

Abstracts Special Issue Intercultural Education SIRIUS

Dr Michalis Kakos

Developing a holistic model for the educational inclusion of migrant and refugee students

Using the universal right to education as a starting point and a basis for the analysis, this article is bringing together key findings, primarily from projects conducted by SIRIUS network () in the area of educational inclusion of Newly Arrived Migrant and Refugee Students (NAMRS) and argues for a holistic approach to educational inclusion. The discussion is grounded on the legal obligation of European educational systems to address the right of every individual to education, and it argues that the fulfilment of this obligation requires the recognition of the complexity of the needs of all learners, including of migrant and refugee students. Importantly, this framework also considers the significance of the effects of factors that sit outside education on students' educational experiences as well as the multidimensionality of the impact of education on social inclusion. The discussion explores some implications of the adoption of such holistic model of educational inclusion for the educational practice, research and policy making in education of NAMRS.

Loes de Graaf and Hana Siarova

Synergies for inclusion

Classrooms in Europe are becoming increasingly more diverse. While many policies and practices have been adopted to ensure that schools can create inclusive environments for their diverse students, a broader approach to education is needed to ensure that it responds to the background and family context of each child. Close collaboration between schools and non-formal educators (NFEs) has been shown to provide benefits by addressing specific needs that schools cannot support, or by bringing the school closer to the child's culture and family. While benefits of such collaboration are more and more often recognized, policies to support collaboration between schools and NFE are lacking. This paper provides an overview of efforts made across Europe to connect schools with NFEs, for the specific purpose of ensuring the inclusion of migrant children.

Ellen-Rose Kambel & Tomislav Tudjman

Enhancing Teacher Competence, Student Well-being, and Parental Involvement Through Multilingual Learning Materials

AVIOR, an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership, aimed to narrow the achievement gap between native and non-native pupils in Europe. European partners collaborated to provide bilingual literacy and numeracy materials for primary school's children aged 4-8. Additionally, they shared best practices on creating inclusive multilingual classrooms among teacher trainers and school leaders. AVIOR's outcomes included enhanced school engagement and teachers who gained more awareness and insights in the benefits of multilingual teaching. It created a sense of identity for migrant children, along with increased parental involvement as their languages gained recognition in schools. Despite the project's impact, multilingualism remains uncommon in European schools due to cost and policy-maker awareness barriers. The project showed why multilingualism in European schools should be taken seriously.

Claudia Koehler

Revisiting Refugee Education Findings of the Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Youth in Europe- PERAE

This paper revisits and expands upon the findings of the 'Multi-country Partnership to Enhance the Education of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Youth in Europe (PERAE)' initiative, which was launched by the SIRIUS Network in 2016 to address the challenges of integrating refugee youth into European education systems. Amid the significant influx of refugees since 2015, PERAE conducted empirical assessments in seven European countries to examine the systemic and ad-hoc responses to the educational needs of refugee students. The project generated critical insights into the barriers to education for refugees and provided policy and practice recommendations aimed at improving access to quality education. In light of the continued rise in asylum applications and the persistent challenges faced by refugee students, this paper shifts from a national focus to a broader analysis, identifying overarching patterns in refugee education across Europe. It incorporates more recent findings to assess the current state of educational integration for refugees, highlighting ongoing issues such as limited resources, language barriers, and the need for coordinated efforts among stakeholders. The paper underscores the importance of understanding these patterns to inform future policies and practices that promote inclusive and equitable education for refugee youth in Europe.

Vinathe Sharma-Brymer, Michalis Kakos, Claudia Koehler, Monique Denkelaar

Supporting the educational integration of young people seeking asylum and refuge: Examining good practices from Germany, Sweden and the UK

The integration of Newly Arrived Migrant and Refugee (NAMR) children and youth in a host country's educational system is seemingly far from a 'one size fits all' process. Educational integration in a new country requires educational systems responding to the diverse, often emerging, and frequently not formally identified needs of newly arrived young people and families. Some of these needs are pre-existing whilst others are closely linked to their experiences of migration. Often, they are exacerbated by NAMR young people and families' limited understanding of their host country's educational policies, structures and procedures. Due to these complexities, as well as the urgency of the matter, involved parties, including policy makers and practitioners, strive for guidance in developing effective interventions. This explains the strong interest in the identification and dissemination of interventions that are deemed as effective in one setting and transferable to another. This paper builds on the good practices that were identified and exchanged between seven partnering countries from Europe and the UK in 2017-18 as part of SIRIUS network's RefuEdu project. The good practices were grounded in knowledge, experience and examples that researchers, policymakers and practitioners shared relating to the effective educational integration of NAMR children and youth. For the purpose of this paper, such educational integration is discussed from the contexts of Germany, Sweden and England. A set of nine principles of good practice and seven individual sets of good practices are highlighted with action steps. This may assist policy makers and practitioners in comprehending challenges and opportunities embedded in the educational integration of NAMR children and youth. The implications of good practices are for strengthening their holistic integration alongside positive educational experiences.

Rory McDaid

Integration of Ukrainian Refugee Teachers in Ireland?

This paper explores the experiences of a selection of Ukrainian refugee teachers enrolled on a refugee teacher bridging programme in Ireland intended to support the integration of these teachers into the Irish education system.

Nicola Horsley, Michalis Kakos, Claudia Koehler, Kristel Kooijman and Tom Tudjman

Research Note: Online schooling and the digital divide: challenges and opportunities for migrant students' online inclusion.

In this research note we present the key findings from a small-scale, mixed-methods international study which examined the experiences of Newly Arrived Migrant and Refugee Students' (NAMRS), their families and their teachers' experiences relating to their engagement with online schooling during the COVID19 pandemic. The study was conducted in 2022 in England, Germany and the Netherlands with the aim to explore the challenges and opportunities of online schooling for the educational inclusion of NAMRS. The results reveal that due to a combination of reasons NAMRS and their families in the three countries have been particularly vulnerable to the already documented and growing digital divide (Hernandez & Roberts, 2018; Goedhart et al., 2019). These reasons include limited access to equipment, limited availability of suitable study space at home, limited knowledge of the curricula and educational systems that were transferred to online provision, as well as language barriers. However, the analysis indicates that many of these barriers were addressed to some degree in the later stages of the lockdowns, resulting in a more positive educational experience for students and their families. The findings indicate that with appropriate preparation, online schooling has the potential to contribute to the educational inclusion of NAMRS when combined appropriately with school-based provision.