school representatives and organisations to discuss migrant children integration, the need for awareness raising activities, the readiness of the local community to welcome migrants, etc. These kinds of meetings could ensure continuous communication between NGOs and schools, and when needed, stakeholders could turn into active collaborators on specific initiatives;

*Key finding 4.* There are a number of individual schools that aim to innovate and open up to wider communities with the aim to enrich learning experiences of their students and facilitate integration of students who need additional support; however, such initiatives are not yet mainstreamed across the system.

Schools are well placed to recognise the needs of migrant children, even when needs are not directly related to educational performance and suggest some cross-discipline activities to promote competences and/or address various issues. EU level comparative studies indicate that there are a number of such innovative and proactive schools across Europe, aiming to improve their pupils' learning experiences, and opening up to partnerships with wider stakeholders; however, this tendency is still not systematic and mainstreamed. Usually such initiatives depend on the motivation and commitment of school leadership and teaching staff.

Explorative analysis of barriers that can possibly explain, why not all schools yet engage in partnerships and involve non-formal education actors to enhance children's learning experiences, and support integration of migrant and refugee children in particular, suggests the following potential reasons:

- Lack of information and knowledge of schools about available non-formal education opportunities.
- Lack of school vision and overarching strategy when it comes to the community actors' involvement.
- Uneven capacity and competence of school staff to integrate non-formal learning effectively to design holistic learning approach for their students.
- Lack of training opportunities and support for school staff in this regard.
- Regulatory constraints in education law and policies may prevent schools from picking and choosing the activities they want to implement.

#### Way forward

- ✓ Schools should develop a strategy and vision, and together with the school community, agree on what value synergies with outside actors could bring to their missions;
- ✓ School leadership should allocate sufficient time for their staff to plan projects with external actors;
- ✓ Education systems should shift the mind-set of teachers and school leaders who believe that education happens only in the classroom through adequate training opportunities;
- ✓ Education authorities should develop tools and mechanisms for recognising learning opportunities outside the classroom;
- ✓ Educational systems should embed mechanisms to reward teachers that engage in additional activities outside the usual curricula, e.g. projects, student ex-changes, coordination of volunteering, etc;
- ✓ Authorities that monitor the quality of education could map competences that students acquire through non-formal education programmes; and provide recommendations on which projects could be undertaken through school partnerships with outside actors.

## Systemic conditions and policy changes

*Key finding 5.* National and regional strategies lack strategic objectives encouraging partnerships for social inclusion.

With regard to NFE and its links with formal learning processes, there is a lack of strategic direction at the national level in many countries. The general trend is that national/regional policies do not have a specific and verbalised aim to bring formal and non-formal education together. Even when goals are articulated in policy documents, they are rarely operationalised and subsequently implemented in a consistent manner, as often strategies lack well-operationalised objectives with built-in monitoring instruments, while schools lack follow-up guidelines and a clear understanding of how different forms of learning can be integrated together. Cross-sectoral approaches are present with regard to overall migrant integration but not with a focus on collaboration between formal and non-formal education.



### Way forward

- ✓ There is a need for a much more accentuated strategic focus at national and regional levels on promotion of non-formal education generally and specifically for targeting socio-economically disadvantaged groups for participation in non-formal education. For example, migrant integration strategies, which are the most common instance of cross-sectoral cooperation in terms of migrants, could include aims to encourage schools and NGOs working with migrant integration to engage in networking activities. Such a strategic commitment could result in provision of distinct funding strands for non-formal education, in conjunction with European funds.
- ✓ Member States need to take a broader view on the operationalisation of new inclusive strategies and action plans.
- ✓ Clear expectations for schools should be set through standards, curricula, school evaluation mechanisms that can help guide schools in the implementation process.

*Key finding 6.* Partnerships between schools and non-formal education providers could be encouraged by school autonomy (in defining their teaching methods, learning goals, and managing their funds) accompanied by adequate accountability mechanisms.

Research (PPMI, 2018) shows that ability of schools to adopt innovations depends on their autonomy over teaching methods, learning goals and funding distribution. It is important for schools to be able to adjust the curriculum according to the children needs and choose suitable teaching methods. Evidence in literature also indicates that school's capacity to adopt innovation and organisation of learning depends on the way funding is distributed. However, autonomy must go hand-in-hand with accountability. Balanced school accountability mechanisms should focus on achievement and excellence while supporting experimentation, risk taking and innovation, and the participation and feedback of a variety of stakeholders to build consensus and improve the overall quality of education.

### Way forward

Policymakers should promote balanced school autonomy along with horizontal accountability mechanisms:

- ✓ Teacher work organisation and remuneration systems should have sufficient flexibility to reward a teacher's time spent on developing new teaching methods, materials, approaches; as well as participating in research projects, testing, and integrating modern learning and assessment tools into their teaching practice.
- ✓ Education systems should enhance the role of local stakeholders like teachers, students, parents and local community actors in school governance, which would also strengthen horizontal accountability of schools.
- ✓ Education systems should encourage evidence-based policy experimentation with built-in risk management mechanisms, developing a system that learns from and reflects on failures and successes.

*Key finding 7.* Available funding opportunities are often reported as a barrier for consistent collaboration between schools and outside actors in general and targeting migrant integration in particular.

NGOs and individual schools identify local demands for non-formal education opportunities for migrant children, and consequently put efforts into fundraising and implementing activities. However, funding opportunities should be more sustainable to fulfil local needs and ensure continuous provision for migrant children. Literature also shows that overall school funding policies are not always flexible enough to give schools autonomy on planning extra-curricular activities.

### Way forward

- ✓ Member States and national education stakeholders could further explore the possibilities of European funding programmes, such as Erasmus + and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund to support non-formal education and school-community partnerships with the view to integrate newly-arrived children.
- ✓ Teacher networks/authorities that coordinate non-formal education should systemise information on funding opportunities and disseminate it to schools and non-formal education providers.
- ✓ Education systems should ensure certain flexibility in managing funds that could allocate resources to support experimentation and implementation of innovation.

- ✓ Grant scheme managers could consider whether schools have strategies/guidelines directing partnerships with non-formal education providers when allocating funds.

*Key finding 8.* Available professional development and methodological support (in relation to teaching diverse classes and links with non-formal education providers) is not yet sufficient.

The importance of professional development for teachers – taking advantage of partnerships with community actors, using non-formal learning methods, dealing with diversity in the classroom – is emphasised in literature and EU documents. This review reveals that the majority of countries have no systematic trainings for educational professionals on how to engage with non-formal education in EU countries. There are also limited training opportunities for non-formal education providers across Europe.

#### Way forward

- ✓ Public authorities should encourage higher education institutions to include related subjects into curriculum more consistently while training future teachers;
- ✓ Practical elements of initial teacher training should help teachers gain practical skills in inclusive school partnerships and projects, etc.
- ✓ Public authorities and educational stakeholders should regularly monitor and disseminate information on methodological tools and training opportunities that are available to in-service teachers;
- ✓ Public authorities should promote research and development on valid and easy-to-use tools allowing to assess previously gained competences in a regular school context and which can be competently administered and interpreted by school staff members.

*Key finding 9.* School-to-school collaboration and networks might promote partnerships between schools and non-formal education providers by giving them access to information that is inaccessible at that moment, encouraging positive attitudes towards certain teaching practices, and inspiring teachers to try new methods.

Several country reports suggest that multi-stakeholder networks can facilitate collaboration between schools and NFE actors. For instance, in Germany, as part of the open all-day schools some municipalities established stakeholder networks within districts. With the help of these networks they try setting up effective structures of cooperation between social, educational and further institutions in order to create synergies between their work and their experience and improve learning experiences of children and youth in the district. Sometimes, the municipality employs special network coordinators who act as central contact persons for any kind of issues related to the network and its activities.

#### Way forward

- ✓ School management should ensure a supportive environment for teachers to engage in and promote collaborative practices, such as peer-learning, mentoring, formative feedback, reflective and inquiry-based practices; and provide relevant opportunities for networking and professional development.
- ✓ Education authorities should invest in the development and sustaining of high-quality networks and platforms for teachers, schools and a variety of other stakeholders to exchange their knowledge and experiences, receive recognition, and collaborate on joint projects at different levels. This could scale-up innovation across schools and empower them to learn from each other.

*Key finding 10.* Even though there are more and more various NFE opportunities available in many countries, there is very limited research and evaluation data on their quality, key success factors for migrant inclusion and effectiveness

Policy mapping showed that there are very few studies available on the effects of non-formal education across European countries; also, it seems that children who attend different types of NFE are not systematically registered in national educational statistics. SIRIUS national partners report that very rarely official statistics and monitoring data is collected on the quality, accessibility and affordability of non-formal education activities, for disadvantaged groups of children in particular. This insufficiency of reliable data limits the monitoring of policy implementation, as well as the quality of programmes and their effect on participating children and hinders the identification of challenges and issues for improvement. Most of the existing data relies on the perceptions of stakeholders and programme organisers.

### Way forward

- ✓ Authorities should review and update definitions currently used in national education databases in order to receive a clear overview of the number and characteristics of pupils engaged in NFE activities. Also, the indicators should disaggregate take-up data based on various profiles such as refugee children, EU citizens, third-country nationals, etc.
- ✓ Stakeholders at various levels could address the insufficiency of research in this field: European Commission, governments and universities should sponsor research projects on the quality of available NFE programmes, mechanisms to explore links to integrate different learning spaces and types, explore effects of such partnerships for migrant children in particular; and promote participatory research projects involving teachers and NGOs.
- ✓ Agencies monitoring quality of education in schools need to include additional criteria: inclusive education and engagement of a school community into the learning process in the evaluation standards, to provide additional incentives for schools to change their organizational practices.

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